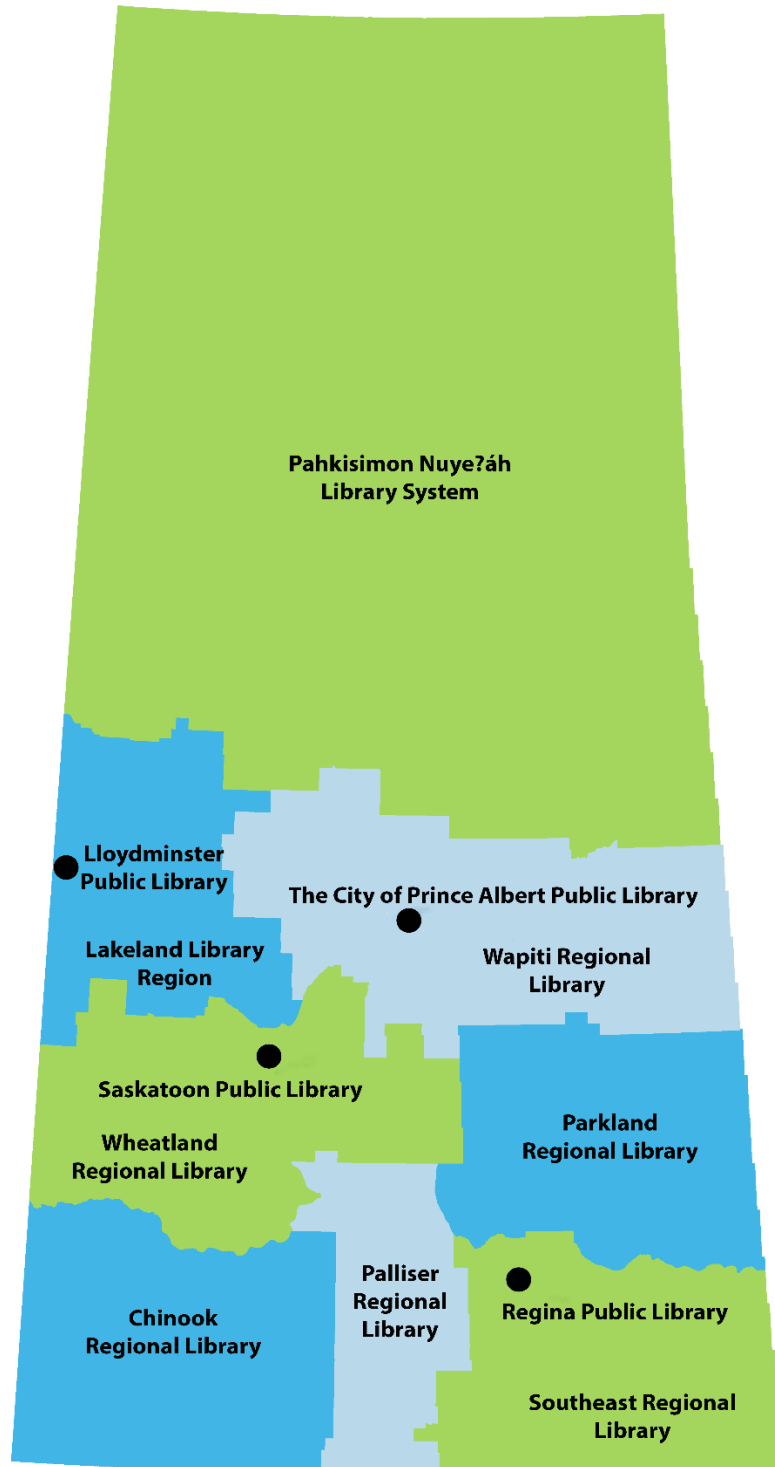


Public Library System in Saskatchewan

2024 Year in Review



Introduction

The public library systems in Saskatchewan are established under *The Public Libraries Act, 1996* (the Act). As defined by the Act, the purpose of the provincial public library system is to ensure equitable access to basic library services for all Saskatchewan residents.

At the end of 2024, the public library system consisted of 12 library systems that delivered library services through a network of local branches and member libraries. Lloydminster Public Library Board was established in November 2024, making it the 12th public library system in the province. The public library systems referred to in this report are:

- Municipal Library Systems
 - Lloydminster Public Library (Lloydminster)
 - The City of Prince Albert Public Library Board (Prince Albert)
 - Regina Public Library (Regina)
 - Saskatoon Public Library (Saskatoon)

- Regional Library Systems
 - Chinook Regional Library (Chinook)
 - Lakeland Library Region (Lakeland)
 - Palliser Regional Library (Palliser)
 - Parkland Regional Library (Parkland)
 - Southeast Regional Library (Southeast)
 - Wapiti Regional Library (Wapiti)
 - Wheatland Regional Library (Wheatland)

- Federation of Northern Libraries
 - Pahkisimon Nuye?áh Library System (PNLS)

The purpose of this report is to provide a statistical summary of the public library system in 2024. Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of this information. However, if errors are identified, they should be reported to the Provincial Library and Literacy Office (PLLO), Ministry of Education. Unless otherwise indicated, this report uses the definitions from the Provincial and Territorial Public Library Council, Canadian Urban Libraries Council, and Saskatchewan Information and Library Services Consortium (SILS). Data sources for this report include the 12 public library systems' annual reports, integrated library system (ILS) reports, provincial statistical data reports, environmental scans and e-resources vendor reports. Due to the delay of separating Lloydminster's ILS account from Lakeland by the SILS office, Lloydminster's 2024 ILS data were still included under Lakeland.

