



Celebrating a New Chapter: Introducing Our New State Library Logo

By State Librarian Mary Soucie

We're turning the page to an exciting new chapter in our agency's story—and we're thrilled to share it with you. After many months of thoughtful conversations, design exploration, and input from a variety of individuals, the State Library is delighted to unveil our new logo. Kudos to our Marketing Specialist, BreAnne Meier, who created the logo.

Our refreshed visual identity reflects both who we are today and who we aspire to be in the years ahead: a modern, innovative, and community-centered agency dedicated to strengthening North Dakota libraries, connecting North Dakotans with reliable resources, and igniting lifelong learning. The logo incorporates elements from libraries as well as our great state.



Our former logo served us well for many years, but with new vision and mission statements, new initiatives, programs, and services, along with an expanded vision for library service, it was time for an identity that better captures the energy and direction of our work.

In the coming weeks, you'll begin to see our new look across our website, publications, social media, signage, and statewide programs. While our appearance is evolving, our commitment remains the same: providing exceptional service, supporting libraries across North Dakota, and ensuring equitable access to information for all. This logo is more than just a new mark; it's a visual reminder of our ongoing promise to the libraries and people of North Dakota. We can't wait to write this next chapter together.

Funding Made Easier: Grant Management System

By State Librarian Mary Soucie

The State Library is pleased to share information about our streamlined grant process. Through a partnership with the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI), all steps in the Library Vision grant process will be submitted via Webgrants from application to award notices, grant amendments and reimbursement requests. All requests will be submitted in Webgrants, where applicants can log in to track the progress of their grant application.

If your library/institution was not already in Webgrants, it has been added. You may still need to be added as a user for your institution. The steps to have an account created can be found in the NDDPI Webgrants user manual beginning on page 4 at <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/districtschools/grants/webgrants>.

Getting a new account created can take several days. We strongly encourage you to create a new user account now so that you are ready for the next Library Vision grant opportunities. Accounts cannot be created in the last few days before an application is due.

Please see "Unlock the Possibilities" for the next rounds of grant opportunities opening in April for Tribal Academic Libraries and May for general Library Vision grants which are open to all publicly-funded libraries and tribal libraries in North Dakota.



EPISODE 41: MICHELLE STRINDEN
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF ND

HOSTED BY ND STATE
LIBRARIAN MARY SOUCIE

Unlock the Possibilities: New Library Vision Opportunities

By State Librarian Mary Soucie

The State Library is pleased to announce new grant opportunities. As shared in the "Funding Made Easier" article in this issue, grants will be submitted in the new grant management system, Webgrants. Please see that article for more information on the new process. The Tribal Academic Library Vision grant: The Tribal Academic Library Vision grant application will be open from April 15, 2026 through May 25, 2026. The maximum award is \$15,000. Grant award notifications will be sent through the system on July 1, 2026.

The State Library is committed to supporting Tribal Academic Libraries with meeting the needs of their communities through innovative programs, access to resources, and updating the library collection.

This will be our first grant round utilizing the new system so we ask for patience and grace as we work through any "bumps" that may occur. Please reach out ASAP if you have any problems with accessing or using the system.

General Library Vision grant: The general Library Vision grant application will open on June 1, 2026-June 30, 2026. This grant opportunity is open to all publicly funded and tribal libraries in North Dakota. There will be a Small grant, \$500-\$1,999, and a Large grant, \$2,000-\$10,000. This grant is intended to strengthen libraries as community hubs through the development of essential services and programs and increasing access to valuable collections.

This is a competitive grant round. All libraries are encouraged to view the series of grant writing videos in Niche Academy to improve their applications. Applicants should review the current Library Vision Strategic Plan at [Library Vision Strategic Plan 2025-2027](#) prior to beginning their application to ensure alignment with the grant program's goals. The North Dakota Library Coordinating Council places a strong emphasis on choosing the correct goal that aligns with your project. Grantees should include an evaluation plan that includes goals that follow the SMART goals framework: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely.

Applicants are encouraged to reach out to our new Grants Coordinator, Bethany Rants, at nds-lid@nd.gov or their library development specialist for assistance with the grant application prior to submitting.

Grants

PLS: After the Close

Submitted by Monica Struck

The North Dakota PLS might close on March 31, but the work is just beginning. Here is what happens starting April 1.

