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Royal Oak Public Library feels the impact of DOGE federal cuts

By Lauren Edwards and Brendan Vrabel | Published April 8, 2025 6:32pm EDT | Royal Oak | FOX 2 Detroit | ,

DOGE federal cuts impacting library funding

Typically, the second week in April honors local libraries, the services they offer and the work they do, like at Royal Oak Public Library. However, Royal Oak Public Library Director Sandy Irwin tells FOX 2 that they have been feeling some of the federal punches as the year goes on.

The Brief

- It is National Library Week and the celebration has been soured due to federal cuts across the US.
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ROYAL OAK, Mich. (FOX 2) - Libraries are a place for everyone to access information and read incredible, heart-pounding stories. But as National Library Week kicks off, federal cuts from DOGE are dimming celebrations everywhere, including Metro Detroit.

Big picture view: Typically, the second week in April honors local libraries, the services they offer, and the work they do, like at Royal Oak Public Library.

However, Royal Oak Public Library Director Sandy Irwin tells FOX 2 that they have been feeling some of the federal punches as the year goes on.

"There is a cloud, and it's called the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a that is where federal funding comes to libraries across the nation," she said. "It's like a knife in the heart to me, because I truly believe in libraries. And our board and our staff. We all believe in serving the public."

What they're saying: Director Sandy Irwin says the IMLS was shut down on March 31, so the overall \$4.8M they typically see won't be coming. She says those millions, which include state funding, go to the 396 public libraries in the state.

Over \$380,000 goes to special projects.

"Here in Michigan, it funds what's called the MelCat, inter-library loan system," she said. "So, if I wanted to borrow a book from another library in the state, it could be sent here, and last year there were over a million books, I believe, that were sent through that system."

It also provides funding for library staff training and access to research databases

"If you look at the IMLS dollars that come into the state of Michigan, generally there's a return of about, for each dollar, \$26.96," she said. "Libraries know how to stretch a dollar and make it work for you."

What's next: The Royal Oak Public Library could lose \$3.4M in federal and \$1.4M in state funds.

Irwin says Attorney General Dana Nessel joined other states and filed a lawsuit to bring back the funding. But as of right now, she says there's no word when or if that'll happen.

"It doesn't matter who you voted for; it is a bipartisan, nonpartisan issue," she said. "Everybody's affected. And it just feels as though, why? Why?"

Irwin says she is hoping for the best with the lawsuit or that something is done soon. She is also recommending people call their local lawmakers and congresspeople and tell them how much local libraries mean to them.

The Source: FOX 2 talked with the Royal Oak Public Library and used information from previous reports.

Royal Oak

Community



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