



Building Stronger Communities, Together



OKLAHOMA
Department of
Libraries

OKLAHOMANS INVEST IN LIBRARY SERVICE WITH AD VALOREM TAXES



On Average, Only 4%

of county ad valorem funding goes toward public library services.



Approximately 94%

of a public library system's annual budget comes from ad valorem.



Nearly 2K Oklahomans

are employed by public libraries. Over 70% work for library systems.

AD VALOREM FUNDING POWERS VITAL LIBRARY SERVICES

Early Literacy and School Readiness

A Norman parent shared heartfelt thanks for Pioneer Library System's Kick-start Kindergarten program, which helped her son transition smoothly to pre-K. Once too nervous to even enter the classroom, he gained confidence and independence through the summer classes. His teacher noticed his readiness and even played the same ABC song he had learned at the library. The parent said hearing him sing it at home nearly brought her to tears. She credits the program with giving him the strong start every child deserves.

Workforce Development and Career Exploration

Tulsa City-County Library System partners with ODL to offer Tulsa County residents the opportunity to earn their high school diploma for free through Excel High School. 29-year-old Jasmine wanted to complete her diploma because she wanted to show her children that anything is possible and to never give up.

"I've always wanted to be a nurse or teacher, and now I'm finally taking those steps. I have enrolled in TCC in the nursing program, and I have now received a higher paying job because I have my diploma."



Digital Connectivity and Community Place

At the Minnie R. Slief Library in Cheyenne, it's common to see energy company trucks in the parking lot each evening as workers utilize the library's Wi-Fi to update critical business records. During the day, landmen frequently use the library's internet to research courthouse records, as it is significantly faster than the connection at local county offices.



Life-Changing Access to Healthcare

Accessing healthcare isn't always easy, especially in rural areas or for those with communication barriers. The telehealth booth at Parker Memorial Library in Sulphur is already making a difference. Recently, a woman who is deaf was able to meet with her doctor in the private, secure booth, with a trusted friend translating the doctor's instructions and questions into sign language.

She later shared, "I felt respected and understood. Having this option at the library gave me access to care I wouldn't have had otherwise."

Critical Thinking and Research Skills

With the support of school librarians and access to trusted digital research tools, students build critical thinking and information literacy skills that prepare them for future success. At Shawnee Middle School, librarian guidance and databases helped five students qualify for the Oklahoma National History Day state competition, turning curiosity into achievement. These skills are the foundation of workforce development, ensuring Oklahoma's next generation enters college and careers with confidence.

Blending Outdoor Exercise and Early Literacy

In Muskogee, the beloved Azalea Festival is gaining a new feature: the StoryWalk®, thanks to a partnership with the Eastern Oklahoma Library System. The StoryWalk encourages families to move, read, and explore together while enjoying the beauty of Honor Heights Park.

As Parks Director Mullins shared, it reminds people they can be active anytime—at the park or at home. By blending tradition with innovation, the library helps families celebrate community, wellness, and learning all in one experience.



AD VALOREM KEEPS OPPORTUNITY WITHIN REACH FOR EVERY OKLAHOMAN

Public libraries demonstrate local commitment and investment in community resources. Consistent local funding provides the stability libraries need to support learning, connection, and opportunity statewide.