



January 31, 2023

Felton Thomas, Jr., Executive Director and CEO  
Cleveland Public Library  
325 Superior Avenue  
Cleveland, OH 44114

Dear Director Thomas,

As was the case in so many areas across the world, 2020 was a remarkable year for Ohio's public libraries. Libraries across the state were closed for many weeks of that year and that led to challenges in calculating statistics for the Institute of Museum and Library Services' annual Public Library Survey.

The majority of Ohio's public libraries calculate annual visits based on a "typical week" determined by each library. As very little was typical about the 2020 calendar year, we recommended that Ohio libraries that use a typical week input "not available," a value that reflects our goal of ensuring the highest data integrity in what we submit to the federal government. Like so many other amazing things libraries do to support their patrons, many things are difficult, if not impossible, to quantify for the Public Library Survey.

We do not believe the Cleveland Public Library's omission from the 2022 America's Star Libraries list indicates anything about the quality of services to your patrons nor the great value you offer your community. Furthermore, Library Journal indicates in the Frequently Asked Questions section on whether the LJ Index measures, "*the quality, excellence, effectiveness, value, or appropriateness of library services.*" They state that, "*(n)o, the index measures none of these. By definition, service outputs do not reflect quality, excellence, effectiveness, or value of services to the library's community.*"

As our recommendation regarding determining annual visits was limited to data collected in 2020, this issue will not be reflected in future Library Journal Indexes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wendy Knapp". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Wendy Knapp  
State Librarian  
State Library of Ohio