2024 Highlights

4.26 million in-person visits to public libraries



6%

9.04 million physical and electronic circulation



2.6%

854,000 Items shipped between library systems for hold requests



1.6%



**302 library locations supported by
679 Full-Time Equivalent**

3.62 million physical and electronic items
available



**147,300 library cards used, and 46,750 new
cards issued**

325,000 new items added to collections



Over 585,000 questions were answered

41,790 library programs attended by
479,400 adults and children



Library System Facts

Library	Chinook	Lakeland	Lloydminster	Palliser	Parkland	PNLS
Area (sq. Km)	51,080	36,675	18	25,221	43,500	262,281
Population	47,485	68,370	11,843	55,498	85,292	36,242
Registered Library Cards	12,902	22,933	N/A ¹	18,783	18,878	8,314
Total Open Hours	24,460	27,454	20,139	20,139	41,082	15,432
Number of Branches	31	31	1	20	53	11
Number of Joint Venture Libraries with Schools	1	-	-	-	2	10
Number of First Nations Bands	2	18	-	-	16	31
Total Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)	30	33	13	37	39	30

Library	Prince Albert	Regina	Saskatoon	Southeast	Wapiti	Wheatland
Area (sq. Km)	67	179	227	45,983	60,736	51,094
Population	37,756	226,404	266,126	103,148	88,669	106,761
Registered Library Cards	11,607	113,111	136,656	30,422	21,605	29,706
Total Open Hours	3,886	26,281	28,260	50,390	43,230	42,804
Number of Branches	1	9	9	47	44	45
Number of Joint Venture Libraries with Schools	-	1	-	3	8	2
Number of First Nations Bands	-	-	-	14	25	1
Total Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)	26	181	169	41	36	43

Note:

1. Lloydminster's registered patron and usage data in this report were still included in Lakeland's respective data at the end of 2024 as their account was not separated from Lakeland until the beginning of 2025.

Library Patrons

Saskatchewan residents value public libraries. They accessed libraries both in-person and/or online. All public library systems continued building collections to meet their patrons' emerging needs.



Over **147,300** library cards were used in 2024, and **46,750** new library cards were issued, which is a 7 per cent decrease from 2023



Almost **4.26 million** in-person visits to public libraries, a 6 per cent increase when compared with 2023 visits



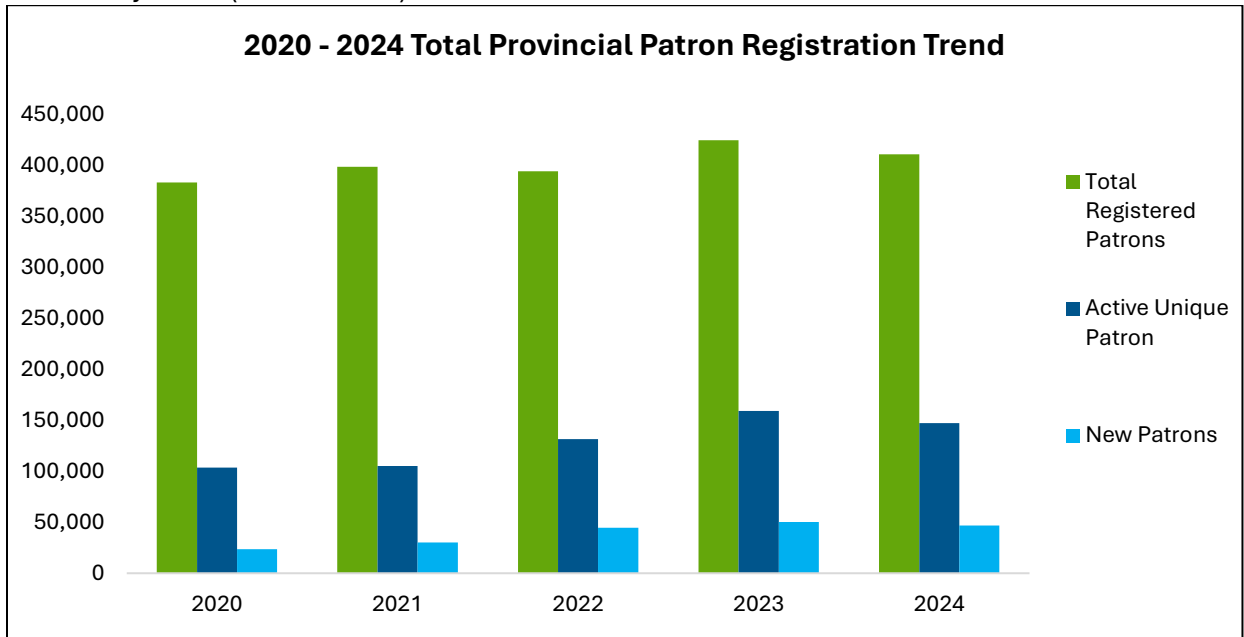
Library patrons asked over **585,000** reference and information questions by email, phone or in-person



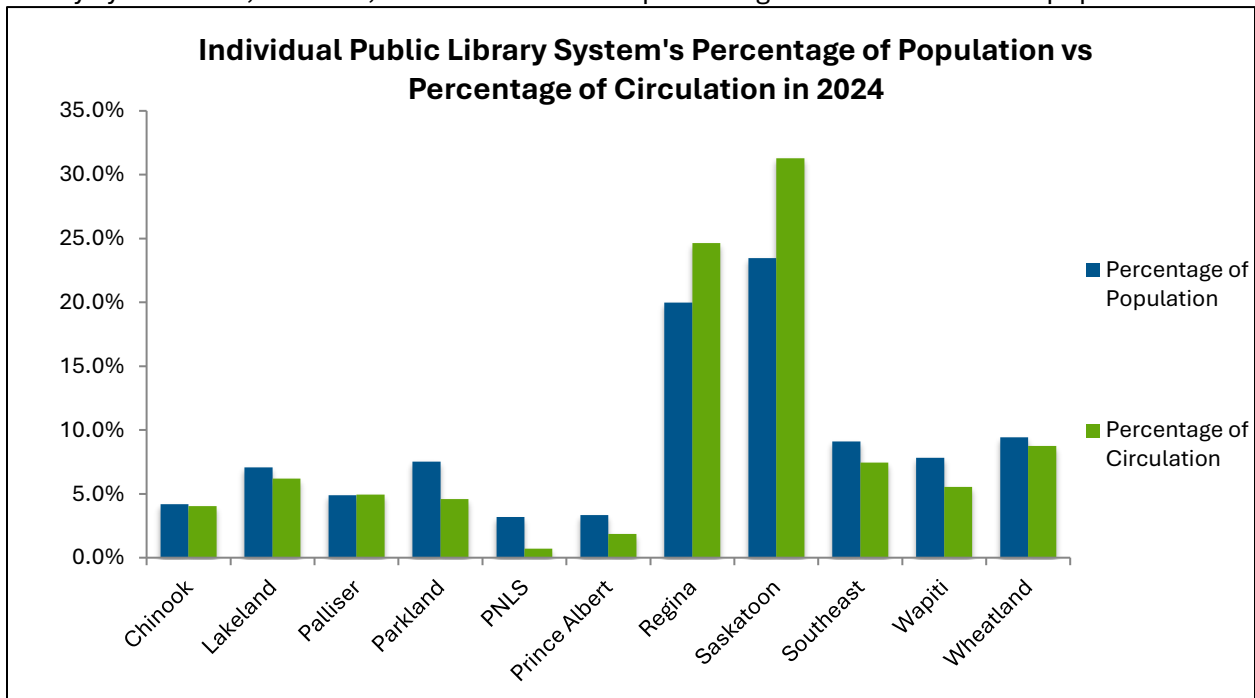
Almost **50** per cent of the population of Regina and Saskatoon had library cards

