

2005 Annual Report

Delivering Value:

Vision. Commitment. Results.



We would like your opinion!

Answer questions online and help shape the way we deliver our services to you.

KCLS is conducting a **confidential** patron survey to guide the planning for library improvements and services. Your opinions are important to us, and will give us valuable information about what you expect from your community library.

Most people will complete the survey in 20 to 30 minutes. You can take it right now on the assigned library computer. Simply follow your guide's instructions to the computer in the library. Your guide can also answer your questions and assist you with the survey, if needed.

Thank you for your time and willingness to assist KCLS!

KCLS is committed to ethical research and the absolute protection of your privacy. The survey does not ask your name, address or telephone number. Your responses will never be revealed to anyone. Questions about age, race, gender or other demographics will only be used for comparative analysis.

For more information about the survey call 425.369.3275.

*Turn to us.
The choices will surprise you.*



“If we focus on improving that which is already great, we can transform ourselves, our organizations, families and communities.” 📖

Introduction

Today’s libraries are here because neighbors valued public libraries as a vital investment in their community. Friends got together more than 60 years ago to create a network of libraries for everyone, whether they lived in town, outlying communities or distant rural areas. That vision became reality when county voters established the rural library district that has grown to become the King County Library System (KCLS).

Times have changed, cities have grown where farms used to be, but the underlying vision remains the same: a vital network of free public libraries connecting our communities through shared resources for lifetime learning.

Today KCLS maintains the community tradition of excellent service while planning and building the libraries of tomorrow.



In 2005, we asked our patrons to help guide the future of KCLS libraries by telling us what they value most in their community libraries today. Our goal was to define a “Gold Standard” of library service, to guide allocation of library resources—and budget priorities—to the things that matter most.

Through an extensive patron survey, more than 5,400 respondents told us what was on their mind, what they like about KCLS and areas where they’d like to see improvements.

Overwhelmingly positive replies lauded KCLS staff and the outstanding service they provide. Respondents also praised the abundant materials in the Library System’s collection and the range of computer resources KCLS offers.

Suggestions for improvement included making it easier for people to know what is available in their libraries and how to find what they need. Also at the top of the list was: dependable technologies that work reliably across all libraries, more open hours, enhanced comfort and space in facilities, and reduced noise levels.

Based on survey results, we are focusing our efforts over the next several years to maintain the level and quality of service and materials patrons rely on and improve our performance in the areas indicated through the survey results.

On the following pages you’ll see some highlights of KCLS’ 2005 achievements and previews of things to come.



📖 *Patron comment from 2005 Patron Experience Project Survey*

“Without the General Store, America’s Library System must rise to and stay as the hub of American Community. Libraries are the communal ‘glue’ that holds us together.” 

Vision

KCLS began with a shared vision of public libraries as the heart of the community—an essential part of the quality of life. Today that role is more important than ever. KCLS libraries are vital for our friends and neighbors at every stage of life.

Parents bring their toddlers and preschoolers to Story Time, where even the youngest children learn to love libraries and books.

The early learning-focused Ready to Read program teaches parents and caregivers the skills they need to help their young children learn basic pre-reading skills, making reading easier when school begins.

Free and fun Summer Reading Programs help elementary school children enjoy learning throughout the summer. While they’re having fun, they’re also retaining and building their reading skills through the long summer months, giving them a head start when they return to classes in the fall.

Middle and high school students rely on KCLS libraries to find the resources they need to complete their homework assignments, prepare for tests, seek funding for college and develop social skills. While learning to find information at the library, they’re also acquiring study and research skills that will help them be successful throughout their lives.

New graduates use KCLS resources to research employers, write skillful resumés and find their first jobs.

For teens and adults alike, KCLS libraries offer how-to guides for sports and outdoor skills, trekking, travel or new language skills, plus the latest works on political and social issues and spiritual growth.

Adults turn to KCLS for many reasons, from planning affordable family outings to learning new parenting techniques or first aid skills. Many come for new job opportunities, tips on starting a small business, research for their careers or that long-dreamed of first novel.

Many seniors make visits to the library as part of their weekly activities—for social interaction, to enjoy magazines and books or to improve their computer skills.

