

## School Board OKs city library expansion into Lake City High

### David Townsend/Coeur d'Alene Library

“Be innovative and continually changing, and adapting to meet community needs.” - From the Coeur d'Alene Public Library's Long Range Plan.

How do we bring public library services to an area of Coeur d'Alene that is growing? After a year and a half of exploration, the answer is: open a public library branch in Lake City High School's school library.

The plan was approved Monday night by the School District 271 Board of Trustees, the final step in a process that also included endorsement by the Library Board and the Coeur d'Alene City Council.

The idea is expected to become a reality within the next two months.

Library Director Bette Ammon said the project is modeled on similar branch libraries in public school in Missoula, Mont., where she was the library director before coming to Coeur d'Alene. The plan is to open Cd'A Library @ Lake City High School when school is dismissed for the day. The high school library stays open, staffed by JD Smithson, Coeur d'Alene Library Reference Clerk.

Smithson will courier public library materials back and forth providing books, videos, and more for library patrons of all ages. Initially this branch library will be open Monday – Thursday, late afternoon and early evening hours.

“During the summer we expect to be open afternoons with the potential of story times and other programs to promote Summer Reading,” Ammon said.

The Library Board first considered the creation of a branch library in July 2014 and was encouraged to consider a school/public library partnership by City Council member Kiki Miller, who is the city government's liaison to the Library Board.

In September 2014 an exploratory committee was formed with representatives from the Library Board, City Council, School Board, Library Foundation, the Chamber of Commerce, and other community representatives.

This year in September the City Council approved a library budget that included funding a full-time person whose duties would include the branch library.

Ammon noted that final plans for the branch remain to be determined, but will be based on comments and concerns raised during the lengthy discussion period and on community needs.