Library System	Number of Library Cards at the end of 2024	Population Served	Percentage of Library Cards to Population
Chinook	13,061	47,485	28%
Lakeland	24,598	80,213	31%
Palliser	18,844	55,498	34%
Parkland	18,681	85,292	22%
PNLS	8,087	36,242	22%
Prince Albert	12,270	37,756	32%
Regina	109,878	226,404	49%
Saskatoon	123,083	266,126	46%
Southeast	31,320	103,148	30%
Wapiti	21,177	88,669	24%
Wheatland	30,024	106,761	28%
Total	411,023	1,133,594	36%

The chart below provides more details regarding library users. It includes the total number of registered patrons (Total Registered Patrons) at the end of year, the number of patrons who used the libraries during the year (Active Unique Patrons) and the number of patrons who registered for new library cards (New Patrons).



The chart below compares each public library system's percentage of its circulation to the whole provincial total in 2024 with its percentage of population to the entire provincial population. It shows that Regina and Saskatoon Public Libraries were the only two library systems with their percentage of circulation above their respective share of population within the province. While Palliser's percentage of circulation was the same as its percentage of population, other eight library systems left, however, had their circulation percentage below their share of population.



Library Collection



Over **9.07 million** physical and electronic items were checked out, a 2.6 per cent increase from 2023

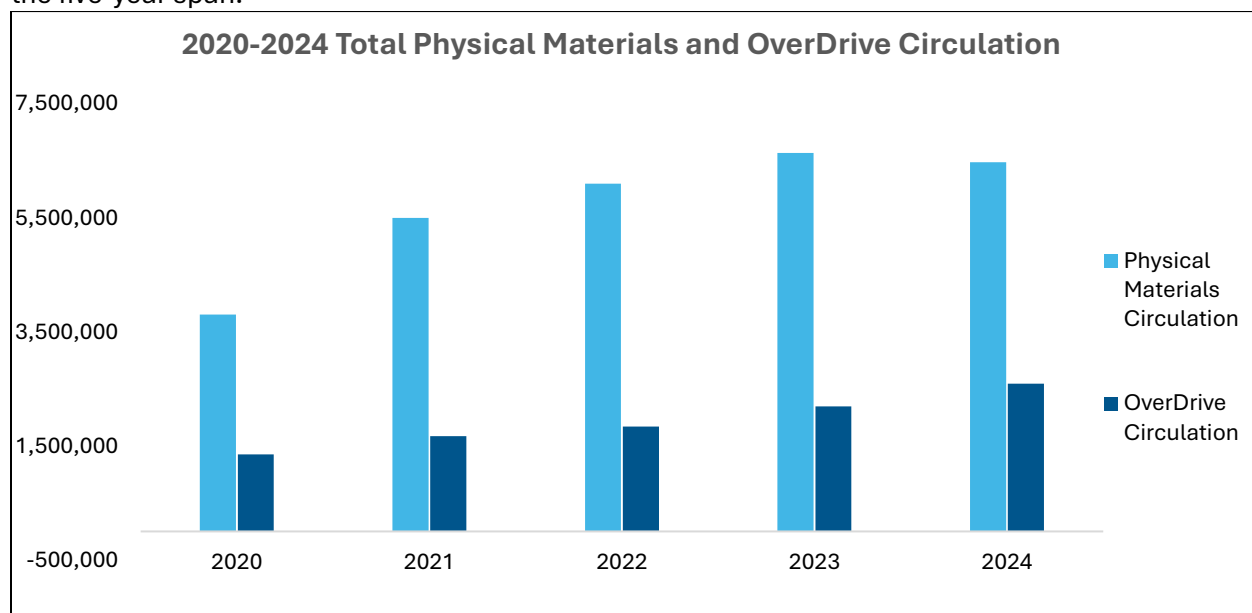


3.62 million physical items and e-books available to the public,
325,000 new items were added to library collections in 2024

In 2024, Saskatchewan public libraries spent \$8.42 million to purchase new library materials to enhance their collections, which was four per cent more than the previous year. This includes physical items such as books, magazines, DVDs, CDs, video games, Literacy or STEAM Kits, music instruments, and e-resources such as database subscriptions, e-books, e-magazines and streaming audios and videos.

OverDrive is a shared downloadable e-book and e-audio book collection that all 12 public library systems and the Provincial Library collaboratively licensed. Library patrons can access these materials online through web browsers or the “Libby” App for mobile devices. Together, all the public library systems purchased more than 43,600 copies of e-books and e-audio books in 2024.

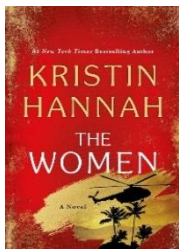
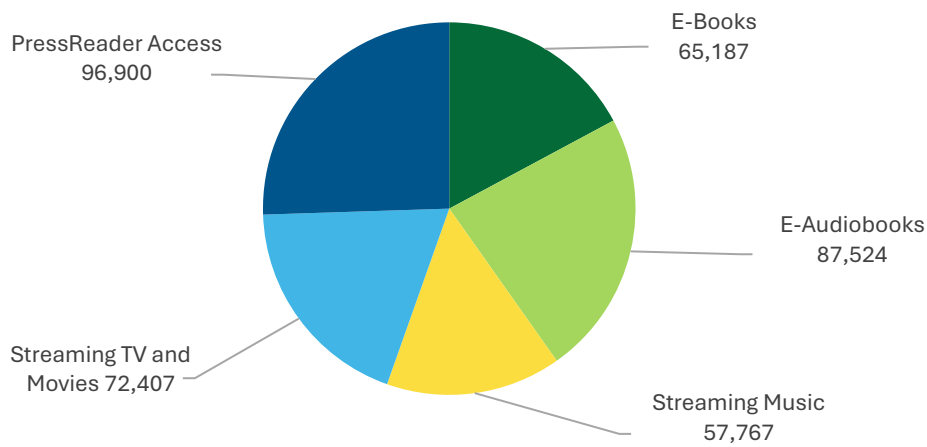
The following chart illustrates the use of physical materials and OverDrive collection in the province between 2020 and 2024. While physical materials use has gradually moved up in the first four years but fell slightly last year, OverDrive usage has steadily increased year over year during the five-year span.



