

Norwalk Public Library System



**Annual Report
FY 2012-2013**

Norwalk Public Library System



Mission Statement

The Norwalk Public Library System is dedicated to free and equal access to information, knowledge, and independent learning in a welcoming environment, and to the joy of reading for our wonderfully diverse community.

Norwalk Public Library System



2012-13 Highlights

- *NPL cooperated with Norwalk ACTS, SteppingStones, and the Early Childhood Council in promoting a citywide summer reading program to “stop the summer slide”; 1200 children and teens participated, reading over 11,000 books.*
- *NPL bucked the statewide trend by increasing both the number of library visits and the number of children, teens and adults attending library programs.*
- *Although circulation of library materials decreased in Norwalk (as it did throughout the state) use of online databases soared to 24,667, led by "Live Homework Help" which serves students in grades 3 to 12. Also popular online were “Mango Languages” and “Job Now”.*
- *Although FSW cut funding to Literacy Volunteers in June, the Library Board stepped in to save the program for FY 2013-14.*
- *The Norwalk History Room opened in the main library to house the archives from the closed Norwalk Museum.*

Norwalk Public Library System



2012-13 by the numbers:

585,594 items loaned

420,528 library visits

267,788 items in collections

83,165 public internet sessions

37,828 reference questions asked

32,394 library card holders

27,493 children attending library programs

24,667 uses of online databases

3,987 adults attending library programs

1,539 teens attending library programs

Goal One: Support the Business & Non-Profit Community



1. Partner with Norwalk Businesses and Non-Profits.

- NEF, GNCC, Norwalk Arts Commission, Literacy Volunteers, Norwalk 2.0, AARP, SCORE, NAACP, Norwalk ACTS, Norwalk Reads, Norwalk Housing Authority, Norwalk Health Department, SteppingStones Museum, and Early Childhood Council all partnered with NPL in FY 2013.
- In January, 2013, FactSet gave a grant to NPL for the *Healthy Minds, Healthy Bodies* launch.
- Norwalk Parking Authority created a sign directing main library patrons to additional parking at the Yankee Doodle garage.
- NPL partnered with the Chamber and SCORE for a series aimed at small business owners.

Goal One continued



2. Provide information about local businesses and organizations.

3. Buy local whenever possible.

4. Provide meeting rooms for Norwalk non-profits (at no cost) and for-profits (at cost).

Renovated the main library's local history room into a small meeting room on the main floor.
Were not successful in getting capital funding to renovate the main library auditorium and the branch community room.

5. Provide and Promote Business Databases.

Retained *D&B*, *NY Times*, *Ref USA*, *Gale Legal Forms*, *Consumer Reports*; deleted *Mergent*. Added *Universal Class*, with online classes, some geared to small business, and *Atomic Training*, which provides on-demand video software training and support tutorials to help businesses and organizations fulfill staff technology training and development goals.

6. Continue Traffic Graphic Program with Norwalk Arts Commission.

Completed Phase two with NAC in FY 2013.

7. Promote a renovated main library as cornerstone of Wall St. redevelopment.

Awarded capital funding in 2013-14 for a main library building plan.

Goal 2: Help Job Seekers



1. Provide and promote NPL's resources for the unemployed and underemployed.

Continued coordinating monthly Career Coach visits to main library.

Retained and promoted databases *JobNow* and *Learning Express*.

Workplace meets with clients individually every week in the main library.

2. Assist patrons with job applications and resume writing.

Offer ed one-on-one support at both libraries.

3. Support entrepreneurs with library resources ,including study rooms and WiFi.

Furnished an area with tables, desks, and electrical outlets across from the main library's computer area so people can plug in and use WiFi. (Area previously housed print reference collection.)

Goal 3: Provide Access to Emerging Technologies



1. Continue computer classes in English and Spanish.
Held Saturday classes in both languages in the main library.
2. Maintain the speed and reliability of NPL's public computing.
Continued relationship with City IT department for help desk.
Deployed new equipment , refreshing 30 workstations.
3. Invest in hiring and training tech savvy staff to man public desks.
4. Investigate funding to subsidize printer cartridges for public printers.
5. Activate committee to recommend purchase of an ILS for FY 2014.
Supervisors recommended migrating to III's Sierra. FY2013-14 Capital budget proposed funding for Sierra migration and RFID project.

