



Final Report on Library Services & Programs Priority Survey

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Introduction

In the fall of 2009, as part of the 2010 budget-planning process and work on the 2010-2012 strategic plan, Worthington Libraries sought community feedback to help determine service priorities.

Library staff developed a survey which asked respondents to rate a list of 38 services and 14 programs as *unnecessary*, *nice to have* and *essential* on both a personal level and a community level. (For example, a respondent could rate storytimes as *personally unnecessary*, but *essential to the community*.) Respondents had the opportunity to share additional feedback in an open-ended question.

Respondents were also asked to provide basic demographic information, including age, gender, home ZIP code and primary library.

The survey was available online and in paper form in all three locations, from October 1-November 9, 2009, a total of 40 days. The online survey appeared as the homepage on all publicly-accessible computers in the Library during this period and a link to the online survey was sent to all registered borrowers with valid e-mail addresses (approximately 35,000 people out of 76,731 total cardholders).

We received 5,984 complete responses to the survey; of these responses, 1,345 included additional comments. This report offers a summary of the survey results, both the ratings and comments.

A separate appendix to this report offers additional background, including a copy of the survey instrument, a demographic summary of the respondents, distribution of all ratings and a full listing of all public comments.

Ratings of services and programs

At the conclusion of the survey period the ratings were tallied and analyzed. A rating of *unnecessary* was assigned a score of 0; *nice to have* was assigned 1; and *essential* was assigned 2. For each item on the survey, an average score was calculated for the personal rating and the community rating. The demographic information provided along with the survey responses permitted further analysis by a variety of segments, such as age.

