Strategic Plan
FY2025-2029

GLADYS E. KELLY
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Contents

> **They defy the old view of what a library offers.**

(Top) A huge crowd gathered to learn about owls.
(Bottom) Summer Eats bring free lunch and fun twice a week in the Summer.

To Members of the Webster Community:

Since it opened its doors in September 2018, the Gladys E. Kelly Public Library has undergone significant changes. Not only has the Library changed, but the town has also changed.

The Library has evolved from being a repository of information to becoming the hub of the community. Under the able direction of the Director and the professional staff, and through the generous support of the Friends of the Library, the Library has expanded its programming and services, offering a wide range of activities for community members of all ages.

Why develop a strategic plan? How will a strategic plan help the Library meet the challenges the town faces while celebrating our many gifts?

It is critical to recognize that this Strategic Plan is based on information derived from focus groups, surveys, discussions with Friends members, staff, and Trustees, as well as key community and Library statistics. The strategic plan also took into account national trends and projections. The end result is a strategic plan that is uniquely ours: a Plan that reflects not only the Library's history but also our community's future needs.

A strategic plan is only useful if it is reviewed and revised annually. This helps ensure the Plan remains front and center in the Library's day-to-day operations.

Through annual progress reviews and the creation of complementary annual Action Plans, our Strategic Plan will serve as a viable "living" document, ensuring that priorities continue to be addressed, resources are mindfully allocated, and that action is meaningful and relevant. The Trustees are committed to the ongoing support of the Library and the faithful administration of the Strategic Plan. Through policy creation and budget advocacy, the Trustees will ensure that the library staff has the resources to meet the goals and objective of the plan.

We sincerely thank the members of the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee, the Friends of the Library, members of Town government, Library staff, and the entire community for their hard work and commitment to our Library. Their involvement helped us develop a Strategic Plan that reflects our Town's needs and our Library's goals.

We are pleased to present a strong Strategic Plan designed to help both the Library and the community thrive well into the future.

**Sincerely,**
Board of Library Trustees

(**Top**) The Library Mini Golf fundraiser was a big success!
(**Bottom**) Outdoor Messy Play had kids, and adults, covered in shaving cream.

The Town:

• Webster went from a **mill town** founded by Samuel Slater and incorporated in 1832 to, almost 200 years later, an area of privately owned dwellings.

• Instead of Slater Mills, MAPFRE Insurance, an international insurance company based in Madrid, Spain, is the **largest employer** in Webster.

• The **demographic make-up** of the Town has also changed. According to census data, although Webster is still **primarily White** (78.3%), the Town has seen a **population growth** of 8.29% (1,361 people) along with a significant demographic change of those identifying as Hispanic and Black, between the 2000 and 2020 US census. During this 20-year period, the **Hispanic only population grew 294%** to 2,559 (an increase of 1,910 people) and the **Black only population grew 385.7%** to 889 (an increase of 706 people). The White only population decreased by 6.68% to 13,918 (a decrease of 997 people) and all others, identifying as something else, decreased by 38.6% to 410 people (a decrease of 258 people).

Change in Demographic Growth Between 2000-2020 US Census
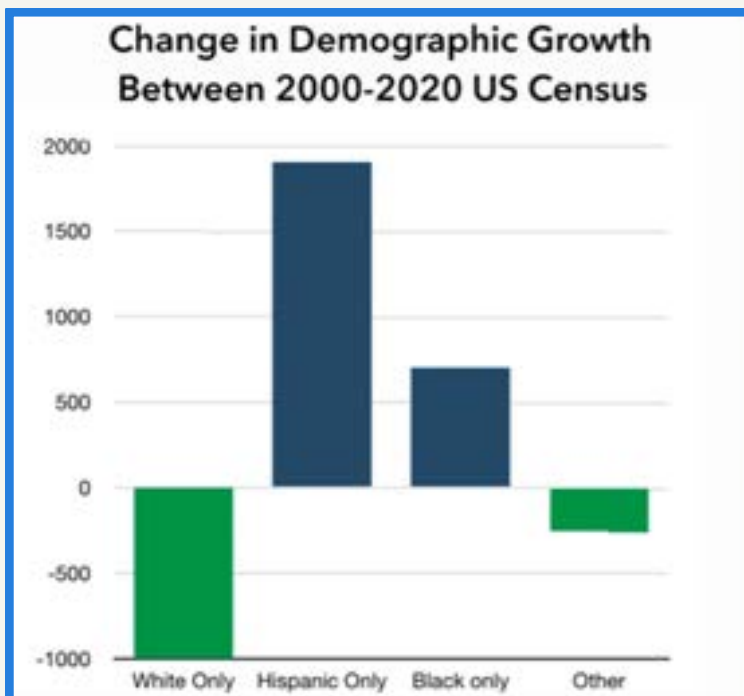
> **Our goal should be to have a diverse patron population that mirrors the census statistics for the Town of Webster.**

- The current 2020 census data indicates that roughly 534 Webster residents are **not citizens**. In addition, English is not the first language for 15% of the population.

- Our school census data indicates that of the school-age population of 2,273 students, 72% attend our local public schools. Of the 72% attending, **46.9% are White**, 38.3% are Hispanic, and 7.6% are Black/African American. Approximately 21.2% of the students attending **do not speak English** as their primary language and 81.2% are **high needs**, defined as students that are either low income, economically disadvantaged, or a student with disabilities (from MA School and District Profiles data 2022-2023 Enrollment Data).

- Webster has been **supportive of low-income housing**. Compared to neighboring towns, Webster has 9.1% (707 units) of the 7,788 total Housing Units available of Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). This is much higher than that of our neighboring towns - Oxford 7.3%, Douglas 4.4%, and Dudley 2.4%.

- Webster's community is also diverse from an **income** standpoint. Lower-income housing is abundant in the former mill areas close to downtown, while more upscale homes exist around the perimeter of the Lake and surrounding scenic areas. Unsurprisingly, the average assessed value of lakefront property is double the value of non-lakefront property.

- The Library has witnessed a rise in the **homeless population** compared to previous years.

More information about the Town and the Library can be found in Appendix A—Webster Community Overview . The Appendices are available on our website: gladyskellylibrary.org.

Please Note: *The 2020 US Census data used is identified as Webster town, Worcester County Massachusetts, and not Webster CDP, MA. CDP (Census Designated Place) is a small, densley populated three square mile area of Webster and does not represent the whole town.*

The Library:

- In December 2014, recognizing that the Chester A. Corbin Library had **too many structural problems** to meet future needs, the Town approved the construction of the new Library building. In 2016, the Corbin Library was razed, and the Gladys E. Kelly Library was built on the same site. The construction project took two years and the **new Library** opened to the public on September 3, 2018.

