



Agenda Item C.1
DISCUSSION/ACTION
Meeting Date: August 3, 2026

TO: Chair and Members of the Library Advisory Commission

SUBMITTED BY: JoAnne Plummer, Neighborhood Services Director

PREPARED BY: Elizabeth Saucedo, City Librarian

SUBJECT: Student Success Card Program Proposal

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive a recommendation from the City Librarian on the Goleta and Santa Ynez Valley Libraries' proposal to develop partnerships for the Student Success Card program.

BACKGROUND:

Research consistently identifies the critical importance of students establishing reading proficiency by third grade as an indicator of lifelong success. To provide students with access to the tools, resources, and support necessary in achieving essential literacy skills, the State of California has approved legislation for the development of partnerships between public libraries and schools to issue library cards to students.

California legislation Senate Bill 321 (Ashby, 2023) and updated Senate Bill 1329 (2024) require the State Librarian to:

- A. Coordinate with each local public library to determine the most effective means to ensure each pupil in each local educational agency is provided with the opportunity to obtain a student success card by 3rd grade; and
- B. Ensure that partnerships between local public libraries and local educational agencies have been established to enable each pupil enrolled at a school site of each local educational agency to be provided with the opportunity to obtain a student success card by 3rd grade.

Existing law (Section 19341 of the California Education Code) defines a "student success card" as a card issued by a local public library that provides access to library services, including, but not limited to, all of the following:

1. Collections that support school curriculum as well as pupil leisure reading, online research, and learning resources maintained by local public libraries and the California State Library.
2. Online tutoring, where available.
3. Digital content from the California State Library's K–12 Online Resources Project.

This report outlines the plans of the Goleta and Santa Ynez Valley Libraries (Library) to develop these partnerships with all schools in the service area of County Zone 4 at the start of the 2026-2027 academic school year.

The Library's prior participation in this program in 2018, when it was piloted by the Pacific Library Partnership as a statewide grant initiative, yielded high levels of interest from schools and families, and staff are confident that a relaunch of this program will receive support and enthusiasm from the community.

DISCUSSION:

Following the approval of this legislation, the State Library began working with public libraries across California on the implementation of the Student Success Card program, holding statewide calls and developing toolkits to guide jurisdictions through the process.

There is a wide range of structures, sizes, and systems across California's public libraries, and the legislation appropriately calls for the State Library to offer resources to assist libraries in identifying strategies that work best for their communities, determining the most effective means of reaching the program's goal at the local level.

As such, the Library leadership team has evaluated a range of options available in implementing the Student Success Card program. Some of these variations include:

- Card Model (Full Card, Starter Card, or Digital Card with differing levels of access to library resources at each)
- Library Card Number vs. Student ID Number
- Formal or Informal Agreement with Schools
- Opt-in vs. Opt-out Card Registration

Following an in-depth assessment of these considerations, the Library foresees the greatest impact by providing a Student Success Card option that is parallel to existing library cards. This would involve establishing an informal agreement with schools to provide an opt-in registration method, whereby students would be issued a full-access library card utilizing existing barcode number conventions. While each option has its merits for use in corresponding library structures, explanations for each component within the Library's plans are provided below:

- *Full Card Model:* This ensures students receive access to the highest level and widest range of resources possible, including all three of the criteria for a Student Success Card that are outlined in the legislation above.

- *Library Card Number vs. Student ID Number:* Utilizing a library card number rather than a student ID number maintains consistency across our patron database; complies with existing protocols for authentication against the catalog for online services; and allows for existing, physical library cards to be issued without incurring additional costs in time or procurement for relabeling or custom printing.
- *Formal or Informal Agreement with Schools:* While staff are willing to establish a formal Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding with schools upon request, the proposed interactions with students and families for the Student Success Card program mirrors existing informal engagement practices already in place, such as classroom visits, outreach, and flyers. Formal agreements are typically used in instances where the Student Success Cards vary from a standard library card, are issued in conjunction with the school enrollment process, or in which there is a data transfer or other integration between school student databases and library patron databases, to document these methods in advance.
- *Opt-in vs. Opt-out Registration:* While there are many benefits to both models of registration, the Library proposes an opt-in model to allow families an opportunity for personalized engagement and active participation in the process of obtaining a library card. Due to the student population size at local schools, this is a manageable approach that is intended to foster long-term consistent use of Library resources. This method may also help reduce the number of duplicate cards in the patron database, increasing accuracy of statistics.

Library staff plan to engage with school site administrators at the beginning of the academic year to assess their preferences on participation in the Student Success Card program at their schools. Per the legislation, initial emphasis would focus on Student Success Card registrations for students in third grade and below. The Library would maintain its ongoing goal of promoting access to library card registrations to all students throughout Zone 4.

The Library team will continue to provide the Commission with Student Success Card updates during regular meetings.

Review By:


Elizabeth Saucedo
City Librarian

Approved By:


JoAnne Plummer
Neighborhood Services Director