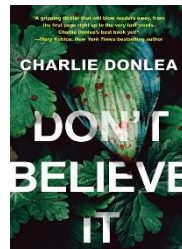
In addition to the provincial OverDrive collection, many public library systems also subscribed to other popular e-book, e-audiobook, streaming TV, movie and music services for their patrons. PressReader, a popular online newspapers and magazines collection, was heavily accessed by patrons of all public library systems through Saskatchewan Electronic Resources Partnership, the flagship program of the Multitype Library Board.

The chart below shows the total reported usage of additional e-resources other than OverDrive by all 12 public library systems during 2024.

2024 Additional E-Resources Usage in Public Libraries



Most Circulated Print Book in Saskatchewan



Most Circulated OverDrive Book in Saskatchewan



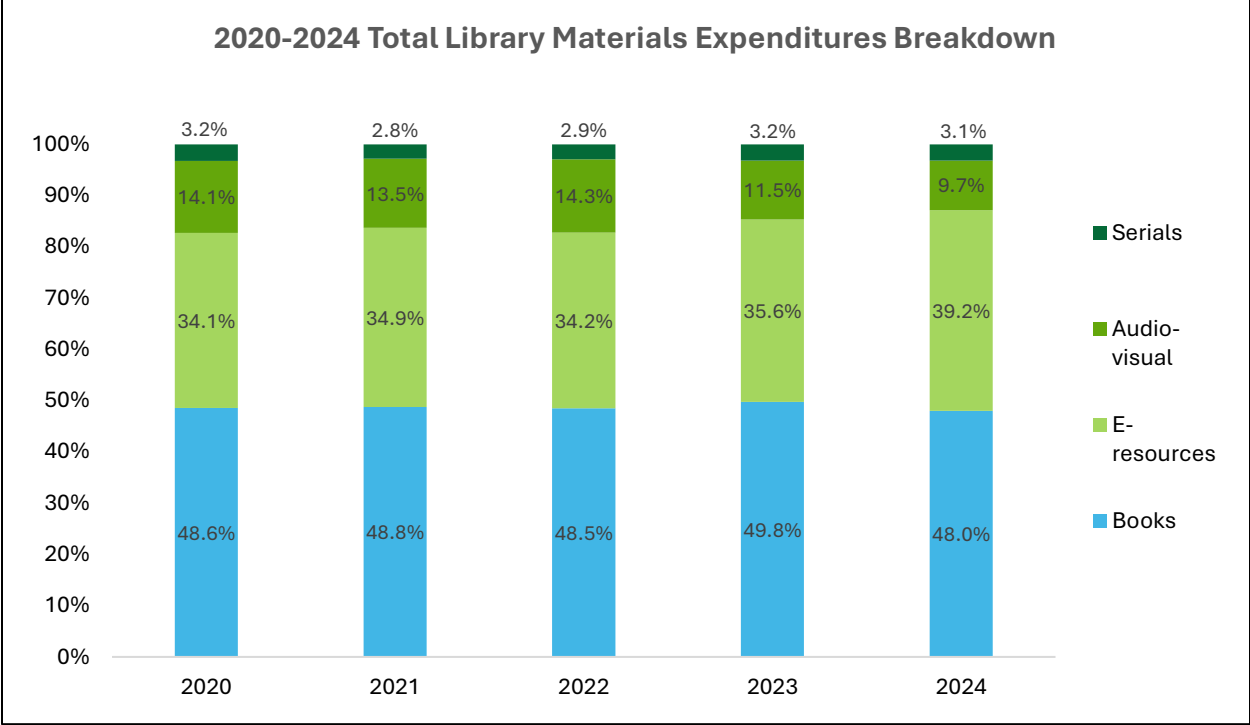
Most Circulated Multilingual Print Book (Chinese) in Saskatchewan



Most Circulated Multilingual OverDrive Book (German) in Saskatchewan

Moreover, some libraries offer new technologies to their patrons, such as laptops, 3D printing, and digitization stations to convert tapes, films, photos and other physical materials into digital formats. To help users improve their home safety and reduce health risks, many libraries also lent out CO2 Monitors and Radon Kits to detect levels of carbon dioxide and radon gas in their home.

The following chart shows the percentage that all public library systems spent on library materials between 2020 and 2024, including books, audio-visual, periodical and electronic materials. It demonstrates that while the percentage of spending on print books remained stable over the last several years, the spending on e-resources gradually increased during the same period.



Resource Sharing



In 2024, over **1.98 million** holds were placed by more than 77,400 patrons, a **3.5** per cent increase over 2023



More than **841,000** items were shipped from one library system to another library system for holds requested, a **3** per cent increase from 2023

ONE PROVINCE, ONE LIBRARY CARD

All 12 public library systems and the PLLO provide equitable access to the materials held at over 300 public library branches through a universal library card.

One Province, One Library Card allows a library patron to:

- register for a library card at any library branch of the patron's home library system;
- search for public library materials on a single database with over one million records;
- request to have library materials from any branch in the province delivered to a preferred library location for pickup using the hold request system; and,
- return materials to any branch in the province that is most convenient for the patron.

Saskatchewan residents enjoy using the *One Province, One Library Card* system. This type of resource sharing plays an important role in supporting equitable access within the provincial public library system. For individual library systems, especially regional libraries where most of their branches are in rural areas, resource sharing (including interagency lending and reciprocal borrowing) allows their patrons to access a broader range of collections from libraries across the province, either in person or via online requests (holds).