- In March of 2020, COVID−19 was declared a **pandemic**. The Library adapted to this new way of life.

- In November 2020, a beloved Library Director and a valued Trustee passed away.

- In March of 2021, a new Library Director, Sondra Murphy, was hired.

- In 2022, under the new Director's leadership, the Library has made impressive strides in serving the community (e.g., job descriptions were modified, policies rewritten, new creative programs introduced, the Webster Times from 1859 through the present was digitized, a new website went live with signature branding, a Strategic Planning Committee was created, etc.).

The Town and our Library have changed, making Strategic Planning more important than ever. It will help provide direction, so that we can better service our complex and varied population of users.

One Book, One Community Brings Bestselling Author Peter Heller to Speak

Summer Reading 2022 raffle prize winner Ishak wins a brand new bicycle!

Summer Reading 2023 finale ends with ice cream for all!

Jeff Belanger tells spooky ghost stories!

Community Vision Statement

The Library's fifteen-person Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC) brainstormed a series of vision statements reflecting the **ideal Webster**.

Following are the top three community vision statements this group believes the Library can best support and positively impact:

- **Webster offers affordable cultural events, entertainment, and historical appreciation of the town in addition to welcoming and encouraging convenient shopping, restaurants, and four-season recreation for all community members.**
- **Webster is an inclusive, welcoming community that values diversity, kindness, and citizen engagement.**
- **Webster cultivates community pride and supports inclusive initiatives that expand, diversify, and strengthen local volunteerism, citizen awareness, and civic engagement to foster a lifelong commitment to the community.**
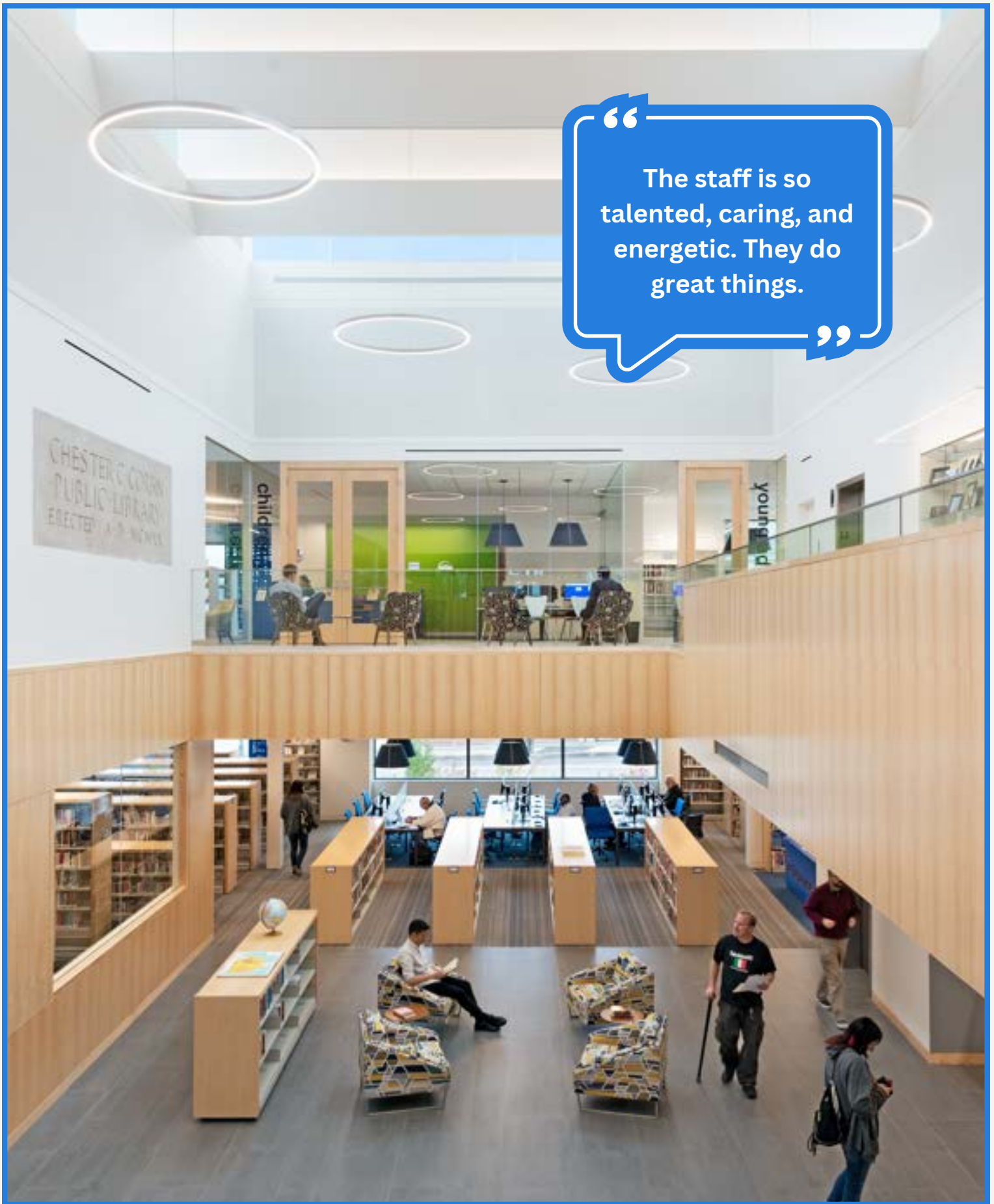
The Library's Plan reflects these statements.

Appendix C - GEKPL Community Vision Statement Results Report 2023 presents the full community visioning exercise results. The Appendicies are available on our website: gladyskellylibrary.org.

"Chickens Around the World" is a surprise hit!

So pleased with the improved facility. Please continue to offer classes!

> **"The staff is so talented, caring, and energetic. They do great things."**
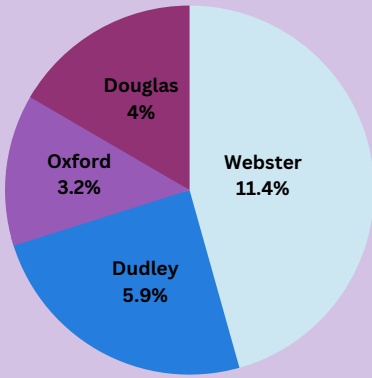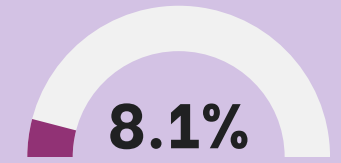
A view of the Lobby from the stairwell.