And in many communities, the library provides the only public gathering space for miles around.



"I like the library because it's free, and I don't have to feel guilty not buying anything to come here. It is a place of refuge like no other... I can read in peace." 📖

✔ Commitment

What began as a community vision long ago continues to be a county-wide commitment today: providing the best resources and services possible in modern, comfortable, convenient facilities and outreach for those who can't come to the library. At KCLS, commitment takes a variety of forms, individual and collective.

Citizen groups are just as active in supporting their libraries today as they were in the beginning.

Community volunteers, along with staff, deliver library materials to homebound neighbors, giving person-to-person service through Words on Wheels.

Friends of the Library groups donate thousands of hours and raise thousands of dollars to support their community libraries. In 2005, these independent organizations provided \$280,000 in funding for library programs, collections and artwork.



Board of Trustees

The KCLS Board of Trustees volunteer hundreds of hours in advocacy and meetings to guide organizational decisions and oversee the civic, social and fiscal responsibilities of KCLS.



Wai Fong Lee
President, 2005



Judge LeRoy McCullough
Trustee



Charlotte B. Spitzer
Secretary, 2005



Judge Richard Eadie
Trustee



Lucy Krakowiak
Trustee



"A library is more like a public well, where everyone should feel welcome, responsible, and especially expected to participate." 📖

KCLS Leadership

KCLS administration not only oversees the day-to-day operations of the entire System, but also works with civic and community organizations to ensure that library facilities and services meet the needs and expectations of their residents and enhance the character of the neighborhoods they serve.



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Jed Moffitt
Associate Director
Information Technology Services

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Denise Siers
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Nancy Smith
Associate Director
Public Services

Jeanne Thorsen
Executive Director
KCLS Foundation

Charlene Richards
Manager
Human Resources

Julie B. Wallace
Manager
Community Relations/Graphics



“The library is a public resource, and the public should feel responsible for it. A patron is not a ‘customer’ who is buying something, but a citizen with the right and responsibility to help maintain free access to materials and free speech.” 

Behind the Scenes

Every day, every week, every month of the year, dedicated library staff bring their skills, commitment and enthusiasm to work for their patrons, communities and co-workers.

While community libraries are our most public face, it also takes the dedicated service of KCLS support staff to keep the System running smoothly.

Information Technology Services staff keep the computer networks, phones, catalog, software and computer stations up-to-date.

Collection Management Services specialists select, order materials, catalog and label new items. Shipping crews sort and move materials, and drivers deliver books and other resources to each library daily, logging 121,050 miles in 2005.

Facilities Management Services tackles new construction projects, while Buildings and Grounds staff keep the libraries in excellent shape, on call around the clock in case of emergencies.

The Business and Finance office handles purchasing and payments, tracks expenditures, processes payroll and keeps KCLS on solid financial footing.

Human Resources handles the myriad of details needed to provide training, benefits and personnel services to more than 1,200 KCLS employees.

The Community Relations and Graphics staff develop, design and produce all public information and marketing materials, handle advertising and media relations and provide strategic communication support throughout the System.



“Great services and staff are taken for granted until services are curtailed or decreased in some way. I think that the library service is one of the best uses of my taxes.” 📌

✓ Results

How are we doing? Online and in libraries, we’re busier than ever. In 2005, we enrolled 97,790 new cardholders, overall library use grew by 7%, with nearly a million visitors through our doors every month. Web use increased dramatically, with 98 million online transactions. Public meeting space use also increased by 20% in 2005.

Our patron survey results show deep satisfaction and appreciation for library staff and services. Our goal is to maintain this level of excellence as we grow.

In 2005, we developed a flexible staffing model to accommodate changing needs and growth in demand for services. While there have been some unanticipated challenges in implementation, we are working to seek effective solutions to the challenges of growth while maintaining the personal character of service in each library.

After the patron satisfaction survey, employees are collaborating to anticipate the future of library service requirements and predict the needed staff skills and expertise to maintain excellence and fiscal responsibility.