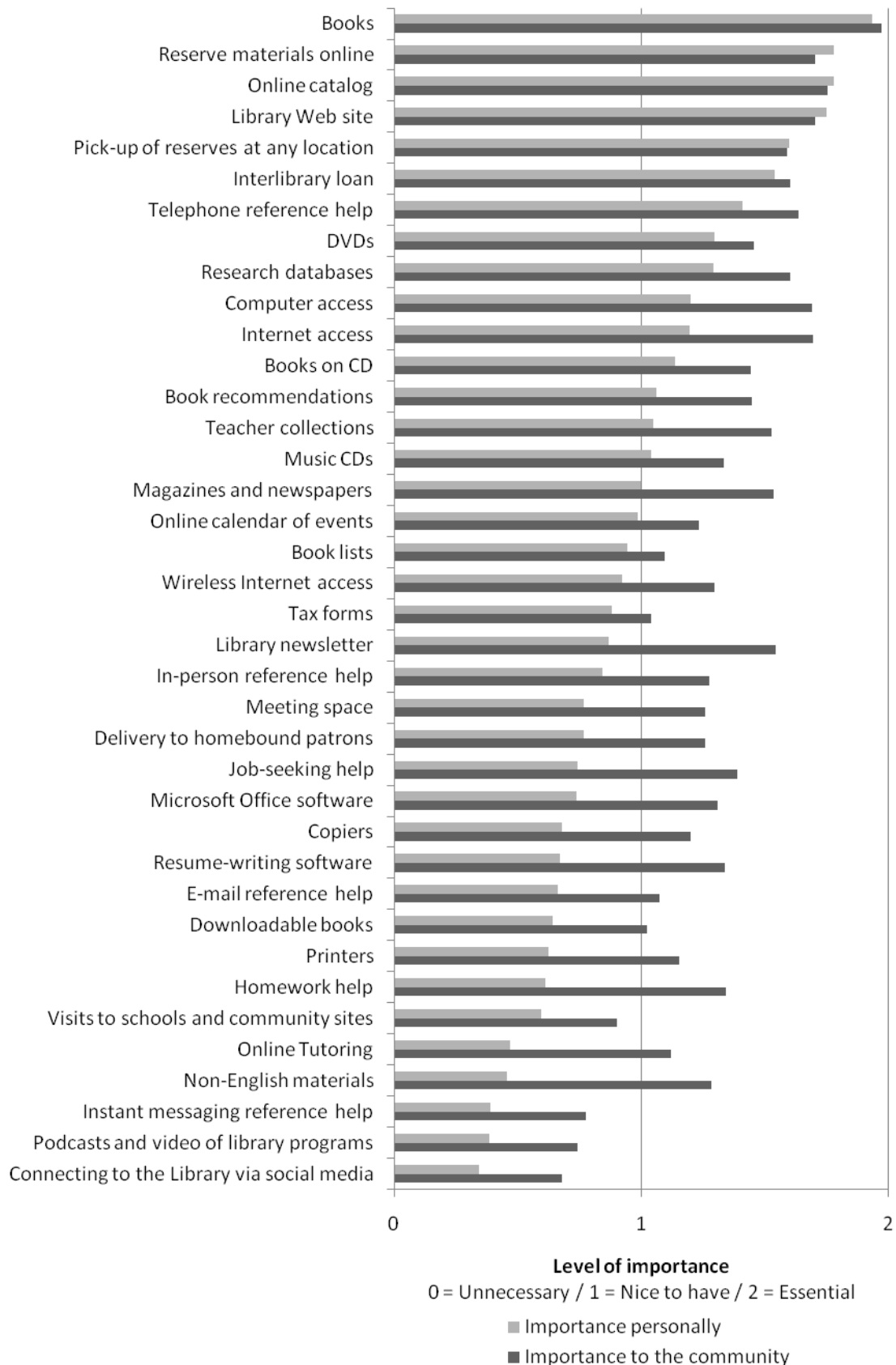
Materials and services

Survey respondents rated most services quite highly at the community level, with books very nearly achieving a perfect “essential” rating (Figure 1). Just a few services fall below the “nice to have” rating, in terms of importance to the community. At the personal level, books still rank near the essential mark, but many services rated highly for community importance are not as important to people on an individual level, such as non-English materials, job-seeking help and homework help. These differences suggest that although many respondents may not personally use such services, they believe that many services have value for others in the community.

Among the top services at the personal level, books rank as the most important service, followed by online reserves, online catalog, library Web site and pick-up of reserves at any location. Looking at these together, the top-rated services among respondents are centered on using library tools to borrow books.

At the other end of the spectrum, those services ranked least important on the personal level are social media, podcasts/video, IM reference, non-English materials and online tutoring. New online media initiatives predominate among the lowest-rated services.

Figure 1. Average importance ratings of materials & services, ranked by personal importance

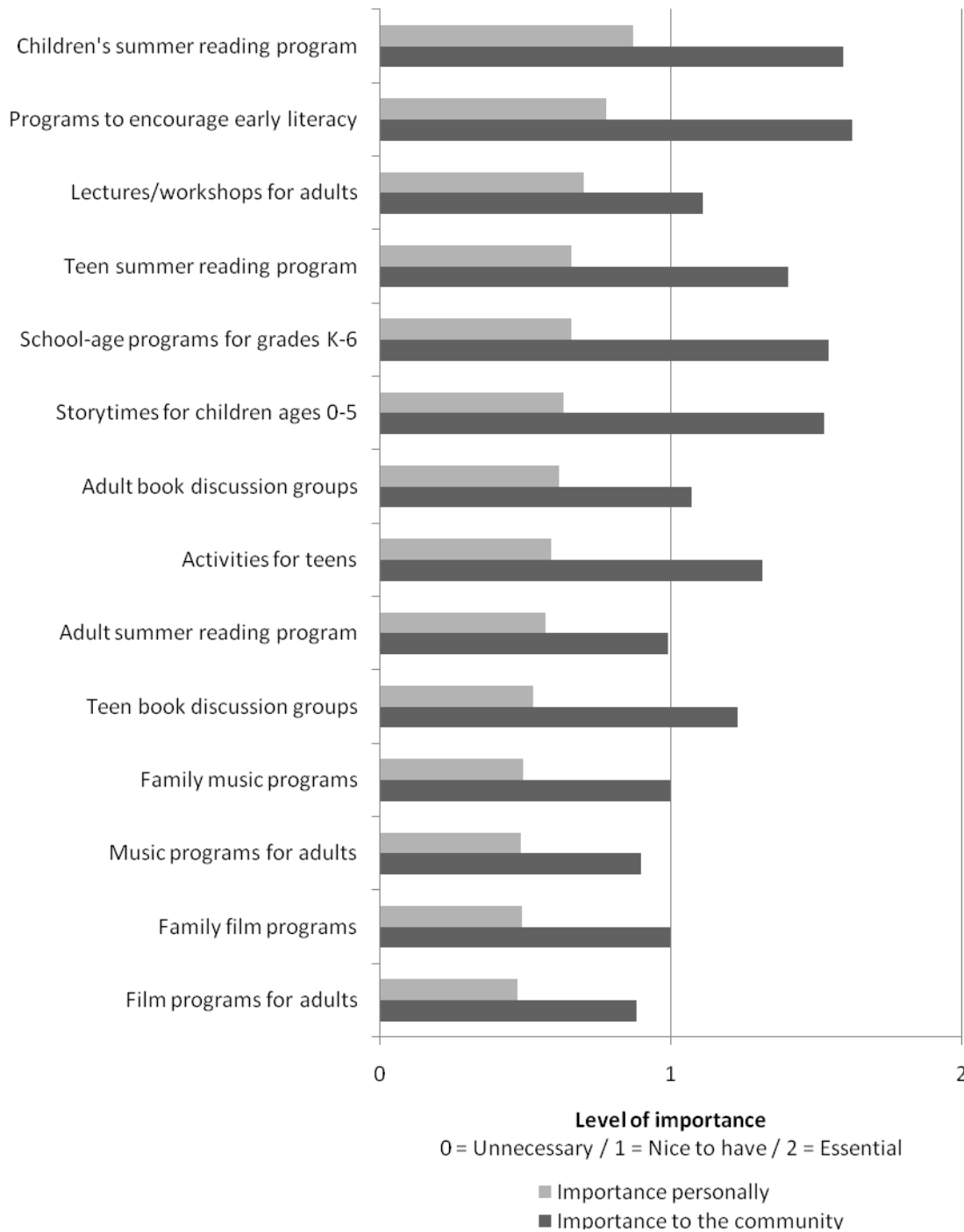


Programs

Respondents did not rate programs as highly as materials and services. At the community level, no single program category achieves a rating of “essential” (Figure 2). At the personal level, ratings of programs are even lower. No single program category achieves a “nice to have” rating.