Webster Community Profile
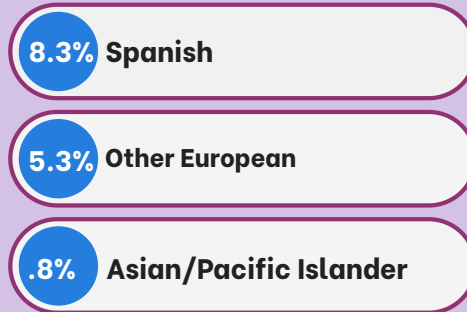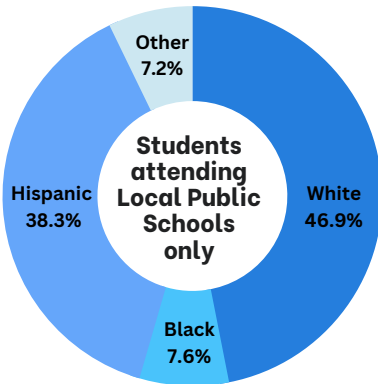
TOP 3 TAXPAYERS: MAPFRE, BOSTON GAS, NATIONAL GRID

Poverty Rate

- Douglas 4%
- Oxford 3.2%
- Webster 11.4%
- Dudley 5.9%

Other Languages Spoken

- 8.3% Spanish
- 5.3% Other European
- .8% Asian/Pacific Islander

15%
Non-Native English Speakers

8.1%
Foreign Born Residents

Student Demographics

Students attending Local Public Schools only

- Other 7.2%
- Hispanic 38.3%
- White 46.9%
- Black 7.6%

21.2% of Students do not speak English as their primary language

School Enrollment

Total Students 2273

- Non-Public 14%
- Vocational 6%
- Public Out-of-District 8%
- Local Public 72%
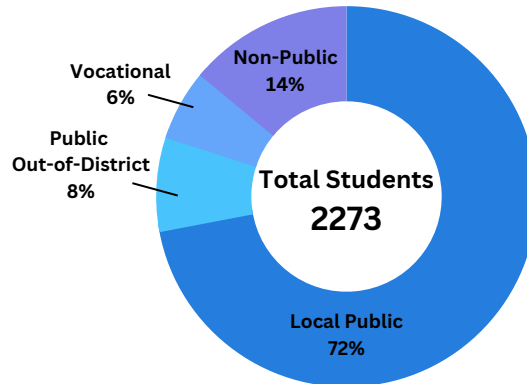
Residents with Advanced Degrees: 27.1%

Median Household Income

- Webster
- Dudley
- Oxford
- Douglas

($150,000 / $100,000 / $50,000 / $0)
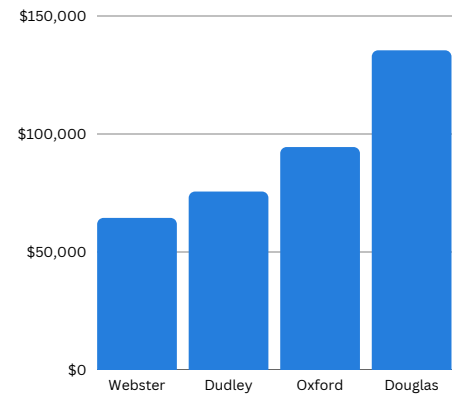
Median Household Income: $64,305

Unemployment Rate

- Douglas 1.9%
- Oxford 1.8%
- Webster 2.7%
- Dudley 2.4%

Subsidized Housing

- Webster
- Oxford
- Southbridge
- Douglas
- Auburn
- Dudley
- Charlton
- Sutton

(0% / 2.5% / 5% / 7.5% / 10%)

Ages of Residents

Men / Women

- 19 & Under
- 20's-30's
- 40's-50's
- 60's-70's
- 80's+

(2,500 / 2,000 / 1,500 / 1,000 / 500 / 0)
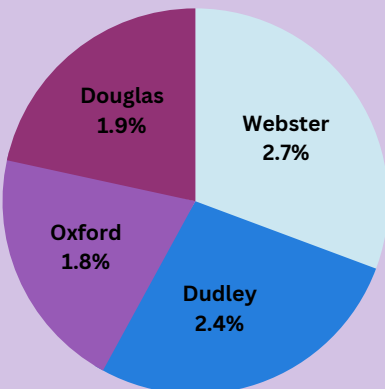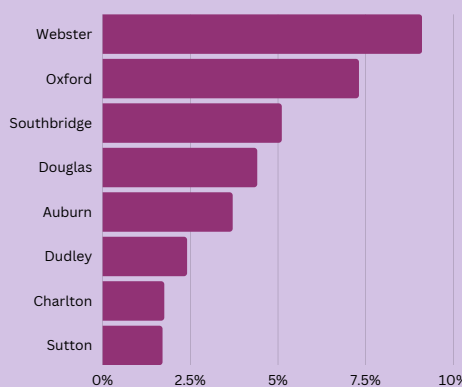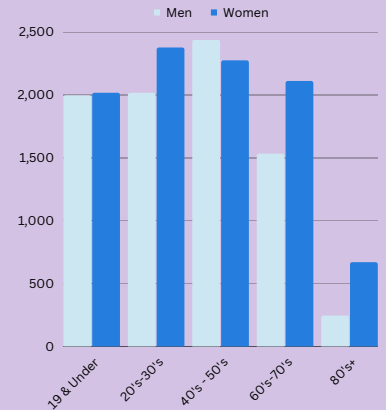
Median Age: 42

> "A community center for community happenings."