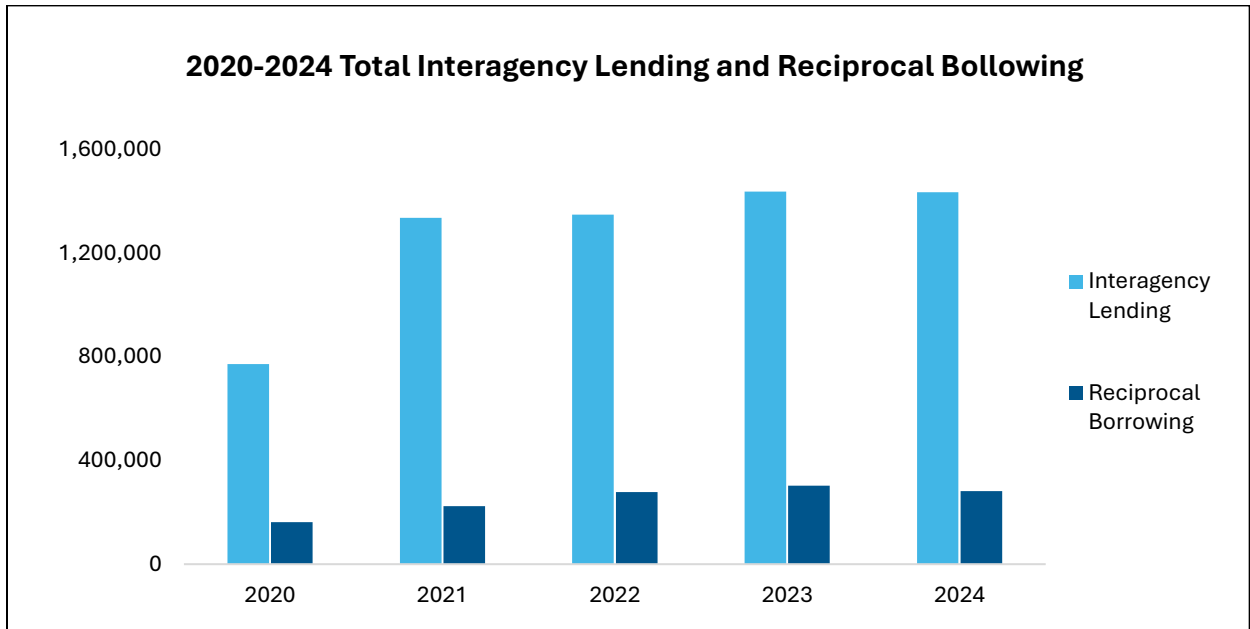


Interagency lending refers to library materials of a library system are shipped to other library systems for checkout by patrons who place the holds

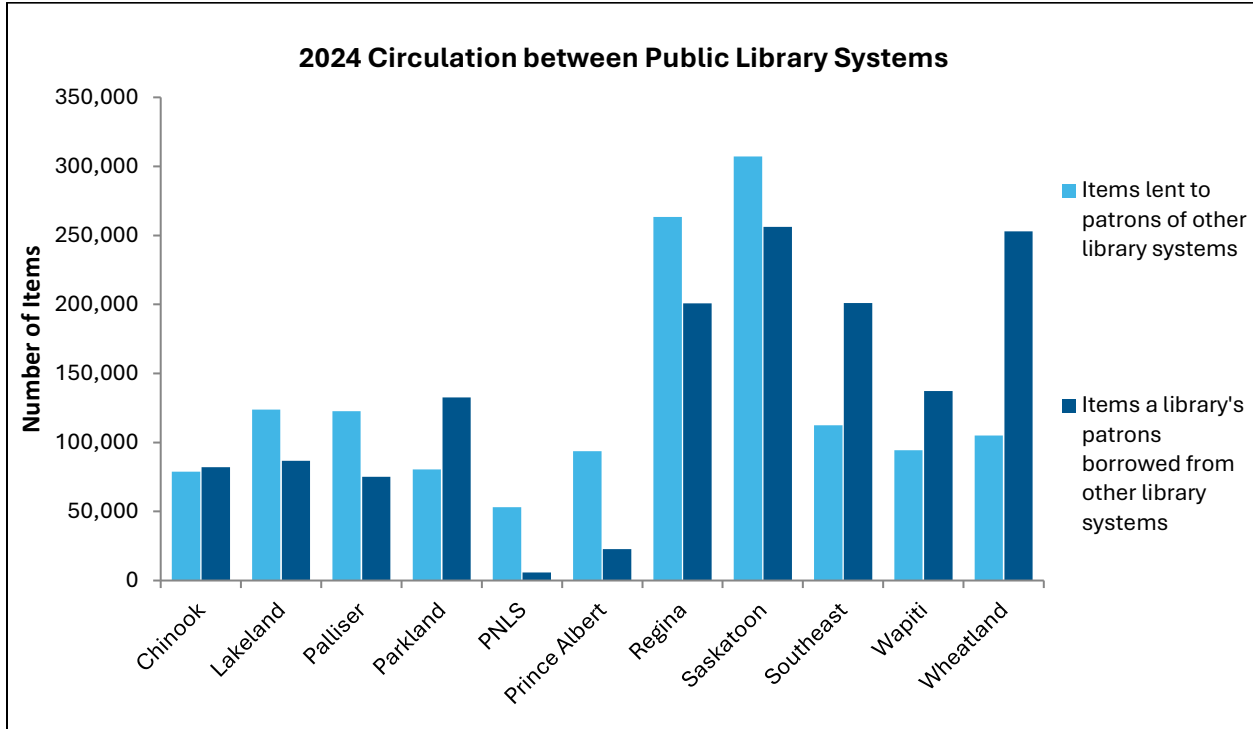


Reciprocal borrowing means a patron goes to another library system other than his/her own library system and checks out library materials there

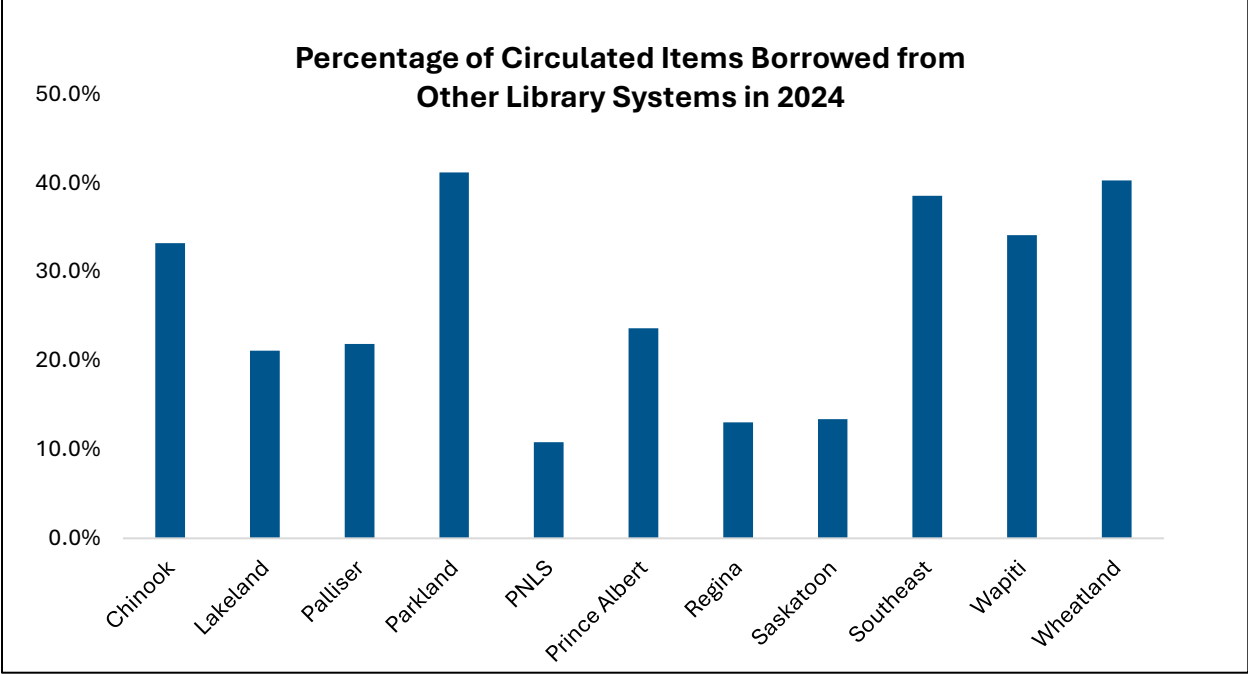
The chart below shows the annual provincial total of interagency lending and reciprocal borrowing between 2020 and 2024.