Programs for children were rated more highly than other types of programs. Film and music programs—for adults and families—received the lowest ratings.

Figure 2. Average importance ratings of programs, ranked by personal importance.



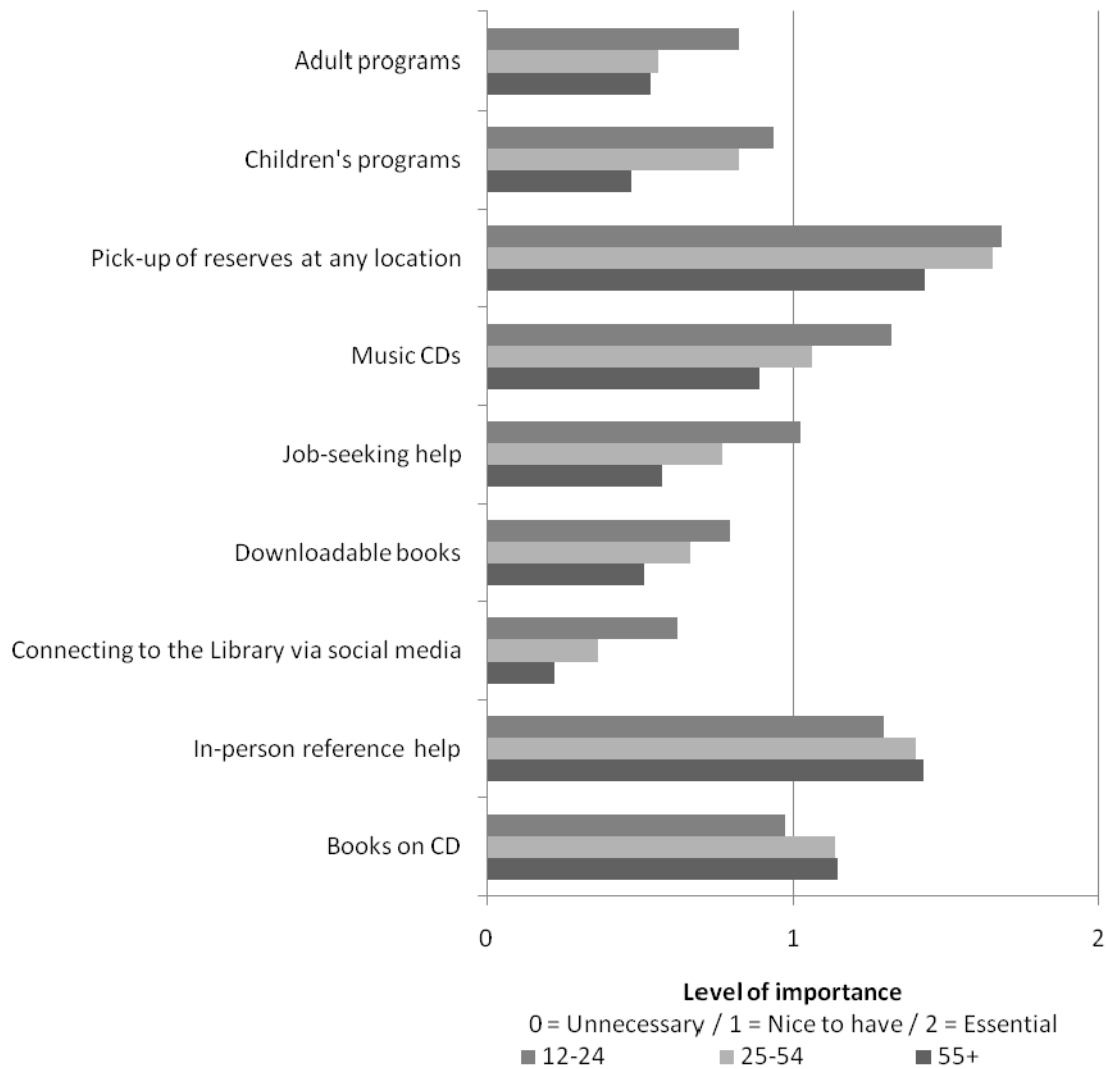
Differences by age and response location

Analysis revealed some meaningful differences in ratings among different segments of the survey respondents.

Those under 55—young people and parents—rank children’s programs highest (Figure 3). Older adults—those over age 55—rated nearly all services and programs consistently lower than other age groups. Teens, college and post-college age adults—those between 12 and 24—rated most services consistently higher.

