

## **Trustee Report**

**September 11, 2025**

**Manske Library Board**

**Submitted by Lee Alvoid**

Legislative Update-SB 412 Regular Session-A Bill I wasn't tracking

While HB 3225 did not make it to the floor in the session, SB 412 was approved and signed into law by the Governor to take effect on September 1, 2025. This law is part of the penal code in Texas, which means that criminal charges can be filed against library staff members who make sexually explicit materials available to minors (defined as under the age of 18).

Most offenses would be class A misdemeanors unless a minor is employed to distribute the materials. Then the offense would be a 3<sup>rd</sup> degree felony.

The Texas Library has a written Fact Sheet to help public libraries navigate the new law. Materials must qualify as "harmful" on 3 tests. The material must have all 3 conditions:

1. Appeals to the prurient interest of a minor in sex, nudity, or excretion.
2. is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community with respect to what is suitable for minors, and
3. is utterly without redeeming value for minors.

Conditions for a person to commit an offense involve intentionally making such materials to minors knowing the nature of the material. Creating displays that might offend and/or hiring minors to handle or distribute potentially harmful materials.

Defenses include if the adult is the spouse of the minor, or a law enforcement officer discharging his/her duties.

The recommendations for library staff include transparency of how materials are classified and displayed. Open processes for challenges to materials. On the other hand, the law does not require libraries to review materials in their collections, establish age verification measures, restrict access to materials, or remove materials from the collection. Several other recommendations are included in the Tip Sheet. [SB-412-Fact-Sheet-August-2025.pdf](#)

## **Community Engagement Ideas**

Many examples of community engagement programs for libraries can be found on the website focused on The Project for Public Spaces. Grants are available from The Project for Public Spaces to develop community programming. One article focused on how libraries

are partnering with performing arts groups to help books and stories come alive for all age groups. Examples are discussed from Charlotte, North Carolina, Frankfort, Indiana and Sante Fe Springs, California. The libraries become a “front porch” for the community by partnering with visual arts projects like sidewalk chalk art, theatre performances and mini concerts that compliment library offerings. [Libraries That Matter](#) While the original article is from 2009, the programming is still in place. In Charlotte, the local opera company is involved the programs.

The Project for Public Spaces is active and has grants available for communities that want to renovate, transform, or create spaces for community events. It is a non-profit organization that has been in existence for 25 years. [Home — Project for Public Spaces](#)

### **Watching the Headlines-Library Closures**

A headline regarding the closure of the Ft. Worth Central Library in 2023 caught my eye. In reading farther, the library temporarily ceased to operate in 2023 until a new facility is developed. Multiple branch libraries provide services as well as a downtown express library facility in old city hall. The new facility will be a renovated historic building where the YMCA used to occupy the space. Headlines can be misleading these days.

The City of Dallas is considering the closure of 5 branch libraries including the Skillman Southwestern Branch. The Skillman branch is the only branch slated for closure. It was saved a year ago with the infusion of temporary funding. As city budgets become more limited, effective library programming that contributes to public life across the city remains significant. [Dallas considers closing several library branches | FOX 4 Dallas-Fort Worth](#)

### **Measuring Outcomes of Public Libraries**

The Public Library Association developed tools, surveys, and training to assist libraries in measuring impact beyond circulation numbers, attendance, and anecdotal data. Funded in 2015 by the Gates Foundation, the number of libraries engaging in the outcome-based evaluation process is growing. This press release from ALA features aspects of the process. [PLA celebrates Project Outcome success; transitions resources for free ongoing use | ALA](#)