Gladys E. Kelly Library Profile

2022

REGISTERED BORROWERS: 9,506

78%
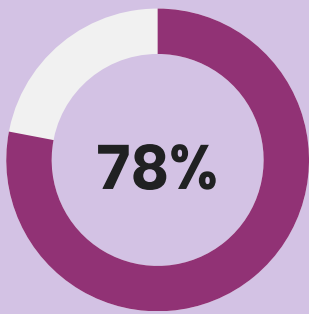
Percentage of Patrons who are Webster Residents

WiFi Sessions: 8,252

Increase from 2021: 25%

31.2%
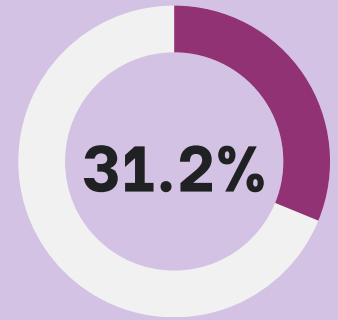
Circulation Increase from 2021

Computer Use:

6,003 Sessions

Increase from 2021: 75%

Program Attendance

- Teens 2.8%
- Adults 27.3%
- Children 69.9%

Staff Hours Comparison

- Webster: 50 Hours Open - 8 Staff
- Oxford: 53 Hours Open - 11 Staff
- Southbridge: 50 Hours Open - 12 Staff
- Charlton: 49 Hours Open - 10 Staff
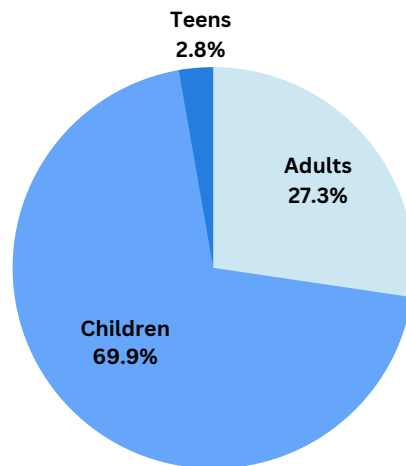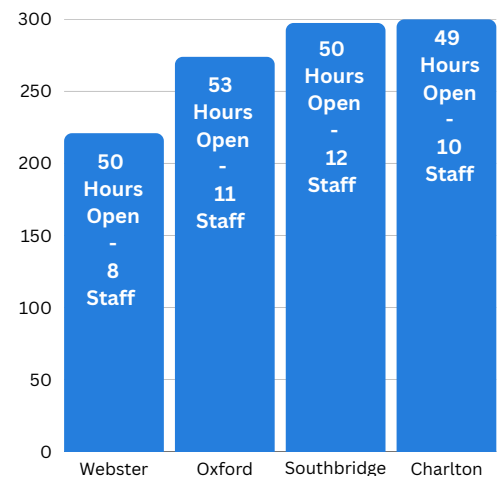
Library of Things: Highest Circulating Items

364 Circulations

Mobile WiFi Hotspots

78 Circulations

Google Chromebooks

107 Circulations

Children's STEM Kits

Gladys E. Kelly Library Profile

ANNUAL CIRCULATION: 39,595

2023

REGISTERED BORROWERS: 9,600

Website Hits

39% Increase from 2022

Reference Interactions:

4,694 Questions Answered

Annual Visits

47,064 People

Computer Use: 9,800 Sessions

Increase from 2022: 63%

Program Attendance: 6,144

Program Attendance 43% Increase from 2022

Staff Hours Comparison

Webster	8 Staff — 50 Hours Open
Oxford	11 Staff — 53 Hours Open
Southbridge	12 Staff — 50 Hours Open
Charlton	10 Staff — 49 Hours Open
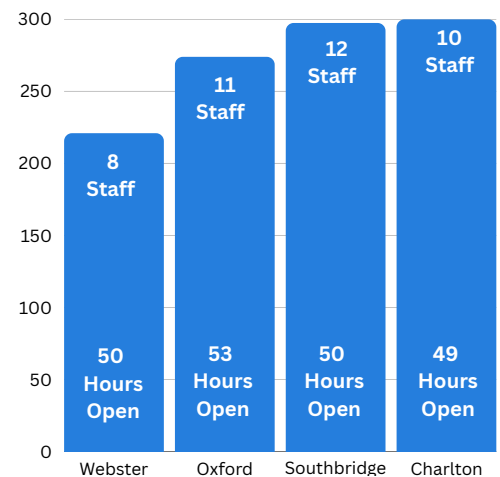
Grants Awarded

$15,000

Janet Malser Humanities Trust

$9,000

Association for Rural and Small Libraries

Field Trip Hosted: 'Whalemobile'
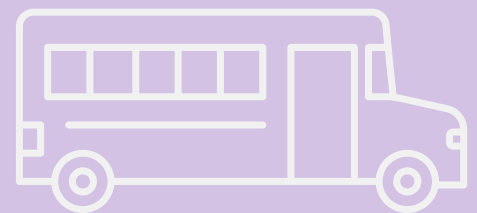
All Saints Academy 113 Students Attended

Library Timeline

1852
The earliest effort to form a library comes from several residents who started The Franklin Club, a private debating society, which includes members: Dr. F. D. Brown, William Hetherington, and Edward Rogers. Town residents form the Young People's Library Association, the nucleus for the Webster Library Association.

1866
A group of citizens form the Webster Library Association; their focus is on debates and literary exercises. Members chose Dr. F.D. Brown as chairman and J. A. Dresser as secretary. The first question for debate was "Ought the President Be Impeached?" The Webster Library Association starts with three hundred books.

1876
The Webster Library Association meets at the library rooms on High Street. By 1876, the library catalogues 1,118 volumes; during the year residents take out 3,970 volumes, an average of 76 volumes per week.

1889
At Webster's April 1, 1889 Town Meeting, taxpayers vote to appropriate $1,500 for a Free Public Library. The Webster Library, located in the Morehouse Block at the intersection of Main and High Streets, houses 1,069 books.

1902
The Webster Public Library moves from the Eddy Block to the Columbia Block on Main Street. The new space has electric lights and space for the collection and reading rooms. However, the room is soon found to be inadequate and in 1907 additional space is acquired. The continued growth of the Library and the necessary relocations convince the Trustees to advocate for a large, new library building.

1918-1921
Augusta Corbin donates a large sum of money for the building and maintenance of a Town Library. The Library is the first town building donated to the town by a resident. Shortly after the meeting, a building committee is formed. The Chester C. Corbin Public Library officially opens July 30, 1921 with a general reception so that citizens might examine the new Library building. The Library is open from 2 to 9 pm with plans to open Sunday afternoons.

1927
Total circulation for the year is 65,438, a gain of 5,699 over the previous year. Number of books in the library is 18,310. Heavy rainfall results in the children's room narrowly escaping flooding of the floor.

1938

While geographically small, the town has outlying districts (the Tanner and Kingsbury district and the Gore). A voluntary offer of transportation is accepted and a bookmobile carries books bi-weekly to these districts during the summer and fall.

1942

During the first year of World War II, the Trustees establish an Air Warden Post in the Library with special telephone and blackout provisions.