Goal 4: Improve Services for Teens



1. Support Teen Librarian's work with schools.
Established a Temporary Teen Card in 2012-13 to allow all Norwalk students to access NPL's online databases.
2. Increase attendance at after school programs by 10%.
Attendance at teen programs increased by 50% in FY 2013.
3. Promote the teen summer reading program.
204 teens signed up for Summer reading; they read over 900 books!
4. Increase the budget and circulation for teen materials by 10%.
5. Support new initiatives for teen programming.

Goal Four continued



6. Develop a library volunteer program for teens, aka “volunteens”.
Volunteens meet monthly in the teen room.

7. Seek funding for refurbished teen spaces and teen tech centers In both buildings.

Teen Tech Room project was funded in the 2013-14 capital budget.

Goal 5: Parking!



Revisit the use of properties adjacent to main and branch libraries to provide parking.

Goal 6: Create Young Readers



1. Launch “For Every Child, a Library Card” to promote early literacy.

Increased the number of Norwalk citizens with library cards from 28,499 to 32,394.

Eliminated the photo ID requirement for library cards, enabling off-site card making.

2. Invite public school classes and preschools to visit the library.

Children's and Teen librarian contacted individual teachers to arrange visits; focused on NPL librarian visiting schools. In 2013, 92 visits to preschools, 40 visits to elementary schools, 3 visits to middle schools

3. Work with Norwalk Hospital on a program for new parents.

Goal Six continued



4. Continue to work with Norwalk Reads.

Norwalk Reads held two successful book distributions in the libraries and hosted their first fundraising gala t SteppingStones.

5. Open family friendly hours, especially Sunday afternoon.

Will seek additional funding in FY 2014-2015 operating budget.

6. Target Kindergarten registration as a time to get an NPL card.

7. Develop a children's holiday collection.

Reclassifying children's holiday books is in process.

Goal 7: Promote Family Literacy



1. Work with Fairfield Southwest Literacy Volunteers to promote literacy.

NPL helped to recruit volunteer tutors in the Norwalk area.

Literacy Volunteers coordinators spoke to an all-staff meeting.

When FSW announced the cut in funding at the end of FY 2013, the Library board stepped in to pledge interim funding.

2. Promote the habit of reading.

Circulation staff in both buildings developed changing displays to encourage the use of NPL's book collection.

Will refurbish the new book sections to promote interest in reading.

3. Hold at least four large scale family events each year.

Main library hosted the annual Run Between the libraries; branch library hosted a reception to honor five African-American men and women listed in the 1970 booklet, *Black People Making History in Norwalk*. Both libraries hosted end of summer reading events.

Goal Seven continued



4. Develop a series of conversational opportunities for beginning English speakers.

May deploy bilingual NPL staff to hold conversation groups in the library.

5. Find a way for families maintain their NPL accounts in good standing.

Will investigate circulation policies, especially the use of a collection agency, with the Library Board.

In December, NPL gives half off NPL bills with a donation of a coat or toy.

In January, NPL gives half off NPL bills with a donation of food for the food pantry.

Goal 8: Power the Imagination



1. Focus on fighting aliteracy.

Developed and supported programs that celebrate books and reading, including monthly book discussions in both buildings, and an April Poetry reading and a Bloomsday celebration in the main library..

Provided library programs in the main library during the Friends' biannual book sales.

2. Buy materials in new formats as they are released.

Continue to add multiple titles in popular formats to keep holds' lists to a minimum.

Circulated e-readers with genre-specific content.

Circulated e-readers with titles from publishers who do not sell to libraries.

Doubled e-book holdings and increased eBook circulation by 67%.

3. Review collection development policies with the Library Board.

Continued customer-driven acquisitions.

Goal Eight continued



4. Maximize materials budget

Migrated to new purchasing plans with B&T, utilizing the “shopping carts”.

Will look at shelf-ready materials for certain genres.

Switched to Sky River for bibliographic records, cutting cataloging costs in half.

5. Continue to weed materials that are not being used.

6. Implement security measures to protect the collections.

7. Increase circulation by 5%.

Circulation actually decreased by 15%, reflecting a statewide trend.

Goal 9: Assure Success in School



1. Provide and promote library databases that provide online homework help.

Retained *Homework Help*, *Grolier's Online*, and *Facts on File*. Teen librarian talked up these resources to teachers and students in MS and HS. Offered a temporary teen card to authenticate students who are unable to have an NPL library card.

