



CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES STAFF REPORT

February 23, 2026
Agenda Item No. 8

TO: BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

FROM: Library Services Department
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TITLE: Children's Summer Reading Program Update

DISCUSSION:

The Newport Beach Public Library's (Library) annual Summer Reading Program (SRP) is an eight-week initiative designed to encourage reading engagement and continued use of library resources and services throughout the summer. New in 2026, the program is launching with refreshed in-house branding and an enduring theme, *Summer Reading: Make it One for the Books!*, providing a cohesive framework for program messaging and activities.

Driven by high achievement in 2025, the reading challenge community goal is moving up to 1 million minutes of reading, which further reinforces reading as a shared community priority and highlights the collective impact of participation.

Children's SRP incorporates two primary elements: a reading challenge and family events. Together, these components make up the collective Children's SRP. The program centers on a structured reading challenge complemented by weekly interactive programs and is designed to support literacy development and sustained learning during the summer months.

The Children's SRP Reading Challenge (Challenge) remains self-paced and flexible, allowing participants to read materials of their choice while tracking progress toward defined milestones. Children may read independently or be read to by a caregiver. Children complete the Challenge by logging 600 minutes of reading.

Challenge participation is tracked through Beanstack, with paper materials available for families who prefer an offline option. The incentive structure emphasizes consistent reading through themed badges and prizes that reflect Newport Beach, local creativity, and the joy of summer reading.

Several Challenge design changes have been implemented this year to improve clarity, participation, and administrative efficiency. Early registration has been added to reduce opening-day congestion. Weekly prize drawings and book review incentives have been discontinued due to declining participation and limited impact. Activity-based bonus badges have also been removed and replaced with a single incentive

during the final week of the program, offering a bonus grand prize entry to encourage completion and increase library visits at the end of summer.

Progress toward the community reading goal will be displayed at all library locations, with visible recognition of participant achievements. Completion certificates and finisher prizes provide formal acknowledgment of participation and program impact.

Reading challenges for teens and adults are offered in a similar format to promote family engagement and shared participation.

In addition to the Challenge, the Library hosts events at the Central Library and the branches throughout the summer to support in-person engagement and reinforce consistent library use. SRP event highlights include:

- **Week 1: The Week of Wonder** Live animal presentation introducing children and families to rainforest animals through an interactive program with wildlife educators from Wild Wonders, Inc.
- **Week 2: The Week of Big Adventures** Hey Hey Entertainment brings two hilarious, interactive puppet shows to the library, *Dino Chase Through Space* and *Library Bandit*.
- **Week 3: The Week of Creativity** Drop-in craft programs focusing on hands-on creativity and themed summer projects for children and families.
- **Week 4: The Week of Discovery** Self-guided "I Spy" activity encouraging exploration and observational skills within the library.
- **Week 5: The Week of Science** Mad Science brings an exciting, hands-on show packed with amazing experiments and fantastic forces.
- **Week 6: The Week of Play** Family BINGO program promoting intergenerational participation and informal play.
- **Week 7: The Week of Music** Interactive children's concert featuring The Ben Band, incorporating music and movement inspired by the Australian Outback.
- **Week 8: The Week of Celebration** Program conclusion featuring a community celebration activity and a bonus raffle to encourage program completion.

NOTICING:

This agenda item has been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which the Board of Library Trustees considers the item).