Circulation Statistics

Library	Checkouts	Library	Checkouts	Library	Checkouts	Library	Checkouts
Algona-Pacific	165,922	Foster	98,617	Shoreline	843,542	Traveling Library Center	185,260
Auburn	465,586	Issaquah	639,118	Skykomish	14,491	ABC Express	18,550
Bellevue Regional	1,165,628	Kenmore	120,206	Skyway	137,832	Jail	169,106
Black Diamond	68,241	Kent Regional	607,355	Snoqualmie	52,326	Regional Justice Center	159,895
Bothell Regional	792,187	Kingsgate	344,347	Southcenter	186,762	Youth Service Center	39,043
Boulevard Park	99,655	Kirkland	547,438	Tukwila	20,032	Professional	25,048
Burien	514,833	Lake Forest Park	280,230	Valley View	151,390	Interlibrary Loan	19,413
Carnation	75,924	Lake Hills	309,761	Vashon	267,182	Web Activity/Phone Renewal	51,586
Covington	599,624	Maple Valley	327,725	White Center	206,362	Answer Line	2,641,060
Crossroads	397,780	Mercer Island	377,794	Woodinville	462,201	Ebooks	56,283
Des Moines	251,550	Muckleshoot	13,121	Woodmont	188,609	Central Storage	767
Duvall	120,747	Newport Way	486,412	Branches Subtotal	15,004,668	Non-Branches Subtotal	3,366,011
Fairwood	610,662	North Bend	255,303				
Fall City	75,153	Redmond Regional	961,368				
Federal Way Regional	669,174	Richmond Beach	217,451				
Federal Way 320th	248,397	Sammamish	566,629				

Total Circulation 18,370,679

“As far as I’m concerned, KCLS sets an example for most companies to take note of! Maybe this is because the staff in the libraries wouldn’t be here unless they liked being around books and knowledge and such... and it shows!” 

Progress on Capital Improvements

It takes time to build a library from start to finish—and much of the progress is often behind the scenes.

We’re moving forward on the capital improvements approved by voters in the 2004 capital bond measure, working on new and replacement facilities, expansions and upgrades. We will continue to do so throughout the decade. The capital projects include:


- Add libraries in three new locations
- Replace and expand 13 existing libraries
- Expand 11 existing libraries
- Major upkeep for 15 libraries

Equipment Upgrades

We’re upgrading and installing reliable and easy-to-use standardized computer hardware and software. 2005 improvements included:

- Upgraded computers in 10 libraries
- Installed and upgraded wireless access points in all libraries
- Expanded Automated Materials Handling system
- Prepared for new Self Check-In system
- Completed operational improvements in new circulation system



“The key is seeking information and being as responsive as you can, given the limitations (money, space, collection, etc.) that you have.” 

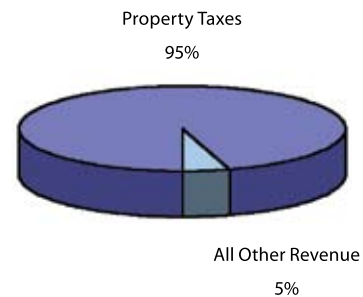
Financial Report

On the financial front, KCLS keeps a close eye on its budget, funded primarily via property taxes. We operated within the 1% limitation on property tax revenue and ended with a fund balance that is 63.7% better than projected, which means that KCLS will not need to go back to the voters for additional support for several years.

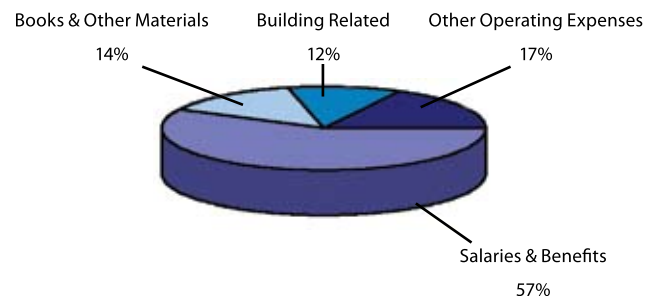
The majority of our expenditures are for employee salaries and benefits, books and materials, and facilities maintenance.

Note: KCLS also spent \$7.5M of capital funds on library construction and renovation projects. In 2005, KCLS issued \$63.6M in general obligation bonds to fund future capital projects.

