

Umatilla County Special Library District

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FY2025-2026 YEAR-END REPORT



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UMATILLA COUNTY
SPECIAL LIBRARY
DISTRICT

Strengthening our community libraries

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Mission:

The Umatilla County Special Library District works in partnership with our libraries to advance and make available excellent library services, programs and continuing education opportunities for all.

Vision:

The Umatilla County Special Library District (UCSLD) works collaboratively with our public libraries to ensure that high quality library services are available to all.

Public libraries are places of welcome for everyone, and UCSLD strengthens and unites our communities.

Library staff are valued and recognized for providing exceptional service to their communities. UCSLD invests in Library Staff development, and offers opportunities for interaction, skill-building and cross-training.

To advance the vision, UCSLD partners with groups and organizations to increase the reach of literacy and access to information, building on the foundations of a democratic society.

Values:

Integrity - Accountability - Transparency;
Community - Inclusion - Fairness;
Resourcefulness - Resilience - Creativity



Report

District-Wide View

The fiscal year began on July 1, 2025, as libraries were once again knee deep in summer reading programs. The libraries all work hard on their goals to serve patrons, and the programming they offer creates opportunities for patrons of all ages.

Heather Estrada, the District Director, continued to visit cities and libraries with the goal of having a healthy working relationship with every city in the County. Extra time was spent in the City of Umatilla this year. Umatilla is planning two large Urban Renewal Areas which will impact the UCSLD's funding for the next 20 years. Efforts are being made to recoup some of these funds with software to help all the libraries with collection development.

Heather, along with all the UCSLD staff, worked to complete succession planning documents for future needs of the District. The position of District Director succession planning is largely done, with continual updating expected to happen in an ongoing fashion.

As in other years, the staff at UCSLD continued to provide excellent services to the citizens of Umatilla County throughout the year. Some of the successes this year include:

- **Continued financial and logistical support to ensure that all residents of Umatilla County have seamless service to library services. The UCSLD maintains the District's membership in the Sage Library System, provides three days of courier service to deliver interlibrary loan materials, access to e-books, e-audiobooks, and magazines through the Library2Go service, as well as providing training events for all library staff and cooperative programming.**
- **The UCSLD administers the Dolly Parton Imagination Library to allow all children ages 0-5 to receive a free book each month through a partnership with United Way of the Blue Mountains. There are 1,794 children enrolled at the time of this writing, over**

100 more than last year at this time. In addition, since bringing DPIL to Umatilla County, 1,379 children have participated and graduated due to aging out.

- Each month a column was published in the East Oregonian newspaper highlighting work in the public libraries in the county and the programs they provide.
- The C.S. Jackson Historical Grant Program allowed libraries around the District to add historical materials to their collections.
- The District offered two free grant training workshops to all Library Staff thanks to the generosity of our District Board member and grant expert, Nick Nash.
- A new round of connections between the District and the city councils in the incorporated cities in Umatilla County is ongoing with visits to every city to date.
- The third District vehicle was sold and a new agreement with the IMESD was signed. We will no longer provide them a vehicle.
- The UCSLD continues to strive to be open, accessible, and transparent in all we do. The District follows the requirements of Oregon law and the Board's policies and directives to serve and use the public tax dollars effectively and efficiently.

For the UCSLD staff some notable events this year included:

The two staff In-service days, held in November and May. The theme for the November 2025 training was “Turning a new Page” and was held in Milton-Freewater. The May 2026 theme was “Sowing the Seeds for Success” and was held in Echo. The Continuing Education committee did an excellent job of planning and implementing these all-day training courses so all library staff would have a chance to reconnect and grow in knowledge of all things’ library!

Bi-monthly Meetings of the Directors were held for collaboration, connection, and training. We meet in person fully again to encourage the directors to get together and learn from one another. Two other committees, made up of the District Director and several Library Directors, continued to meet by Zoom. A committee for District Wide Programs (such as Passport Program), and a

committee to discuss Challenges and Innovations – which did not meet this year.

Visiting the libraries, the library boards, Library Friends groups and their city governments all remain an important part of the District Director's outreach. She continues to make rounds to a variety of cities, and this year worked especially close with the Weston Library Director to help their city council and Library Board understand how the cities and the District work together.

Dea was unable to come in person this year as she is full-time caregiving for her mother. She made personal zoom visits instead to all the libraries to work with them on their cataloging and website needs. She continues to be responsive and available despite being remote.

UCSLD staff work plans and job descriptions have been approved and updated and the UCSLD Board and staff are committed to abiding by the mission and vision of the District.

The UCSLD staff are amazing and thoroughly enjoy working together. We care about each other, help one another, and strive to balance quality work for the District and keep our families a priority. We do monthly safety training and staff meetings to provide excellent service to our District residents, as well as to provide support and accountability for one another. It is a joy to work with the staff at the UCSLD. We feel fortunate to work with our library colleagues and community partners supporting library services that enhance the lives of those living in Umatilla County.



