

Ohio Libraries Build Success!

Talking Points

The following are talking points to be utilized in communication with your legislators and their staff. First and foremost, we want to thank them for supporting Ohio's 251 public libraries in last year's state budget through the Public Library Fund (PLF). Our partnership with the state, and the funding from the PLF, will help libraries continue to do what they do best, and that is serving their communities. Unfortunately, many of our libraries are experiencing growing pains and are in desperate need of infrastructure updates. The PLF is not performing according to budget estimates and libraries are being directly impacted. This is the perfect time to have discussions with legislators about our communities most treasured resource...the public library.

Library Infrastructure Needs

- Libraries in Ohio are community institutions and have been for hundreds of years. The demand for library resources and services by the public has never been greater. To meet that demand, libraries are having to figure out how to address aging buildings and equipment to ensure safety, accessibility, and innovation.

Share an example of a major infrastructure need by your library. This may include HVAC, technology, elevators, roofs, foundations, etc.

Education / Literacy (Science of Reading – ReadOhio Initiative)

- Reading is necessary for learning. It's difficult to learn from a book when you can't read what's on the page. Ohio libraries focus on instilling a love of reading from an early age. They share early literacy information and resources with their communities, develop early childhood programs that promote literacy, and teach parents and caregivers about early literacy concepts.

Share real-life examples of how your library is building the foundation for reading and school readiness in your community and partnering with schools.

Explain how your library is collaborating with the state on the ReadOhio Initiative through the Science of Reading.

Return on Investment (ROI)

- Ohio's public libraries have the highest usage per capita in the nation and return \$5 to Ohioans for every \$1 they spend.

Use OLC's ROI Calculator to measure the ROI for your public library. Share that information with your legislator so that they understand your library's economic value to your community.

Technology / Digital Divide / Digital Literacy

- Access to the internet today is essential and unfortunately there are still individuals and parts of the state without it. Wi-Fi usage and digital downloads by public library customers are increasing.

Provide examples of how your library provides Wi-Fi and computer connectivity to your customers. Share examples of what your library is doing related to Northstar, eGovernment, computer training, ebooks and audiobooks. Be sure to include any specific lending programs with devices and connectivity. This may include Wi-Fi hotspots, tablets, and partnerships with PCs for People and Broadband Ohio. Additionally, you may want to highlight programs that include telehealth, tech tutoring, or one-on-one digital literacy help.