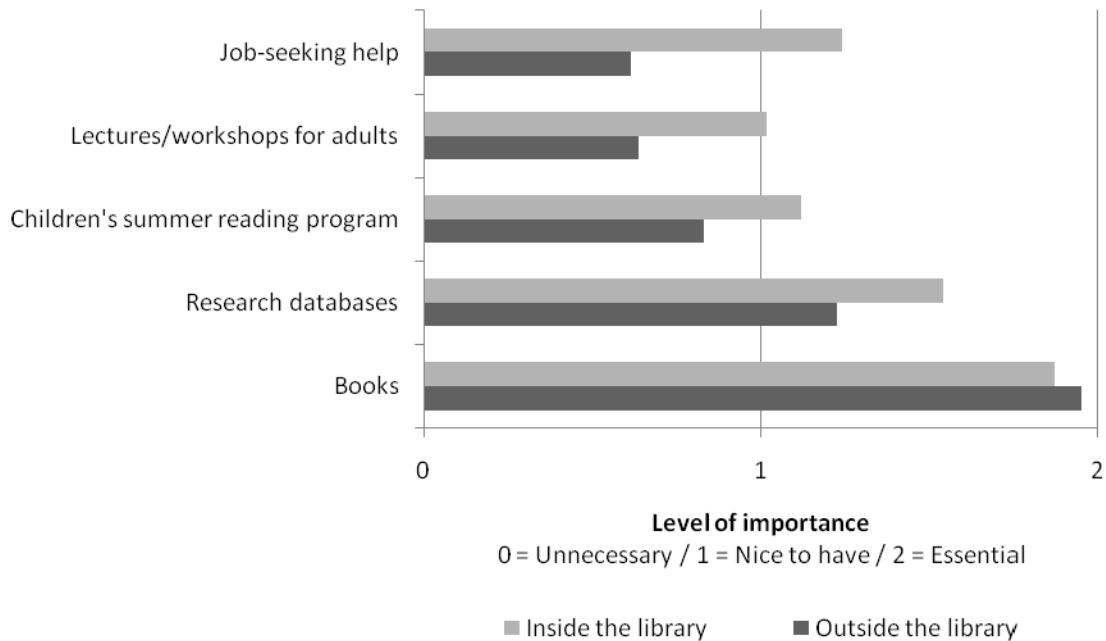
Older adults did rate in-person reference help and books on CD slightly more highly than those in the 12-24-year-old age group.

Figure 3. Selected personal ratings by age.



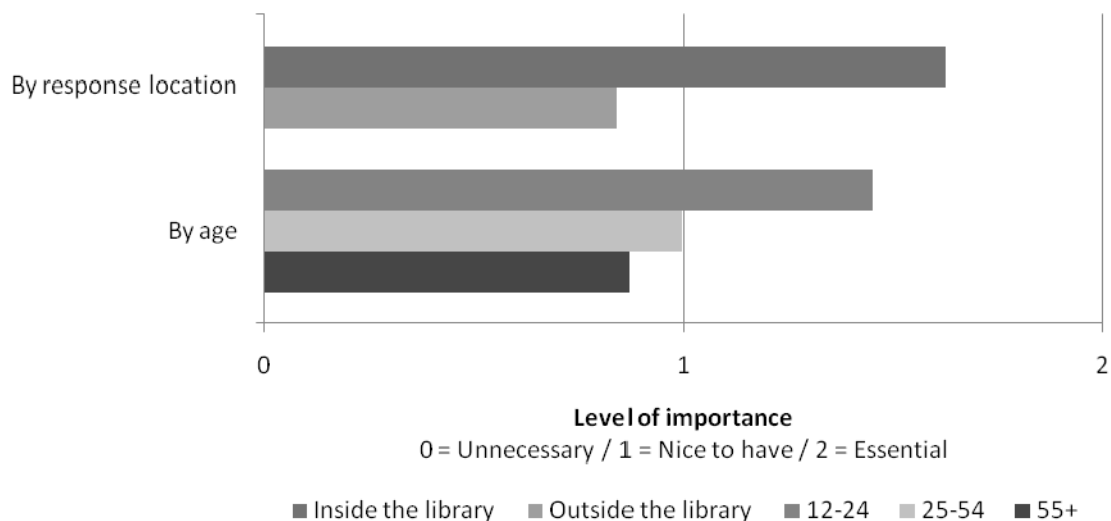
Using IP addresses associated with each online survey submission, responses submitted from library computers could be identified: about one-fifth of all responses came from inside the library. People taking the survey inside the library consistently gave higher ratings to programs and services, with the exception of books (Figure 4). For people taking the survey inside the library, technology-based services took the top spots.

Figure 4. Selected personal ratings by response location.



In fact, there were dramatic differences in ratings of technology-based services (i.e., hardware and software available inside the library such as copiers, printers, computers, Internet access and Microsoft Office software) by response location and by age (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Personal ratings of technology-based services, by response location and age.



Not surprisingly, people completing the online survey on library computers rated such services more highly than those who submitted the online survey elsewhere. In fact, among this segment, books were the third-ranked service, with Internet access and computer access taking the first and second spots.

Likewise, younger people, those ages 12-24, ranked technology based-services more highly than older people. These findings suggest that a distinct segment of respondents—including high-school and college-aged students—highly value the hardware and software available to them at the Library.