1. I review all submissions for errors and make adjustments as needed. I may reach out regarding Standards questions responses so that we can resolve questions prior to doing Standards determination for the coming fiscal year.
2. After I complete my review, I receive a copy of three data files from Counting Opinions: the AE file, the Outlet file, and the annotation file. This is a breakdown of all the information that you have put into the survey in the format accepted by the IMLS Public Libraries Survey Portal.
3. I upload these files into the portal and run a match report. This compares basic library information (address, name, etc.) with last year's information. This report looks for discrepancies that were not addressed in the uploaded files. Once I have resolved any problems and passed the match report, I get to move onto the next step... the edit report.
4. The edit report is like your edit checks at the end of the PLS...on steroids. For reference, even after factoring in your annotations which were uploaded in the previous step, I had to address nearly 400 edit checks last year. Some of these I can address on my own with context I have from your other notes, but occasionally I need a bit more information. So if I come knocking on your door like the ghost of PLSes past, know that I'm in the middle of the edit report, and we'll get through this together.
5. When the edit checks have been addressed, I load the annotated edit report and lock my data.

It seems like the process should end here, but this is the PLS we're talking about. After we lock our data, we enter something called post-lock review. During this time, AIR staff reviews all the data and looks for things that weren't explained in the edit checks. If they find items that need further explanation, they reach out to me. I either provide context notes or request they unlock the data so that I can fix things. Once everything has been addressed, AIR sends the data to our fearless leader, Mary Soucie, to certify. And that, folks, is the thrilling conclusion of PLS season.

Beanstack By The Numbers

By Tammy Kruger

Beanstack by the Numbers highlights how many minutes or books have been read for Beanstack challenges through North Dakota State Library. It also lists next month's challenge(s). Have fun reading and earning badges!

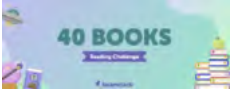
March 2026 Monthly Reading Challenge

Participants of *Read Across America* completed 22,217 total minutes



2026 Yearly Challenge

During the month of March, 249 books have been read for the *40 Books Reading Challenge*. Since January 1st, 798 books have been logged for this activity.



April 2026 Monthly Reading Challenge

April's Beanstack challenge is *Spring into Reading*. This topic encourages readers to put some spring in their step and dive into reading! *Spring into Reading* tracks minutes read.



May 2026 Monthly Reading Challenge

May begins our CSLP Summer Reading Challenges: *Unearth a Story!* These challenges will run from May 1st to August 31st to accommodate for the different start and end times of libraries' summer reading programming. *Unearth a Story* tracks minutes read. There are four categories for participants:



Adults (18+)



Teens (13-17)



Children's (7-12)



Early Literacy (0-6)

What Can You Do if You Finish the Unearth a Story challenge before August 31st?

You have options!

Option 1: Continue working on the *40 Books Reading Challenge*.

Option 2: Read more than the designated number of minutes. While you will not earn extra badges, Beanstack continues to count extra minutes logged. Can anyone double their designated amounts?!

Kids have some additional options.

Early childhood: *1000 Books Before Kindergarten*

Elementary: *500 Books Before Middle School*

Middle and High School: *100 Books Before Graduation*

Statewide Reading Challenge

Sure, Beanstack offers individual challenges for readers... however, what about a collaborative one? During Summer Reading 2026, NDSL challenges North Dakota readers to work towards a goal of 100,000 minutes across the state! Can we make it?





Celebrate National Poetry Month: Immerse Children in Poetry

In the October 2025 issue of *School Library Journal*, Marlaina Cockcroft describes how, in an effort to help seventh grade students explore their creativity, school librarian Kasey Kelly created a Poetry Immersion program. Kelly and her seventh-grade English teacher colleagues noticed students were struggling to apply analytical writing and figurative language skills. The team agreed to use poetry as a form of creative writing. What began in 2022 as a one-week poetry workshop has now expanded to a month-long program.

Students have shared that the program was the highlight of the year, and Kelly noted that one ELA student who previously showed little interest in class discussions became engaged once the poetry lessons began. She stated, "I think that (poetry) really speaks to them because everyone can read the same poem, and we walk away with 20 different meanings... how we feel about it, what it makes us think of, what it reminds us of."

[Continue Reading](#)

Upcoming North Dakota State Library Webinars

April showers bring May flowers. April also brings plenty of professional development opportunities. In addition to a plethora of webinars, we are hosting a virtual conference, April 29th and 30th. *Today's Skills for Tomorrow's Libraries* will explore topics such as cybersecurity, AI Awareness, Information Literacy, News Media Literacy, as well as presentations on programming for libraries and an opportunity to network with fellow librarians. More information, including speakers, topics, and program descriptions will be posted shortly at <https://www.library.nd.gov/traininglibraries>.

In addition to our virtual conference, check out these fantastic webinars being presented by North Dakota State Library staff.