1969

The Trustees announce the formation of a chapter of The Friends of the Chester C. Public Library, Inc. The purpose of the organization is to enlarge resources and expand services for the benefit of the Library.

1986

The purchase of a computer allows the Library to connect with the Central and Western Massachusetts Regional System (CWMARS).

2003

The Children's Room suffers a major flood, causing extensive damage to carpeting, shelving and furniture. At the Town meeting, voters approve replacement of the Library's 83 year old roof and restoration of the skylight. In 2005, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners awards the Library a Planning and Design Grant to begin the process of determining what the future holds for Library services in the town.

2011-2014

The Trustees complete the MBLC (Massachusetts Board of Library Commisioners) grant application. Approval from the Massachusetts Historical Society is granted with stipulations that provisions be made to record and display the Chester C. Corbin Library building. With the help of Senator Moore, the Library receives an unprecedented provisional grant from MBLC for approximately 75% of the construction cost, an increase from the original grant award of 50%. In December of 2014, the Town approves the new construction project during Town meeting.

2016-2017

On August 1, 2016, the Chester C. Corbin Library is closed.

2018

The new library officially opens September 4, 2018. The Library is named to honor Gladys E. Kelly, passionate reader and supporter of libraries.

2020

A pandemic sweeps the country and the entire world, which forces the Library to eliminate on-site visits and programs. In an attempt to meet the needs of the patrons, drop off/pick up services became available. By 2021, the Library has fully reopened. Statistics for December 2021 indicate the Library held 8 adult programs and 20 children's programs. Patron use included computer use 434, study room use 89, WiFi sessions 589, and 2,678 materials circulated.

Planning Process

The Strategic Planning project launched in March 2022, and concluded in September 2023. The following timeline lists the dates of the project's key activities.

> " I think the Library and its offerings are fantastic. I especially appreciate the free yoga classes and book club. "

- **March 3, 2022:** The Library's Board of Trustees initiated the strategic planning process.
- **April 7, 2022:** The Trustees selected the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), designating experienced members to work with Director Sondra Murphy and develop a process and create a draft plan. Rena Klebart, Donna Becker, and Elaine Davies were appointed as the other members of the Strategic Planning Committee.
- **July 15, 2022:** The Library hired Barbara Alevras of Sage Consulting Services to facilitate the planning process.
- **July-October 2022:**
  - The SPC established key planning project goals and drafted a process and schedule to gather community input and prepare a strategic plan document. (See *Appendix K - GEKPL Strategic Planning Project Flowchart*)
  - **October:** A 15-person Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC) was formed.
- **November 2022:**
  - **November 2:** Staff participated in an assessment of the Library's strengths, opportunities, aspirations and results (aka SOAR exercise). (See *Appendix G - GEKPL SOAR Exercise Summary Results Report 2022)*.
  - **November 15:** The SPAC met for the first of its two meetings
  - **November 17:** The Trustees and Friends board members participated in a SOAR Exercise.
- **January-February 2023:**
  - **January 9:** At its second meeting, the SPAC brainstormed Community Vision Statements describing the ideal Webster, and identified elements the Library can best support. (See *Appendix C - GEKPL Community Vision Statement Results Report 2023*).
  - **January 17-February 10:** A town-wide Community Survey was available online and as a hard copy in English, Polish, and Spanish. The surveys' results are presented in *Appendix E - GEKPL Community Survey Results Summary Report 2023* and *Appendix J - GEKPL Tween and Teen Survey Results Summary Report 2023*.
  - **February:** Assistant Library Director Evan Hale joined the SPC.

- **March-April 2023:**
  - **March 7 and March 9:** Two Focus Groups were held with 16 community members, including frequent Library patrons. (See *Appendix F - GEKPL Focus Group Summary Report 2023*).
  - **March-April:** The consultant evaluated data gathered from community feedback exercises and provided related reports.
- **May 2023:**
  - **May 11:** Community Feedback activity reports and the key findings were shared with the Trustees (*Appendices C-J*).
  - To complement the feedback ("soft data") received, key community and Library statistics ("hard data") were collected.
- **June 8, 2023:** The SPC drafted a combined Mission/Vision Statement and the Library's Core Values, which the Trustees approved.
- **July 13, 2023:** The Community and Library Profiles were shared with the Trustees.
- **August 10, 2023:** The Trustees approved the Strategic Initiatives and Goals that the SPC drafted.
- **September 7, 2023:** The Strategic Planning Document was completed and sent to the Trustees for review.
- **September 14, 2023:** The Trustees approved the Strategic Plan.
- **October 1, 2023:** The Strategic Plan was submitted to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC).

Given the Library's close relationship with the Friends of the Library Board, project information was shared with them as it became available. Regular project progress reports were also shared with the Board of Trustees and Library Staff.

" Community events have been very rewarding for my family, and I would like to see the frequency of these events increase and have wider choices. "

Key Findings

Adaptation

It's important that the Library remains aware of rapidly changing technologies, demographics, and socioeconomics to ensure we can pursue **creative solutions to new demands** on our resources. The Library must **anticipate** potential new community needs and continually **adjust** to meet them.

Community

A challenge going forward will be to find new ways to connect people and organizations. **Collaboration and partnerships** with community groups is key to increasing awareness, usage, and value of the Library's offerings. The Library must identify the most effective ways to share and promote news about our activities and resources.

Facilities

The community is proud of the new facility and its award-winning design. However, after working in the space for some time, it is now clear that some adjustments are needed to operate more smoothly and to accommodate new **technology**, new types of **collections**, and a variety of **programs**. Community feedback mentioned the importance of sufficient and accessible **parking**, a space devoted to meeting the growing needs of Webster's **youth**, and reimagining the **current layout** of underutilized Library spaces.

Programs & Services

Community members request **non-traditional** types of services and resources (such as the Library of Things), as well as an expansion of programs that are **creative and different**. Patrons were interested in accessing programs in a variety of places, such as **online and offsite**. Some feedback mentioned an interest in **Local History** and its preservation. Many community members do not think the current Library days and hours fully serve their needs and would like to see **increases in the number of hours and days** that the Library is open.

Staff

Compared to libraries in the surrounding area that serve their communities with the same number of hours, our Library is **understaffed**. In order to provide new programming, be more inclusive, and do more outreach, **additional staff** will be needed.

"
We should not be the best kept secret in town!
"

Empowering and inspiring our community by connecting

people to ideas, knowledge, experiences, and one another.