Comments

The survey concluded with an open-ended question that invited respondents to share additional thoughts about library services and programs. About one-fifth of the surveys submitted included comments. Respondents used the open-ended space to elaborate on their responses and comment on important aspects of library service not mentioned in the survey.

Materials

Several respondents commented on the overall value of the library's collection.

Circulation of materials is the core mission of the library. Buying new material and maintaining your excellent circulation options must be the priority.

The materials and accessibility to those materials are the most important service that you provide.

Books were singled out by respondents as being particularly valuable, often to the exclusion of all other materials, services and programs.

Make it about the books first.

Books are simply not optional, you're a library

Books are the basis of a library, and having them and making them accessible are the most important things.

In my opinion, the library's purpose is to make books available to all members of the community. All services after that are nice to have but not essential.

Any loss of services that are currently provided will be felt, but having said that, the main purpose of a library as I see it is to provide books. Everything else is a bonus.

Comments on audiovisual materials (DVDs/movies and CDs/music) were more mixed. Most respondents who commented on audiovisual materials included them among the materials and services they use regularly (often alongside books), while a few respondents expressed concern about audiovisual materials they considered lacking in educational value.

Borrowing children's dvd's and books are of great value to my family and I am sure to others in the community.

The library is our lifeline for books and movies.

I greatly value the Cd and movie collections at the library.

Thank you for your selection of DVDs. I am unemployed and can't afford to go to the movies or to rent. Your DVDs have provided us many ours of entertainment.

I really oppose the library loaning videos and dvd's. Unless the programs are educational, I think the Hollywood stuff should be left to the video stores. Precious library resources should be focused on books and educational materials.

DVDs, films, and Music CDs are a convenience, but cuts to them should be made before cuts to books or educational programs. Educational DVDs would be an exception. Entertainment should always take a back seat when it comes to cost cutting.

Comments on magazines and newspapers were somewhat mixed. Many respondents included magazines and newspapers among the basic materials a library should

provide, while others indicated a willingness to give up access to magazine and newspaper subscriptions to save money.

It is important that the Library maintain print subscriptions to newspapers and periodicals.

Since you have limited funds, please focus on providing books, magazines, research materials and librarians who can help patrons locate the aforementioned items.

Spend the money on the basics of books, magazines and newspapers and keep online access to obtain them.

Stick to the basics....BOOKS....Newspapers...magazines! Trying to have everything for everyone is a recipe for failure.

Things like dvd's, magazines & music CD's can take a backseat to these more important resources.

Comments on audiobooks were uniformly positive. Respondents were effusive in their praise of audiobooks, often remarking on the value they bring to their lives.

Hurrah for books on CD!

You Book on CD collection is fabulous.

I really like your books on CD section. While I am an avid reader, I get much enrichment out of listening to books and lectures in my car on the way to/from work. This has turned what was really lost time into something useful and enjoyable.

Being visually impaired I find library services to be invaluable. As TV is extremely difficult, audio material helps to fill my life. Thank you.

Several respondents shared their appreciation of research databases available online. A few count research databases among the basic materials the library should provide; others find value in particular offerings.

The most important to me and everyone is the availability of non-fiction and fiction books, magazines, newspapers, and research databases.

Other than checking out books and movies the most important service you offer is the online genealogy information.

The on-line stuff is a tremendous help to me, especially since I have such little time to come in person. I especially like ancestry.com access since it is prohibitively expensive to get a personal account with them. If not for the library there would be no way I would ever see that.

I am very happy that the library provides access to research databases. The Consumer Reports site enabled me to make a more informed decision about the purchase of major household appliances

I use the library online just about every day. I need the online Reference USA to conduct my business. I have been told the same thing by many other people..

The most important things to our family are ... the Rosetta Stone online language program. Family members of all ages have benefitted from this wonderful free program. I still can't believe what a wonderful opportunity it is.

Respondents shared favorable comments on downloadable books and audio at a rate of 2 to 1. Most respondents commented favorably on the convenience and the cost- and shelf-space-savings. Some respondents commented on difficulty using downloadable media and shared concerns that digital media might replace books.

The opportunity to download audio books digitally is awesome!

I think more electronic media will be nice and help reduce cost in terms and shelf space and physical management.

I truly value the ability to download books. I do not know what I would do if this option was taken away. I do not have time to read and listening to downloadable books or books on CD in the car is my escape.

Whatever you do please don't cut Digital Downloads. They have made my life so much better and that is no figure of speech.

We haven't found the downloadable movies/books are that great and they are hard to search through.

Please please please do NOT do away with books in favor of digital reading devices or media.

Several respondents commented on the provision of non-English materials. Most respondents highlighted the importance of non-English materials in creating a diverse community; two respondents suggested scaling back the non-English collection.

I think that having books, music, and movies in different languages is important. I love Latin music and reading books in Spanish. Thanks!

please dont cut down on non-english material. we need that as a community.

Internatinal services and books are essential to our growing diverse population.

Also, a place where people new to our country can find materials in their own language and also materials to help them learn English and how to adapt to life in our country.