District Director

Purpose of Position:

The purpose of this position is to administer the operations of the UCSLD and support and ensure the provision of excellent library services in Umatilla County by working in partnership with the 11 member and one partner libraries.

Highlights of FY25-26:

- Continued to facilitate Meetings of the Directors and their sub-committees.
- Attended the SDAO annual conference, Local Budget Law, and CIS trainings.
- Continued to provide courier service delivery during the IMESD holidays.
- Provided two all-staff in-service trainings.
- Continued to meet all requirements for Budget, Audit, Statistical Reporting, Open Meeting Law, Public Record Requests, Performance Appraisals, ALSP Review Meetings, Strategic Planning, Best Practices.
- Ongoing monthly Libraries Provide – Countywide! *East Oregonian* column.
- Trip with several library directors to Albuquerque, New Mexico for the Association of Small and Rural Libraries conference.

Statistics:

- City Council visits: 5
- Book Clubs: 6
- Library Board Meetings: 1
- Parades: 6
- Summer and Program visits at libraries: 42
- Conference (online and in person) and training: 17

This year I have a better understanding of the cycle of the fiscal year and the tasks that come with each season. I continue to be proud of the connections I've made with the libraries as well as with the cities and their staff. I was able to attend many conferences and trainings, including helping 4 other librarians get to Albuquerque, NM for the Rural and Small Libraries Conference. Several of these librarians had not attended a conference before. I continue to meet with new city employees and councils to educate on how the cities and District work together. I enjoy supporting and encouraging the libraries in their desire to serve the people of their communities.

Take Off! Program

Purpose:

The primary purpose of this position is to create and implement outreach services to childcare, pre-school, and public library sites throughout the county, fostering a love of reading and promoting kindergarten readiness through the development of early literacy skills.

A secondary purpose is to provide back-up support for critical UCSLD administrative functions.

Highlights of FY25-26:

- Services continued with deliveries, virtual content, and with in-person services returning to the primary focus.
- Added more library story times into the regular schedule (50 more).
- Kit development was prioritized and well received by sites.
- Developed and expanded Spanish language kits.

Statistics:

Action	Stats
Books and Storytimes kits rotated to sites	15,269
Storytimes provided to libraries and childcare centers	524
Attendance at story times (adults and children)	6,710
Students Enrolled in the Take Off! Program	1,260



Technical Services

Purpose:

The purpose of this position is to support the UCSLD member libraries' abilities to provide services and participate in consortia activities through cataloging (maintaining the integrity of the bibliographic database and authority control) and technical support. Additionally, this position administratively & technologically supports the UCSLD Board of Directors and staff.

Highlights of FY25-26:

- Site visits with all libraries' cataloging staff continued via Zoom (twice).
- Minutes of Board meetings continued to be taken and posted.
- Our Streamline website platform updates continue with current UCSLD information.
- Website accessibility project is now fully accessible via remediation and the addition of DocAccess. We are fully in compliance with national laws that will go into effect in 2028 for all Special Districts.
- Chaired the Sage User Council meetings and continued to serve on the Sage Cataloging mentor group.
- Continued to improve access to Spanish language materials for our patrons.
- Continued to improve and understand how to best use our password manager for District staff.
- Completed a long-desired technology inventory sheet.

Statistics:

Action	Stats
Items added to the catalog	3,183
Items deleted from the catalog	6,031
Cataloging corrections made in the catalog	1,516
OCLC CatExpress records added (UCSLD libraries purchased)	202
OCLC CatExpress records deleted (UCSLD libraries)	902
New bibs created or imported into Sage	904

The UCSLD Board

Purpose of Position:

The UCSLD Board has fiduciary responsibility of the District. They are responsible for upholding public meeting laws, local budget laws, distributing the tax monies received as set forth by an agreed upon formula and providing vision and guidance for the District Director. The Board is made up of 5 elected board members who are scattered throughout the District's boundaries. This year the Board consisted of Nick Nash, Board President; Kathy Thew, Vice-President; John Thomas; Caty Clifton; and Judy Bracher.

Highlights of FY25-26:

- Upheld all public meetings laws and local budgeting laws as set forth in Oregon law.
- Participated in several parades to market the UCSLD.
- Held a board retreat to work, continue to learn, and network on Board business.
- Attended SDAO regional trainings to continue to improve their knowledge as publicly elected board members.
- Participated in public meetings law training.
- Attended City of Umatilla Urban Renewal Area (URA) meetings to support service for all 12 libraries in the County.
- Attended the spring and fall all staff in-services.
- Actively and enthusiastically supported the District Director at monthly board meetings.
- Attended various library programs around the District, to be a public face for the 12 libraries, their staff, and patrons.