We Value:

Nurturing Curiosity

We stimulate minds, guiding all to the well of lifelong learning and exploration. We adapt and innovate, encouraging others to do the same. We exult in the wonder of discovery.

Community Collaboration

We nurture relationships with and among our community and patrons, making connections and serving as a unifying force, collaborating and making a positive impact while providing a safe and accessible environment.

Dynamic Response

We act thoughtfully and with integrity, openly and receptively listening to our community and responding positively to them with actions that are sustainable. We are responsible, accountable, and trustworthy.

Top Talent

We are a talented and fearless team, continuously demonstrating a "can do" attitude, and welcoming our community with kindness, respect, and passion.

Extraordinary Experiences

We seek, with community and individual growth in mind, that which playfully inspires the imagination, surpasses the ordinary, and sparks joy.

Community

Cultivate community connections that strengthen the Library's ability to offer services.

- **Collaborate with local talent to bring a variety of programs and classes to the Library.**
  - **Rationale:** Many community members have knowledge, skills and experiences that would be of interest or value to others.

- **Prioritize community outreach. Build and strengthen community connections that improve awareness of, and access to, Library services.**
  - **Rationale:** It is important for the Library to enhance its presence in the community and extend its service delivery points.

- **Increase partnerships with local schools.**
  - **Rationale:** Developing strong relationships with local schools enables the Library to better understand and accommodate teachers' and students' needs. It will increase the Library's visibility and Library Card memberships.

- **Deepen partnerships with organizations that can help promote Library offerings.**
  - **Rationale:** These relationships will allow us to reach a larger audience when promoting our services.

Adaptation

Meet the community's evolving needs.

- **Ensure the library has sufficient staff to meet current and future operational requirements, and continues delivering exceptional service to patrons.**
  - **Rationale:** The current staffing level is unsustainable. It creates gaps in service, presents ongoing scheduling challenges, and hinders the Library's ability to accommodate community growth and increased Library usage.

- **Ensure the Library's open hours meet the community's needs.**
  - **Rationale:** The Library's Community Survey results indicate patron desire for modified and/or additional open hours.

- **Minimize the digital gap.**
  - **Rationale:** The digital gap is a phrase that represents the fact that people with different economic, cultural, cognitive, or generational statuses are detrimentally impacted by a lack of access to and understanding of current and emerging technologies. Equitable and equal access to the internet and new information communications technologies is critical to community members' ability to acquire and share information.

Strategic Initiatives and Goals

- **Prioritize Staff development and training.**
  - **Rationale:** By supporting Staff development, the Library will keep up on trends in the field, make important contacts, and get inspired to serve the community.

- **Maintain mutually supportive relationships between the Library Trustees, Library staff, and the Friends of the Library group.**
  - **Rationale:** In order to work more effectively, we should delineate roles, giving each group specific tasks.

> " I find [the Library] to be a great asset to Webster. "

The Flying High Dogs draw a huge crowd!

Communication

Increase the Library's visibility in the community.

- **Develop a comprehensive communication strategy.**
  - **Rationale:** To increase patrons' knowledge of our services, we need to determine how effective our marketing is and increase its scope.

- **Ensure the public is adequately aware of Library events.**
  - **Rationale:** Patrons should be able to find information about ongoing events in a variety of outlets.

History

Preserve, promote, and expand access to Webster's historical information and materials.

- **Increase access to the local history collection.**
  - **Rationale:** Patrons are interested in conducting more historical research from home. By expanding our digitized collections, we can help meet that need.

- **Organize the Local History Room.**
  - **Rationale:** While the Local History Room has a plethora of information, we do not have this information cataloged or organized. Cataloging it would allow staff a greater ability to help patrons in locating materials they are looking for.

- **Explore collaboration opportunities with area historical institutions.**
  - **Rationale:** Patrons enjoy learning about local history. Partnering with these institutions would allow us to provide them with information from local experts.

Facilities

Ensure the facility's interior and exterior spaces are welcoming, accessible, and safe.

- **Meet the needs of our busy Children's Room.**
  - **Rationale:** The Children's Room needs to be able to grow and change based on the current population's needs.

- **Meet the needs of our growing Tween population.**
  - **Rationale:** Webster's tween population continues to grow, but the Library does not have a dedicated area for them.

- **Improve public access to convenient entry and exit areas.**
  - **Rationale:** Currently, patrons walk a great distance to reach their vehicles from the Library's entrance and exit.

- **Increase the amount of usable staff office space, usable storage, and improve the program and event space based on current staff needs and trends.**
  - **Rationale:** The current building layout offers inadequate staff and storage space. In order to improve functionality, analysis is required.

- **Investigate improving the public's access to parking for Library events.**
  - **Rationale:** The Library's parking lot is small, and has little room to expand, so we will provide information for alternative parking options.

- **Reimagine underutilized public spaces in the Library, as needs evolve.**
  - **Rationale:** As periodicals begin to phase out, the dedicated space could be better used for other purposes.

Sustainability

Serve as an eco-positive organization focused on sustainability and reducing waste.

- **Ensure the Library has a positive impact on the community and environment.**
  - **Rationale:** The Library should act as a role model for sustainable and green business practices.

- **Apply sustainability practices to Library programming and patron services.**
  - **Rationale:** Making thoughtful and intentional decisions regarding sustainability practices can have a positive impact on the environment.

- **Pursue environmentally focused supplemental funding (e.g., grants or donations).**
  - **Rationale:** By seeking out grant funding, the Library can pursue forward-thinking projects without tapping the Town for funds.

Performance Management

Annually, the Library Director will gather and review relevant data and feedback to evaluate the progress made toward achieving the strategic initiatives and goals outlined in this Strategic Plan. The findings will be reported to the Board of Trustees and summarized in the Director's annual report to the community.

By monitoring and measuring the Library's progress towards our strategic goals, we can improve our services, provide the best possible service to our community, and ultimately achieve a greater level of success.

Measures of Success

- Increase in event attendance.
- Increase in Library attendance.
- Increase in Library cardholders of ages 18 and under.
- Increase in press coverage.
- Increase in reported sense of community within the Library.
- Increase in town residents' use of the Library.
- Increased awareness and usage by school-aged children and families.
- Local history room materials are organized and searchable.
- Increased awareness of local history resources.
- Friends, Trustees, and staff are all aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Increased membership and participation in the Friends organization.
- Increased staff attendance at professional development events.
- Anecdotal evidence of improved physical accessibility.
- Evidence of non-traditional library users frequenting the Library more often.
- Expanded variety of programs led by community members.
- Library building is responsive to the needs of the community.
- Increased patron satisfaction with the technology available at the Library.
- Increase in anecdotal evidence of meaningful experiences at the Library.
- Positive reports from patrons regarding open hours.