De-emphasize foreign language acquisitions. This will encourage foreign nationals to learn English and save you money.

Finally, a few respondents expressed concerns about the availability of Web sites, movies and books that they deem inappropriate

I can understand DVDs/CDs, but do we need R rated materials?

I hope all the kids' violent dvds like pokemon, etc will be removed from the shelves even for financial purpose and for children's psychological health.

Internet access, particularly when pornography and other filth is accessed at the library, should be cut off completely.

Services

One of the most frequent areas of concern among respondents was hours of service. Many respondents advocated maintaining hours on Sundays—or even extending Sunday hours year-round—and expressed the importance of evening and weekend hours. Some respondents expressed support for reducing hours, especially if it meant that other services and programs would not be cut.

Maintain the hours of service.

Do not cut hours!

Extended hours on Friday, Saturday, Sunday would give us more access to the library since that is the time we have off from work, etc. Maybe the library could reduce its hours during the week and extend them on week-ends when the need is the most.

I am thankful that Worthington library branches are remaining open on Sundays while the Columbus libraries have to be closed at this time. Open on Sunday is an "essential". Thank you.

I would rather see the library cut services than cut hours, as my work schedule restricts the times that I can visit the library.

Maintaining hours as much as possible is essential.

Please do not reduce hours open!!!!

As a teacher, the Sunday hours were very helpful.

Evening hours and weekend hours are essential for those of us who work during the day, especially when all adults in the household work during the day.

I think it is more important to maintain the quality and quantity of materials than the number of hours a day the library is open.

Please cut hours of operation before cutting essential library services.

Although I use the library on Sundays, I would be willing to give up the extra day of service in order to keep a program for the community.

I think that closing the libraries on Sundays might be considered. People manage all summer without the library. Students could plan to use Saturdays, checking out needed materials or the Internet at home. Or keep some of the libraries open and close others. Perhaps be open one fewer night per week.

Comments about the use of online catalog to reserve books for pickup at any library were overwhelmingly positive, with several comments designating the online catalog as essential.

As a business professional with a limited amount of time, the online search and reservation feature has been tremendously convenient!

Having the ability to reserve materials online has helped our entire family develop a hobby of reading and we pickup books on reserve, on an average, 3 days a week. We love our library, it truly enriches our lives.

I absolutely love the online reserve system and being able to pick up any book in the system at my location.

I definitely think you need to keep the online library reserve, renew capability. Also, I think it is essential to be able to pick the books up at your neighborhood library. To me that is the most crucial service the library provides since it can access so many titles that a single library cannot possibly carry. To have to drive to each branch to pick up the resources you need is not feasible. I think this is what sets this library system above so many others.

I love being able to access my account online and reserve books, pay fines, or find books online.

Online catalogs/reference are essential as they help me make the best use of my time in the library. The after-hours pick up option is a great option for busy working folks like me who can not always get to the library during business hours.

Online reserve and pick up at any location are the most essential. Love the library!!

Comments about technology-based services such as computers, Internet access, printers, and copiers were generally positive. Many respondents vouch personally for the importance of access to Internet-connected computers in the library, while others recognize the importance of such services to others in the community. A few respondents expressed concern that computers and other technology receive greater emphasis than books and other library services.

It is vital to me to have computers and online access in the library in this day and age. I cannot afford to have a computer and internet at home so it helps me to succeed in college.

Internet access is necessary as I cannot afford monthly internet access at this time.

Thank you so much for the computer & internet access. I can do research, pay bills, and keep up with the world!

Anything related to technology is essential in our libraries: Internet access, printers, fax machines, copy machines.

I love the library and use it on average once a week, for borrowing books, browsing, using the computers with internet access and printers, the wireless internet, and the copiers.

I think the computers are something that's really needed. For those who don't have computers and/or printers at home and for times when something happens and your home computer and/or printer doesn't work. Through the years we have made many trips to the library primarily to use the computers and printers.

Computer access and internet access rank especially high among my assessment of library amenities available to the public, particularly in this time of job losses and job shortages, so that people may research and apply to positions without having to pay (as they may be unable to pay) for home access to the internet.

Not everyone is fortunate enough to have a computer at home. The computer access, programs and tutorials are especially helpful to those who are job seekers.

I would like more books. I do appreciate being able to reserve and get books, but it seems there are fewer and fewer books on the shelves. Back to the basics: more books and fewer computers!

Comments about services for job seekers were uniformly positive. Respondents acknowledge the value of job-seeking assistance on a personal level and a community level.

I do not have a computer at home nor a cell phone. I am unemployed due to the economy. My boss closed shop. I absolutely need the library to apply for jobs and to revamp my resume.

As a person whose husband has lost a job, it was a great comfort to know that he could come to the library to both complete his resumee and apply for jobs online.

I feel in this current economy it is crucial to have resources for people looking for jobs (computers for internet searches, ability to print resumes, etc...).

Although I do not use the services of the library for job searches and for young children's programs, I think these area very valuable.