The following chart illustrates the interagency circulation of materials between library systems in 2024.



Most regional libraries in Saskatchewan benefit from provincial resource sharing. The following chart shows that a significant portion of regional libraries' physical materials circulation were from collections outside of their own library system, demonstrating again the consistent high use of resource sharing by patrons in rural areas.



Library Programming

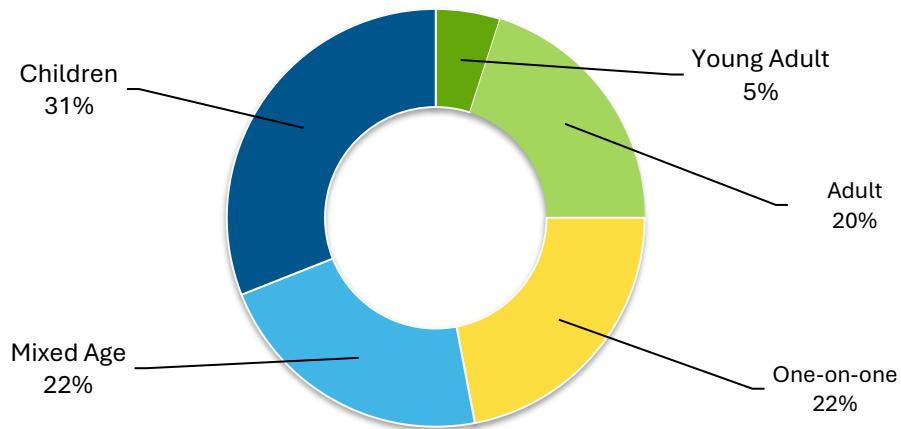


Public libraries delivered over **41,800** library programs across the province, including both in-person and online

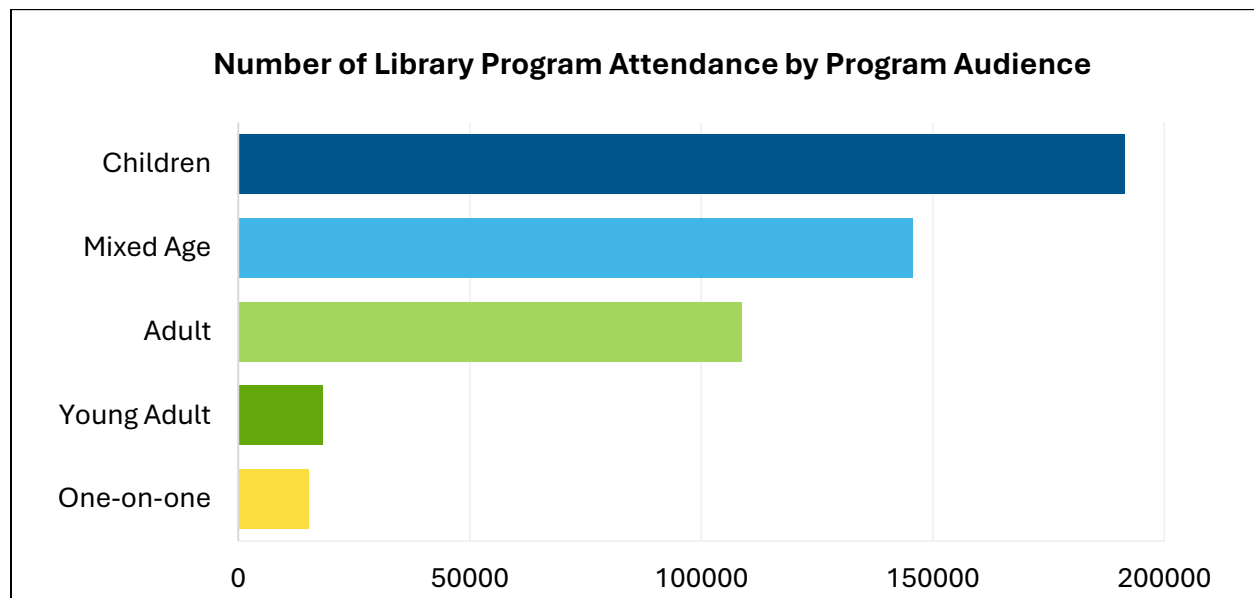
More than **479,300** people attended a program in 2024, an 8 per cent increase from 2023

The following chart illustrates the percentage of library programs provided during 2024 based on program audience.

Library Programs by Program Audience



The chart below shows the total number of attendees for each library program category in 2024.



Saskatchewan Aboriginal Storytelling Month

Saskatchewan Aboriginal Storytelling Month is held in February of each year to observe and respect traditional protocol around sharing traditional stories after the snow has fallen. It involves public libraries, schools, colleges and universities and Indigenous organizations.

- 10 public library systems and several other organizations hosted 173 Indigenous storytelling events in more than 100 rural and urban communities across the province in 2024.
- Over 24,000 attendees, with over 80 per cent being school-age children, listened to 52 storytellers and Elders share a variety of contemporary and traditional Indigenous stories.