2. Work with BOE and NEF on projects that connect schools, teachers, and parents.

Provided multiple copies of summer reading books; cooperated with NPS to shift summer reading lists to the Governors Summer Reading list.

Worked with Norwalk ACTS on the first citywide read in the summer of 2013.

**Attend open houses to promote NPL's school age materials and programs to parents.

Visited classes to promote reading and library services to students.

3. Provide information for parents about college admissions process.

Co-sponsored with NEF a panel discussion for parents about the common application, the personal essay and FAFSA.

Goal 10: Maximize Community Resources



1. Work with city hall to cross promote library and city services.

2. Offer NPL library cards to non-resident city and BOE employees.

Library Board did not support this objective.

3. Participate in community celebrations and events.

NPL did have a booth at the 2012 Oyster Festival.

NPL did support a very successful “Beach Reads” rack at Calf Pasture in the summer of 2012.

4. Provide display space for local artists.

Goal Ten continued



5. Provide library welcome packets to new homeowners.

Will Redesign packets annually to stay fresh.

6. Cooperate with NEF on a citywide read in the summer of 2014.

NPL did cooperate with Norwalk ACTS and other organizations to promote a citywide summer reading program.

Goal 11: Promote Lifelong Learning



1. Develop a library volunteer program with job descriptions and annual orientation.
NPL hosts an annual volunteers appreciation lunch on the day of the fall children's book sale.
May seek interns from SCSU for challenging volunteer opportunities like ILL.
The Norwalk History Room had an intern from CCSU's graduate American History program who worked for one semester on an annotated list of Norwalk artists.
and also the Norwalk Manuscript File.
2. Refer requests for court-ordered community service to the Lower Fairfield Volunteer Action Center (www.givetimenow.org).
3. Seek bilingual volunteers and NPL staff to participate in "conversations" with new English speakers.

Goal 12: Welcome New Immigrants



1. Employ staff who are fluent in the languages spoken in Norwalk households.
NPL has five FT and five PT Spanish speaking employees, as well as speakers of Russian, French, a and Mandarin.
2. Relocate and promote the main library's collections in languages other than English.
Relocated language collections form lower level to main level. Did not add Japanese, Brazilian Portuguese, and Greek.
Ask "preferred language" on library card applications.
3. Develop programs for families in their native language.
Added a bilingual story hour in both the main library and the branch in 2013.
Hosted Hispanic Heritage Month programs in both buildings.
4. Provide materials and programs for new English speakers.
NPL provides online databases for language learning for both adults and children.

Goal 13: Provide a Warm Welcome



1. Provide adequate coverage by custodians and security guards in both buildings.
Added a third FT custodian to the NPL staff; did not increase security guard hours.
2. Learn to better assist customers with the use of new technologies through coordinated staff development programs.
3. Develop a customer service policy and empower staff to serve customers at NPL.
4. Improve the look of the main library
Redesigned the lower level to make room for Norwalk History Room.
Will add new signage for the main level.
Will market the collection by using the hold shelf and new book shelves.
Renovated the main library's child activity room.

Goal Thirteen continued



5. Seek funding for a five year capital plan for a renovation of the main library.

Did receive capital funding for a main library building plan.

6. Make changes in the South Norwalk branch building.

Investigated sound proofing for the community room. Added request to unfunded capital project for auditoriums.

Will add doors to open shelves in community room.

Will build display cabinets/space for exhibiting artwork from local residents.

May Carpet the child activity room to add warmth.

7. Continue to improve NPL's online presence.

Completed website re-design.

Continue monthly online newsletter and event blasts; 32,082 newsletter opens in FY 2013.

Provided real time library emergency info on the website and phone.

8. Continue participation in social networking as a reference department function.

Goal 14: Preserve our Heritage



1. Partner with other city organizations to provide access to local history materials.

Joined the NPL local history collection and the Norwalk Museum archives into the collection of the Norwalk History Room, open and staffed with volunteers and part time NPL staff four hours/day, six days/week.

2. Promote services for Norwalk residents who are interested in learning about history and heritage.

3. Address preservation of *The Hour* and *The Sentinel* by seeking funding for the microfilming, digitization project.

Will apply for capital funding in 2014-15; have applied for grant funding from Fairfield County Community Foundations.