Several respondents commented on online services. Many remarked on the convenience that online services provide, but a few suggested that cuts should start with online services.

I am very interested in more services, groups, materials being available online. As I get older, I have less time to go there in person and Online is convenient.

If the library can figure out a good way to capitalize on the social networking trends and work them into the operations in such a way that they still remain a good information center to the community, then that's a good idea. ... Also, I would capitalize on the growing mobile trends of people. For instance, I can see people using an iPhone app that allows them to do the common tasks people do when they use the website.

As we move forwards technologically as a society, the library needs to continue to provide access to digital resources and tools. In the long run it will serve the community better and lead to increased and improved ways to interact with it.

I also believe that it is essential to keep pace with technology; the online services you provide are excellent. I would hate to see those services take a hit. I may not use them often myself, but I believe in their value.

Keeping things the way they are now seems the right way to go, but if cuts have to be made, they should first start with extraneous materials like podcasts and online information.

Online interactive things are great to have but should be held off till there is more money to spread around.

Several respondents commented to express appreciation of the pickup window at the Northwest Library for the convenience it offers.

Online catalog, Internet book requests and the drive-up pickup are ESSENTIAL to my family!

The new driveup system is AWESOME!!

I just love how I can reserve books online and pick them up at the drive-thru!!

Keep the drive thru window at the Northwest library - huge timesaver and amazing for moms w/tots/sick kids who need to get some entertainment for the kids but can't drag them all out of the car.

The drive-thru for picking up reserves is great!!!

Several respondents suggested discontinuing the library newsletter. While these comments acknowledge the value of the library newsletter, respondents suggested scaling back the printing and mailing and instead moving it online as a cost saving-measure.

Maybe some money could be saved by cutting down the newsletter, though I wouldn't take it away entirely-- without it, I'd probably never think of the libraries and the services it provides, and then I wouldn't be participating.

I really think the newsletter is unnecessary even for folks like us who are "Friends of the Library." We can get library info easily through the local newspapers and publicity available at the library, itself.

Although it is nice to have printed copies of fliers and newsletters, all of those materials could be made electronic with one or two posted at the library.

Library newsletter copies would be limited to few copies on information desks and should be returned. Same with simpler paperwork which are accessible but will so without surplus copies.

Many respondents shared feedback on a variety of other library services. Respondents commented favorably on services such as delivery to homebound patrons, after-hours pickup, reading lists and staff recommendations and self checkout.

The most important service to the community would be delivery of books to homebound patrons. I wouldn't cut that out.

The after-hours pick up option is a great option for busy working folks like me who can not always get to the library during business hours.

Your after- hours pick-up service is forward thinking - it will benefit the public if you need to reduce hours. I have already used it and it couldn't be easier.

I have loved staff selections and recommendations- it has widened my reading of both subject and style.

Putting suggested books on display has been very helpful to me in picking out books for my grandchildren.

The self checkout process is an amazing success!!!

Programs

Many respondents' comments emphasize the critical importance of the library's role in early literacy and education. In keeping with the emphasis on books, many respondents focused on the need for the library to continue to support childhood literacy and foster the love of reading in all ages.

The library is vital in supporting childhood literacy. Any program that gets children reading and accessing a wide variety of sources should be a priority.

When my children were growing up, we used the story times and other programs for children. I believe that literacy and love of reading are developed thru childhood library programs.

When in doubt, keep it about the books and encouraging and helping achieve global and community literacy.

I don't have kids, but I think the children's programs are most important. Adults don't necessarily need these but for kids, it's very important to start learning how to read and enjoy books early on.

The most important services, IMO, are the traditional library services and encouraging reading and literacy.

The early literacy & adult literacy are especially important, instilling life long habits & skills.

The basic services of lending books and programs to encourage young people and teenagers to use and enjoy the library are VERY important. You are a source of of education and entertainment for young people which helps them become good citizens and good members of our community. Please continue to help young people. Old folks who use the library will continue to do so because we always have. Make sure to get the younger ones involved.

Providing programs that stimulate a love of reading to youth groups of all ages is I believe the most important mission of the library. Providing free services and programs to families that do not have the means to provide their children (buy books, reference materials, computer access) is important to fulfill that goal. Marketing the library's programs to be sure the families know about the library's services is important.

Several respondents shared strong comments on the importance of the summer reading program and the role it plays in supporting literacy and fostering a love of reading. A few respondents suggested scaling back the summer reading program, by spending less on prizes or discontinuing the adult program.

But the summer reading program has to stay. It is THE most essential program this library system offers. Without it, I cannot imagine what turns literacy would take. I have personally worked the Summer Reading Program sign-up table for years, and seen how it inspires children as well as adults to explore the world of reading. It is an incredible program for me to participate in as well as see the improvement in others, and an incredible program for all ages to get excited about an important skill.

The library programs are all nice, but I believe that they are unnecessary with the exception of the summer reading programs. I grew up having them as my motivation, and I still participate in them today as an adult.

Summer programs are anticipated at our home by all ages, and are a strong part of our summer activities.