Summer Reading

TD Summer Reading Club (TDSRC) is a national program to engage children in the joy of reading and to address summer learning loss through public libraries across the country.

- In 2024, 221 Saskatchewan library branches participated in TD Summer Reading Club. There were 11,322 children registered online or in-person, up 11.4 per cent compared to 2023.
- 174 Saskatchewan library branches participated in the TDSRC survey, reporting 2,762 activities delivered during the summer and attracted 39,370 children to attend, more than double the attendance in 2023.

Regional Park Pass Lending Program

2024 was the third season of the Regional Park Pass Lending Program, a partnership of Saskatchewan Library Association, Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association and the Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association.

- This program enhanced knowledge of and visitation to Saskatchewan's nearly 100 regional parks and all public library branches, while also reducing barriers to accessing parks.
- 846 regional park passes were made available on loan to Saskatchewan public library patrons with a seven-day free access to any regional park in the province.
- On average, each pass was circulated 7.6 times, compared to 5.8 times per pass in 2023, a 30 per cent of increase.
- The program evaluation indicated that a majority of libraries received more visitation due to the program and encouraged the public to know more about regional parks prior to borrowing the pass.

Support Family and Children Connecting to Nature

Saskatchewan libraries are always involved in programs to engage the community in outdoor activities and encourage children and their parents to connect with nature.

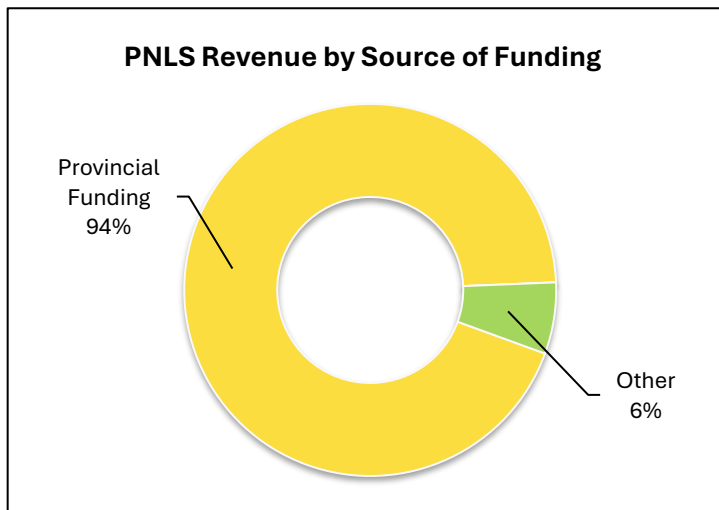
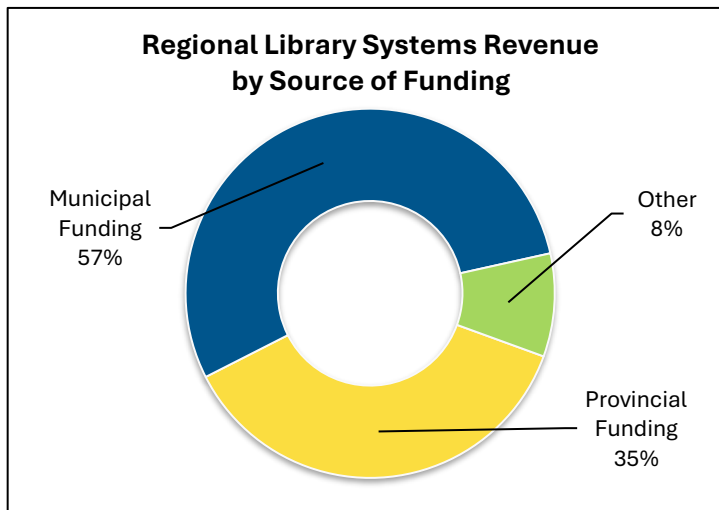
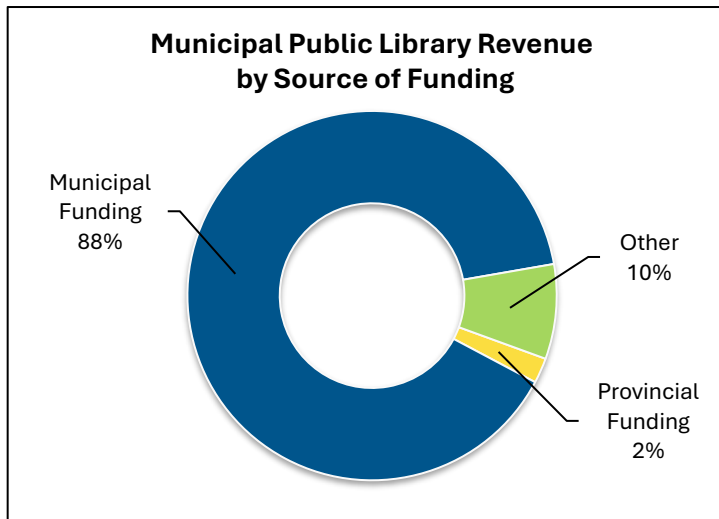
Neighborhood Forest is a North American program with goal of "giving every child the opportunity to plant and watch trees grow" through partnership with libraries, schools and youth groups, every registered child receives a free tree before the Earth Day to plant in their neighbourhood.

- In 2024, North Battleford Branch from Lakeland and all branches from Southeast and Wheatland participated in this program and became the delivery locations for local children who ordered the tree.
- North Battleford handed out 191 White Spruce, Southeast distributed 1,080 trees and Wheatland distributed 1,173 various kinds of trees to help kids grow the forest in their local communities.

Notice Nature is a Saskatchewan community program that encourages participants to connect with natural environment through 400 fun outdoor activities and observations listed in the Notice Nature Passport and identification guides.

- 324 public libraries in the province delivered Notice Nature programming in 2024 to support the development of environmental awareness, land and water stewardship and future-ready youth.
- Recognition items including provincial pins, Notice Nature ribbons, wildlife posters and Western Development Museum Family Passes were available and distributed to participants.

Funding



\$8.72 million in provincial resource sharing grants were distributed to 11 public library systems

The Government of Saskatchewan provides grants to the public library systems to facilitate provincial resource sharing.

In the Municipal Library Systems, most of their funding is provided by their respective municipality. More than 88 per cent of the systems' funding comes from the cities of Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon. Provincial funding for the municipal libraries was \$1.428 million in 2024-25.

In the Regional Library Systems, provincial funding represents 35 per cent of the total funding. Funding from the municipalities made up 57 per cent. Provincial funding was \$6.26 million for all seven regional library systems in 2024-25.