> **Warmth.
> It's welcoming.
> Patrons are talking
> to patrons.**

Summer Reading 2023 raffle prize winner Alia gets a ride to school in a Fire Truck!

One Book, One Community bring bestselling author Christina Baker Kline to the Library.

Children learn how to make a Rube Goldberg machine during a STEM class.

Year 1 Action Plan

Adaptation: Meet the community's evolving needs

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe for Activity	By Whom
Ensure the Library has sufficient staff to meet current and future operational requirements and continuous delivering exceptional service to patrons.	Use data on Library usage, peer communities' library staffing levels, and other relevant information to create a multi-year staffing plan. This Plan should identify potential increases in staffing and provide suggestions on how to work with the Town and Friends of the Library to add additional staff members. These staff members would allow the Library to offer more hours of operation to the public.	August 2024	Trustees, Director, Assistant Director
Ensure the Library's open hours meet the community's needs.	Analyze foot traffic and item circulation data to identify potential open-hour adjustments and the resources necessary to accommodate the changes (e.g., additional staff).	July 2024	Trustees, Director, Assistant Director
Maintain mutually supportive relationships between the Library Trustees, Library staff, and the Friends of the Library group.	Create a "Collaboration and Support" document that presents how the Library Director, Board of Trustees, and Friends of the Library will work collaboratively to support the Library (e.g., roles and responsibilities, best practices).	June 2025	Trustees, Director, Assistant Director, Library Friends

Community: Cultivate community connections that strengthen the Library's ability to offer services.

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe for Activity	By Whom
Increase partnerships with local schools.	Collaborate with school librarians, school administrators, area colleges, and students to offer field trips and tours, participate in school events, and offer paid internships.	September 2024	Director, Assistant Director, Children's Librarian, Program Coordinator

Communication: Increase the Library's visibility in the community.

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe for Activity	By Whom
Ensure the public is adequately aware of Library events.	Explore establishing a test or email reminder system so patrons are aware of ongoing events.	January 2025	Assistant Director, Program Coordinator

Facilities: Ensure the facility's interior and exterior spaces are welcoming, accessible, and safe.

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe for Activity	By Whom
Reimagine underutilized public spaces in the Library, as needs evolve.	Apply for an LSTA grant to convert the Periodicals Room to a co-working/makerspace.	July 2024	Director, Assistant Director, Program Coordinator
Increase the amount of usable staff office space, usable storage, and improve the program and event space based on current staff needs and trends.	Conduct a professional space analysis, identify recommended changes, and develop a plan to secure the funding necessary to pursue the improvements.	June 2025	Director, Assistant Director, Trustees

History: Preserve, promote, and expand access to Webster's historical information and materials.

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe for Activity	By Whom
Explore collaboration with area historical institutions.	Partner with area historical interest groups to preserve and promote local history.	July 2024	Director, Assistant Director, Program Coordinator, Children's Librarian

Sustainability: Serve as an eco-positive organization focused on sustainability and reducing waste.

Objectives	Actions	Timeframe for Activity	By Whom
Apply sustainability practices to Library programming and patron services.	Purchase tools which will help reduce waste, preserve damaged material, and prolong the life of our collection.	July 2024	Director, Assistant Director, Trustees

The Trustees approved the Annual Action Plan on November 9, 2023 by a unanimous vote. The Action Plan has been submitted to the MBLC.

Plan Approval

On September 14, 2023, the Library's 7-person Board of Trustees unanimously approved this Strategic Plan.

> "Add hours on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Nice to have expanded weekend hours."

We would like to sincerely thank the following people for their contributions to the Strategic Plan:

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY BOARD

Susan Buehler

Allison Caraceni

Elaine Davies

Paul LaFramboise

Cindy Nagle

Pat Nectow

Steven Place

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Donna Becker

Susan Buehler

Mary Chabot

Rich Franas

Rena Klebart

Martina Koziak

Jeanne Mikels

Evelyn Pappas

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Donna Becker

Elaine Davies

Evan Hale

Rena Klebart

Sondra Murphy

STAFF

Janessa Barrette

Randa Cox

Evan Hale

Natalie McDonald

Jen Millett

Sondra Murphy

Andrew Tai

STRATEGIC PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Kwasi Acheampong

James Alkire

Ted Avlas

Pastor Janice Ford

Jen Genduso

Dave Hurton

Lisa Kontoes

Rick Lafond

Paul LaFramboise

Carla Manzi

Carole Marchand

Joe McKenna

Sondra Murphy

Pat Nectow

Jean Travis

PLUS Hundreds of Focus Group Participants and Survey Respondents!

Appendices

Appendix A - Webster Community Overview: This document presents a general overview of the Webster Community.

Appendix B - Gladys E. Kelly Public Library Timeline: This document presents an overview of the Library's history as a timeline of Library milestones.

Appendix C - GEKPL Community Vision Statement Results Report 2023: The Library's Strategic planning advisory committee brainstormed a series of vision statements reflecting the ideal Webster and prioritized the vision statements the Library can best support and positively impact. This report presents a prioritized list of the final community vision statements.

Appendix D - GEKPL BOT and FOL Board Survey Results Report 2022: The boards' survey was conducted with the Trustees and Friends of the GEKPL officers in November-December 2022.

Appendix E - GEKPL Community Survey Results Summary Report 2023: The Community Survey was conducted on January 17-February 10, 2023. A summary of the results is presented in addition to graphs and charts.

Appendix F - GEKPL Focus Group Summary Report 2023: This report presents highlights of the feedback and ideas about the Library's collections, services, and staff generated in a series of two focus groups conducted with 16 community members.

Appendix G - GEKPL SOAR Exercise Summary Results Report 2022: This report documents the results of two environmental assessments of the Library's strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results. One was conducted with the Library's staff, and a second session was conducted with the Library's Board of Trustees and Friends of the Library Board members.

Appendix H - GEKPL SPAC Survey Results Report 2023: The Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC) survey was conducted in January 2023.

Appendix I - GEKPL Staff Survey Results Report 2022: The staff survey was conducted in November 2022.

Appendix J - GEKPL Tween and Teen Survey Results Summary Report 2023: The Tween and Teen Survey was conducted on January 17- February 10, 2023. A summary of the results is presented in addition to graphs and charts.