[Cataloging Unique Items](#)

April 8 (3:15 PM -4:00 PM)

[Is It Time to Ditch Dewey? The Pros and Cons of Using Genrefication](#)

April 9 (3:15 PM -4:00 PM)

[WordPress Q&A](#)

April 14 (1:00 PM - 2:00 PM)

[Upcoming Webinars](#)



School and Public Libraries Collaborate to Prevent Summer Slide

As the hint of spring fills the air, summer is right around the corner, and that means summer break, sunshine, and fun. Unfortunately, something less enjoyable may also accompany summer: the *summer slide*. If you're unsure what the summer slide is or whether anything can be done about it, this article offers some answers.



What Is the Summer Slide?

In her article, *Is Summer Slide Real?* Jill Staake describes the summer slide as the regression of student learning during summer break. This regression affects academic skills gained throughout the school year. Children in grades K-6 are most vulnerable, with those from low-income households experiencing the greatest loss. The good news is that this phenomenon can be reversed, and libraries may play an important role in that effort.

[Continue Reading](#)

New Items Added to Digital Horizons

A highlight of the items added to the various digital collections of the North Dakota State Library.

[North Dakota Histories](#)

- 100 Years, 1887-1987: A History of Willow City, North Dakota and Surrounding Areas

[North Dakota Memories](#)

- Hotel McKenzie advertisement, Bismarck, N.D., 1910
- Jury Takes but One Ballot in Finding Gummer to be Guilty of Slaying 18-Year-Old Marie Wick [newspaper article, 1922]



[Political Prairie Fire](#)

- Biggest Delegation in N.D. Legislature for the Nonpartisan League
- Passage of Senate Bill 134 is Urged [newspaper article, 1919]
- Portrait of Robert Byrne, circa 1925-1931
- Portrait of Treadwell Twichell, circa 1909
- Report of the N.D. Industrial Commission, 1926
- The Farmers' Burden [political cartoon, 1915]



[Prairie Recipes](#)

- Leeds Lutheran Church Anniversary Cookbook, 1886-2011
- St. Vincent de Paul Church Centennial, 1897-1997: Cookbook



Digital Horizons



Heart of America Library is hosting [Revolutionary Talks with Dr. Zahra Moss](#). April 9 = Origins of the Revolution; May 7 = Voices of the Revolution; and June 4 = Images of the Revolution.

Morton Mandan Public Library received a [\\$50,000 T-Mobile Hometown Grant](#) to "transform a reimagined site into a dedicated gathering space for families residing in the 3rd Street Corridor, strengthening community connections"



Today's Skills for Tomorrow's Libraries Virtual Conference

Wednesday, April 29 - Thursday, April 30

Our world is changing before our very eyes. We have reached a time where artificial intelligence is increasingly integrated into our lives, where our online presence is quantified and monetized, where a photo or video can live on in perpetuity, and our personal data is a commodity. We must reevaluate the traditional services offered in our libraries and adapt them to the changing demographics of our communities to continue to support people as they navigate an evolving world.



Librarians must develop knowledge and skills to meet the changes we face both today and tomorrow. Please join us for this virtual conference where we will learn today's skills for tomorrow's services.

Topics include cybersecurity, AI Awareness, information literacy, news media literacy, programming for libraries, and an opportunity to network with fellow librarians.

More Information

State Aid for Public Libraries

Submitted by Allie Suko

The State Aid application process is open! State Aid applications must be submitted through the Counting Opinions website by **April 30, 2026**, for your library to be considered for State Aid funds. There have been no changes to the application from last year. For a refresher on the State Aid process and how to fill out the application form, visit the North Dakota State Library YouTube channel and view the [State Aid to Public Libraries Walk-Through](#), or refer to the [State Aid LibGuide](#). If you have any questions regarding your application, or issues with the Counting Opinions website, please contact Allie Suko at ndsl-fiscal@nd.gov or 701-328-2492.

[Learn More](#)

Public Library Infographics

The State Library is happy to provide a personalized infographic for your public library using the numbers you have provided in the Public Libraries Survey (PLS).

These basic infographics can include any statistics that are useful for your library, such as number of visits to your library, registered card holders, items in the collection, programs, circulations, etc. If you would like statistics not included in the PLS, please include that information in your answer to number 4 in the request form.



[Request An Infographic](#)

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Any mention of services or products in this newsletter does not constitute any endorsement or recommendation. The use of any services or products should be evaluated on an individual basis.

www.library.nd.gov

To submit content ideas/articles for a future issue of the Flickertale, please contact BreAnne at ndslpa@nd.gov.

Times referenced are Central Time.

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