2005 General Fund Revenues \$77.4M



2005 General Fund Expenses \$75.5M



**Unaudited Preliminary 2005 Information*

Summary

Today, as in the beginning, KCLS remains committed to ensuring that our libraries continue to grow with our communities, and to keep meeting their needs and exceeding their expectations in the years to come.

To that commitment we bring the flexibility to adapt to a constantly changing environment and our unwavering intent to do the best possible job with the resources available.

We will continue to seek and use patron advice to guide our decisions, as we seek the best balance of vision and practical application. That's the most important commitment we can make to deliver the results our patrons expect and continue the KCLS tradition of excellence.



KCLS Foundation

Creating a Community of Readers

In the hearts of our communities, our libraries provide programs and services that advance literacy, lifelong learning and technology skills. These vital collections and programs need financial support beyond available public funds. The King County Library System Foundation mobilizes resources and enriches our community by sponsoring reading programs, homework centers, author visits, writing seminars and much more.

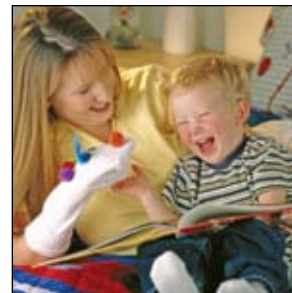
Encouraging Readers: One Child at a Time

Our vision: All children in our community will be ready to read by their first day of school.

Research in early brain development shows that children prepare to read long before they start school, even as early as infancy. Reading to—and with—young children is one of the most effective ways parents can support brain development and early learning skills.

The KCLS Foundation supports the library’s **Ready to Read** program that reaches out beyond the library walls and into communities to provide adults with the vital strategies and materials to effectively develop these skills in children.

Our goal is to reach 30,000 parents and caregivers with free Early Literacy workshops, skill-building techniques and encouragement for families to share books and stories.



The KCLS Foundation strives to ensure a lifetime of books and resources for all learners in our community and brings quality and value to library programming. In 2005, nearly 100,000 children and adults participated in programs and activities supported by the KCLS Foundation.

Dragons, Dreams, & Daring Deeds—the 2005 Summer Reading Program—set an all-time record, with more than 34,000 children participating.

ABC Express vans traveled to more than 50 childcare centers and provided books to nearly 10,000 kids in low-income areas this past year.

Reading skills are vital to academic achievement, especially in the early grades. The **Ready, Set, Read!** program challenges kids to set goals and establish the reading habit. Eighteen local school districts promote the program in elementary schools, and nearly 10,000 students tallied four million reading minutes.

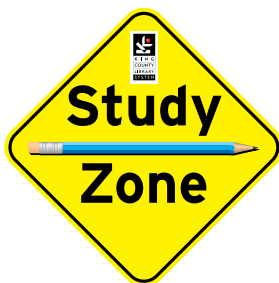
Combining great books and quiz show questions sets the stage for the annual **Global Reading Challenge**. Eleven hundred fourth and fifth grade students from 42 schools formed teams, read books and had fun in these challenging contests.

Students who need extra help with homework can visit **Study Zones** in nearly all libraries. More than 200 volunteers lent their expertise in tutoring 2,600 students in a variety of subjects, including math and science.

The **Read 3, Get 1 Free** program involved 3,600 teens and provided free books as incentives for reading time and reviews.

Looking to the Future

Your investment in Early Literacy and in reading programs for all ages will reap substantial benefits for children and adults, employers and our community. Libraries change lives. Your support of the KCLS Foundation is making a difference and creating a community of readers. Thank you.



Ready-Set-Read

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The KCLS Foundation welcomes gifts to its endowment fund, honor and memorial gifts, appreciated stock and other planned gifts, bequests, in-kind donations and cash contributions. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Gifts to the Foundation are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

KCLS Foundation received \$619,396 in contributions in 2005. A total of \$372,277 was distributed in support of library programs and the Library Connection @ Southcenter project, and \$106,069 was spent on administration and fundraising costs. Financial statements are available by contacting the Foundation office.

The KCLS Foundation appreciates the generous corporate, foundation, and community support provided through contributions of Board leadership, financial resources, and in-kind services.

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