Appendix K - GEKPL Strategic Planning Project Flowchart: The flowchart presents the Library's planning methodology, including the timeline, major project milestones, community needs assessment activities, and process participants.

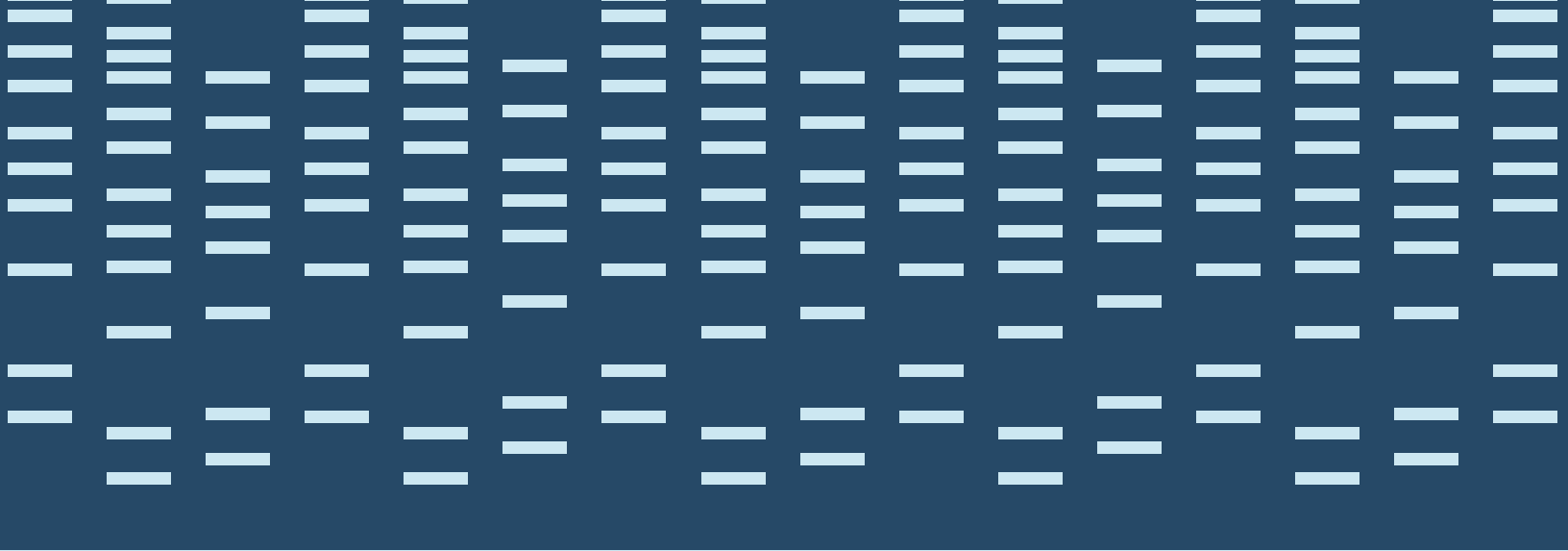**All Appendices are available at our website: gladyskellylibrary.org**
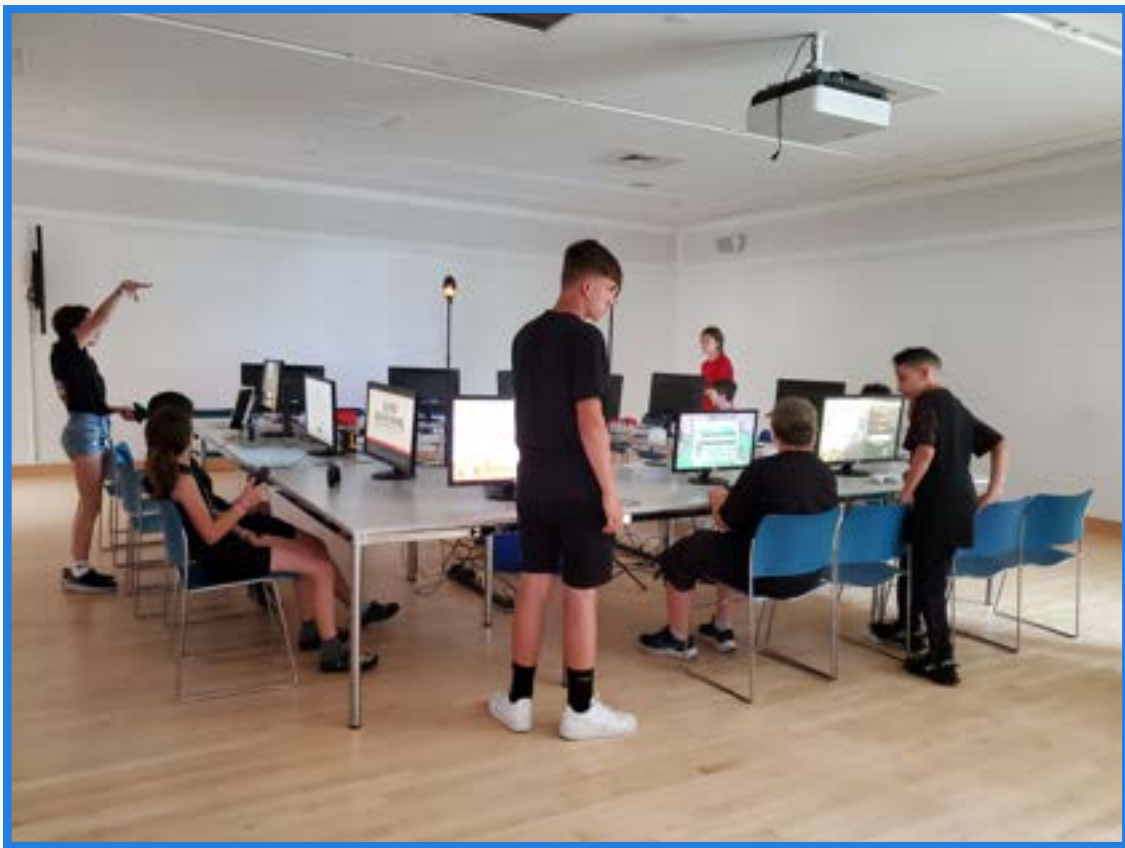
Teens gather for a gaming event.

> **We love all the children's activities and can't wait to do more!**

STEM Programs allow kids to explore the world around them.

GLADYS E. KELLY
P U B L I C   L I B R A R Y