In the northern library system, PNLS, the Ministry of Education provided the majority of the funding, which was \$1.029 million for 2024-25.

“Other” funding sources varied, including fundraisers, donations, other provincial or federal grants and investment income.

Provincial Library and Literacy Office

The Provincial Library and Literacy Office (PLLO), a branch of the Ministry of Education, provides the policy framework that supports cooperation in both the provincial public library system and the multitype library system, as well as opportunities for literacy supports for Saskatchewan families.

The PLLO's activity is legislated by two Acts: *The Public Libraries Act, 1996*, which defines public libraries and their relationships with provincial and municipal governments; and *The Libraries Co-operation Act*, which establishes the Multitype Library Board.

Some of the key legislated responsibilities of the provincial government include:

- providing cost-effective and appropriate central services to public libraries by acting as a central library;
- developing province-wide library policies;
- establishing committees and task forces as necessary to assist in the development and coordination of planning services;
- coordinating the development of standards for public library services; and,
- coordinating resource sharing among public libraries.

Saskatchewan Information and Library Services Consortium

Saskatchewan Information and Library Services Consortium is a non-profit organization established to govern the Single Integrated Library System (SILS), which connects all public libraries in the province via the universal library card, ensuring equitable access to library resources and online services. PLLO is a member of the consortium and collaborates on joint library services projects. An annual provincial grant was provided to SILS to support innovation, research and development and improvements to services. In addition, PLLO provided cataloguing support for all public library systems.

Interlibrary Loan

The PLLO grants support a coordinated interlibrary loan service between the public library systems and other libraries within and outside of Saskatchewan, ensuring residents have access to additional library resources not available in Saskatchewan's public library collections. In 2024, 6,368 interlibrary loan requests were made by patrons of all public libraries and 5,612 requests were filled.

Services to library patrons with print disabilities

The PLLO provided funding to the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA) and the National Network for Equitable Library Services (NNELS) for accessible library collections and services for Saskatchewan residents with print disabilities. CELA provides more than one million items in accessible formats, including audio, braille and e-text, while NNELS provides alternate formats for open access content or copyright materials online from Canadian and Saskatchewan publishers, for more than 58,000 items. In addition, PLLO developed the Dyslexia-Friendly Print Collection project for people with print disabilities in the province through local public libraries.

Overall, in 2024:

- More than 64,000 CELA items were circulated to 2,815 patrons in Saskatchewan.
- 114 new users registered for CELA.
- 141 Saskatchewan residents downloaded 494 NNELS titles from July to December (Due to technical issues, NNELS 2024 statistics were only available for that period).
- The Dyslexia-Friendly Print Collection has over 2,650 items at the end of 2024, including more than 500 decodable books that were distributed and hosted by all public library systems.
- The Dyslexia-Friendly Print Collection were circulated 2,281 times in 2024, including 235 circulations from the decodable books.

Collections and Resources

The multilingual collection at the PLLO provides public libraries with the ability to support newcomers and local communities by offering materials in their first languages for literacy, learning and recreational reading. As the central library for all library workers in the province, PLLO provides a library science collection to support staff development, continuing education, and professional resource and policy development for every type of library in Saskatchewan, including more than 400 eBooks and five e-journal databases.

- In 2024, the multilingual collection had over 63,200 print books in 31 languages and more than 7,300 e-books in 25 languages available in OverDrive.
- PLLO sent out more than 27,400 books from its multilingual collection to public library systems during the year.
- The multilingual books were circulated more than 26,000 times and almost 4,000 checkouts were made in the OverDrive multilingual eBooks.
- There were over 5,600 books in the library science collection at the end of 2024, which circulated 1,200 times during the year.

CommunityNet

The Ministry of Education continued providing funding for all public libraries' access to CommunityNet (CNet) through SaskTel. This ensures that Saskatchewan residents have access to a wide variety of online resources through public libraries.

In 2024, nearly 200 rural public libraries with existing CNet fibre networks were upgraded to a minimum speed of 50 megabits per second (Mbps). These increased speeds will improve the library experience by providing faster access to online resources and research.

Key Statistics for 2024

Library	Population Served	Registered Library Cards	New Library Cards	Open Hours
Chinook	47,485	13,061	1,242	25,476
Lakeland	68,370	24,598*	3,580*	24,924
Lloydminster	11,843			2,834
Palliser	55,498	18,884	2,007	19,844
Parkland	85,292	18,681	2,058	41,515
PNLS	36,242	8,087	902	12,474
Prince Albert	37,756	12,270	1,161	3,886
Regina	226,404	109,878	13,018	26,412
Saskatoon	266,126	123,083	14,461	26,772
Southeast	103,148	31,320	3,572	50,556
Wapiti	88,669	21,177	1,839	43,796
Wheatland	106,761	30,024	2,910	423,681
Total	1,133,594	411,023	46,750	322,170

* Those Lakeland data include Lloydminster's relevant figure

Library	In-Person Library Visits (rounded)	Items Borrowed (rounded)**	Programs Delivered (rounded)	Program Attendance (rounded)
Chinook	142,000	367,000	4,000	21,100
Lakeland	145,000	562,000*	1,600	16,800
Lloydminster	103,000		400	9,800
Palliser	241,000	448,000	2,800	27,000
Parkland	124,000	416,000	2,900	25,100
PNLS	19,000	63,000	90	12,800
Prince Albert	125,000	168,000	400	3,400
Regina	1,482,000	2,234,000	10,900	138,000
Saskatoon	1,463,000	2,836,000	4,300	73,900
Southeast	Not available	674,000	9,500	89,100
Wapiti	239,000	503,000	2,500	26,400
Wheatland	174,000	794,000	2,400	36,000
Total	4,257,000	9,065,000	42,790	479,400

**Including OverDrive audio/e-books

Library	Library Materials (rounded)**	New Items (rounded)**	Library Material Expenditures (\$ rounded)
Chinook	217,000	13,000	211,000
Lakeland	281,000*	19,000*	310,000
Lloydminster			118,000
Palliser	290,000	15,000	408,000
Parkland	309,000	18,000	315,000
PNLS	343,000	9,000	100,000
Prince Albert	112,000	13,000	371,000
Regina	526,000	98,000	2,764,000
Saskatoon	558,000	87,000	2,484,000
Southeast	335,000	16,000	435,000
Wapiti	311,000	21,000	465,000
Wheatland	336,000	15,000	443,000
Total	3,618,000	324,000	8,424,000