

October 13, 2026

Board of Supervisors
Kern County Administrative Center
1115 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301

**PROPOSED MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH DREAMCATCHERS
EMPOWERMENT NETWORK FOR YOUTH PARTICIPANTS AGES 15-25
TO VOLUNTEER AT THE KERN COUNTY LIBRARY
(Fiscal Impact: None)**

The Kern County Library (KCL) is requesting approval to the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Dreamcatchers Empowerment Network (DEN), to accept youth participants ages 15-25 volunteering at the Kern County Library. The term of the MOU will remain effective until either DEN or KCL discontinues the agreement.

This agreement establishes a partnership between DEN and Kern County Libraries to provide youth with meaningful volunteer work experience. Youth participants are expected to be respectful, professional, dependable, and follow all library rules, safety guidelines, and instructions from library staff. They must arrive on time, complete assigned tasks, maintain confidentiality, and report any injuries, unsafe situations, or concerns right away. DEN and the library will work together to provide supervision, support, training, and feedback throughout the volunteer experience.

The program is voluntary, and participants may complete up to 220 volunteer hours, usually over about three months depending on their schedule. The program is designed to help youth build workplace skills such as communication, teamwork, time management, problem-solving, customer service, and responsibility while learning about the role libraries play in the community. DEN will monitor each participant's progress and provide coaching, while the library will provide training and day-to-day supervision. The agreement does not require either organization to provide or exchange money or property, and any future activities involving funding or shared resources will require a separate agreement; either organization may also end a volunteer placement if expectations, safety standards, or policies are not followed.

County Counsel has approved the MOU as to form. The County Administrative Office concurs with this request.

Therefore, IT IS RECOMMENDED that your Board approve the MOU with Dreamcatchers Empowerment Network; to accept the youth participants volunteering at the Kern County Library and authorize the Director of Libraries to sign the MOU.

Sincerely,



Andie Sullivan,
Director of Libraries

cc: CAO
County Counsel

August 12, 2026

Beale Memorial Library
Attn: Alex Martinez
701 Truxtun Ave
Bakersfield, CA 93301

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding, hereinafter referred to as MOU, is to establish a cooperative working relationship between the parties and to define their respective roles and responsibilities with respect to the operation of the Kern County Libraries.

Dreamcatchers Empowerment Network (DEN) is committed to ensuring that all youth participants ages 15-25 represent the organization in a professional and respectful manner while serving as volunteers with the Kern County Library. All youth participants are expected to meet the following standards:

Code of Conduct

- Treat library staff, volunteers, and fellow participants with courtesy, professionalism, dignity, and respect.
- Comply with all Kern County Library policies, procedures, workplace rules, and safety guidelines while volunteering.
- Attend all scheduled volunteer shifts on time and notify both the library supervisor and Dreamcatchers Employment Specialist as soon as possible if they are unable to attend.
- Perform assigned duties to the best of their ability, follow directions from library staff, and ask questions when clarification is needed.
- Maintain confidentiality of any sensitive or personal information encountered while volunteering.
- Maintain appropriate attire and professional behavior consistent with the expectations of the volunteer site.
- Refrain from harassment, discrimination, violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or alcohol, or any behavior that creates an unsafe or disruptive environment.
- Follow all applicable federal, state, local, and library policies regarding workplace conduct and safety.

Supervision

- DEN will assign an Employment Specialist to monitor participant progress, provide support, and maintain communication with the designated library supervisor on a weekly basis.
- The Kern County Library will provide site-specific orientation, training, supervision, and feedback regarding participant performance while volunteering.

Liability and Safety

- Participants are expected to immediately report any workplace injury, accident, unsafe condition, or incident to their library supervisor and Dreamcatchers Employment Specialist.
- Dreamcatchers Empowerment Network and the Kern County Library will work collaboratively to address concerns regarding participant conduct, safety, attendance, or performance.
- Develop effective communication and interpersonal skills by interacting professionally and respectfully with library staff, volunteers, and community members from diverse backgrounds.
- Dreamcatchers is responsible for all workers' compensation and liability for the youth while participating in work experience with Dreamcatchers at any community-based location.

Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate accountability and reliability by maintaining a consistent volunteer schedule, accurately tracking hours, arriving on time, and completing assigned responsibilities independently.
- Strengthen organizational and time management skills by prioritizing tasks, following instructions, and adapting to changing work assignments in a professional environment.
- Build confidence and transferable workplace skills, including teamwork, problem-solving, customer service, professionalism, and attention to detail.
- Gain a greater understanding of the vital role public libraries play as accessible community resources that promote lifelong learning, literacy, and community engagement.

Volunteer Service Term

- Participation in the Dreamcatchers program is voluntary.
- Participants are able to complete up to 220 hours, which is typically achieved over a three-month period, depending on their availability and schedule.
- A Dreamcatchers Employment Specialist will maintain regular contact with each participant, monitor progress, conduct periodic performance evaluations, and provide coaching and support to promote successful volunteer experience (weekly check-ins or as needed).
- Dreamcatchers will provide participant and emergency contact information to Kern County Library prior to each volunteer's placement.

Either Dreamcatchers Empowerment Network or the Kern County Library may discontinue a participant's volunteer placement if policies, safety standards, or expectations are not met.

By participating in this volunteer partnership, all parties agree to maintain a safe, respectful, and supportive environment that promotes learning, professional development, and meaningful community service.

It is mutually agreed and understood by and between the parties that:

This MOU is neither a fiscal nor a funds obligation document. Specific studies, activities, programs or projects which involve the transfer or expenditure by any party of any money, services or property will require execution of separate agreements or contracts. Each subsequent agreement or arrangement involving the transfer of money, services or property between the parties to this MOU must comply with all applicable statutes and regulations.

Any party may enter into party-specific Supplemental Agreements, including resource sharing and cost sharing agreements, and license for use agreements, with parties that are part of this MOU. Such Supplemental Agreements shall specify individual agreements and obligations that are applicable to two or more parties. All Supplemental Agreements shall be in furtherance of and complementary to this MOU. Each party shall provide all other parties with copies of any such Supplemental Agreements.

In accordance with provisions of Section 895.4 of the California Government Code, each party hereby agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless all other parties identified in Paragraph 2 of this MOU from and against any and all claims, demands, damages and costs arising out of or resulting from any acts or omissions which arise from the performance of the obligations by such indemnifying party pursuant to this MOU. In addition, except for Departments of the State of California which cannot provide for indemnification of court costs and attorney's fees under the indemnification policy of the State of California, all other parties to this MOU agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless each other from and against all court costs and attorney's fees arising out of or resulting from any acts or omissions which arise from the performance of the obligations by such indemnifying party pursuant to this MOU. It is understood and agreed that all indemnity provided herein shall survive the termination of this MOU.

Name of Authorized Signer

Agency

Signature

Date

Regina Kaiser

Name of Authorized Signer

Dreamcatchers Empowerment Network

Agency

Signature

Date