

Trustee Report
Manske Library Board
February 12, 2026
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Digital Lending Records:

“OverDrive reports that in 2025, libraries broke records with over 820 million digital checkouts and 1 billion minutes streamed, highlighting the continued demand for digital access.” (AI Overview)

[OverDrive, Inc. - Wikipedia](#)

Budget Crisis & Closures:

“Dallas is considering closing four branches (Oak Lawn, Arcadia Park, Skyline, and Renner Frankford) to meet a \$4.5M deficit. Residents are opposing this, and officials are looking into alternative options.” (AI Overview)

[Dallas backs off on library closures, vows new options after City Council uproar](#)

Safety & Security:

“Illinois has authorized security grants for libraries following increased threats to staff and patrons. Grants are available for cameras and other security devices, such as silent alarms and check-in checkpoints. (AI Overview)

[Giannoulis Legislation to Enhance Protections for Illinois Libraries and Librarians Signed into Law](#)

Library Fees Reconsidered:

“Libraries are increasingly raising service fees, such as non-resident card fees (e.g., rising from \$50 to \$120 in some cases), to offset budget constraints, inflation, and rising operating costs. These hikes, driven by higher expenses for digital subscriptions, maintenance, and staff, aim to align with the value of services provided.

Key factors and trends in library service fee increases include:

- **Operating Costs:** Libraries face higher expenses for utilities, security, and digital resources, leading to increased fees to maintain services.
- **Digital Content Costs:** The expense of digital content is substantial, with eBooks costing around \$40 and audiobooks reaching approximately \$73, necessitating renewals.
- **Non-Resident Fees:** Some libraries have significantly raised non-resident fees, such as the [Arlington Public Library \(TX\)](#), which increased its annual non-resident card fee from \$50 to \$120.

- **Budget Pressures:** Flat or shrinking budgets, combined with inflation, often force libraries to re-evaluate their fee structures.
- **Usage and Support:** Despite potential fee increases, library usage remains high, with over 800 million visits in 2023.
- **Purpose of Fees:** Fees for services like late returns can help fund library events and improvements.

While some services may incur fees, many, such as using the [Libby](#) app, remain free with a valid library card. Libraries are restricted from imposing charges that create barriers to accessing core services.” (AI overview)

[Latest News - Library Home at Arlington Public Library \(TX\)](#)

State Required School Reading Lists:

On 1/28, the Texas State Board of Education delayed voting on a proposed list of required books for K-12 students. Concern is about the reading materials' religious focus and lack of racial, ethnic, and gender diversity. It will be considered again at the April meeting to allow board members to solicit feedback. The Texas Education Agency recommended 300 books for consideration. Schools are required to teach the materials starting in the 2030-31 school year. Some are concerned that having book requirements prevents educators from adapting learning materials to their students. Some believe the list excludes stories that represent minorities. This list could impact public libraries that attempt to keep local school district reading lists in their collections.

[Proposed reading list for Texas students draws concern over religious themes, lack of diversity – Houston Public Media](#)