The Summer reading program. Seriously, it is as important to us as christmas. Summer would not be the same without it.

do everything you can to keep the children's summer reading program alive! It's truly the best :)

Honestly I think the summer reading program could be done much better. I think the focus is too much on getting prizes. I really think that if there were more levels with activities, kids would have more fun. This doesn't have to be pricey. I remember when kids wrote their names on various items and posted them on the wall once they reached the first level. My kids loved that. Have

more doing stuff and make it less about getting to that one big prize. It would last longer and be more interactive.

I've always felt that Adult Summer Reading programs are a luxury. Adults should be models...reading for pleasure...no program or reward needed.

Many respondents commented on other kinds of library programs. The majority of the comments support maintaining children's programs and moving away from non-core programming, such as film and music programs and programs for adults. A few respondents suggested that storytimes for children could be discontinued.

I come every Tues with my grandchildren for story time for 2 to 3. It is something my grandchildren enjoy very much. I hate to see anything be cut from the library as it is a vital part to our community. If you can read, there is nothing you can't do.

I believe it is very important not to cut library programs focused towards kids and adolescents.

Programs and social activities (e.g., reading groups) for patrons are nice, but if things need to get cut, that's the reality of it.

I put nice to have on the importance of library programs for adults because I think there are more outlets for adults and more opportunity to go to a bookstore for a discussion group etc.. but if your research shows that many senior citizens walk to the library for these programs with that information they would seem essential too.

I care less about programming than I care about lots of good books, audio books, and DVD's, and about the wonderful access provided through the interlibrary loan system and the online research databases. In the area of programming I'd be fine with cutting all adult stuff and just keeping the storytimes and programs for kids in elementary school. By the end of elementary school they usually are or are not readers, and I'm not sure the programs change that much. You do a terrific job and I am confident that even with cutbacks that will continue to be true.

Eliminate the storytelling for children!!! it's nice, but parents can do that at home!! Anything that helps job seekers should take precedence over entertaining children, who have plenty of stuff around them to keep them occupied! Let parents take more time with this; if they can take their kids to the library for story telling, they can use the same amount of time to do it at home!!!!!!

Staff and facilities

Comments about staff were overwhelmingly positive. Many respondents commented on the helpfulness and friendliness of staff, remarking that these qualities set Worthington Libraries apart from other library systems. A few respondents suggested cutting staff and/or salaries.

I think the library and ALL of its' staff do an EXCELLENT job of serving the community !!

I come all the way to Worthington Ohio to the library from German Village because I can always find what I am looking for at the Old Worthington Library. More importantly, I can always find a librarian to help me.

I commend the Worthington Library staff for all the hard work they do to keep the library the best in the area. The staff are the friendliest and most helpful that I've ever dealt with.

I have live in many areas of the Eastern USA, including New York City, Chicago and Cleveland and this is the very best library I have ever been to. Your staff in very helpful and extremely well versed in their jobs.

I have used the library staff almost every time I have gone to the library. Sometimes it takes me a while to find a book I looked up, and the staff can find it for me in no time. The personal touch and recommendations has been extremely helpful.

It is wonderful to have "live" staff to assist patrons; it sets the Worthington Library system apart. I believe the senior patrons particularly appreciate this sort of service.

We love this Library! Everyone who works here makes it their job to help us find what we need - No more cuts!

The Worthington Libraries are extraordinary and staffed by wonderful, helpful people. Thank you for all you do for the community - the students and children and the adults alike.

I am also very pleased with the help given by the staff at the library...they go the extra mile, and for that I am not only appreciative but always vote "yes" on taxes and tariffs for the library...

Sometimes there seem to be more employees than patrons. Hopefully, many of them are volunteers!

Cut salaries of all employees across the board, leaving all programs intact.

Several respondents offered feedback on the library facilities and atmosphere. Many respondents noted that they value the library as a place to read, study and gather. Several respondents expressed appreciation for the improvements realized by the recent building renovations, especially the children's and teen areas. Some respondents complained about noise levels.

The most important things to our family are: #3: The books and the atmosphere of the library. Always clean, well-ordered, quiet, great atmosphere.

I use the library primarily for books, quiet reading space, and the internet. So up to date, new books, plenty of study space, and high speed internet are essential.

The most essential areas are to be there for those who want to: read for pleasure, have a place to do research and to be able to study and do homework in a quiet, respectful atmosphere; have computers available for those who cannot afford their own; encourage their children to learn about books and the world around them and to know that learning can be fun. Also, as a gathering place for the community.

My kids both LOVE to pick out their own books, read books on your computers, and just hang around in your wonderful children's area.

The children's area is wonderful for kids to interact.

The remodel of the Northwest library seems to have made things more efficient and I think was a good decision.

I think the teen room was the best renovation to this library. It is very helpful to students like myself. The children's center is very nice as well.

At Northwest, the teen room is the place all 3 of my kids hang out. Giving each age group a 'place' in the library to study or to read is wonderful.

Noise reduction at times. Kids talking. Kids crying. Cell phone conversation at the computers-rude.

One point I would like to submit would be to have cell phones turned off during time in the library. Too many times, I have been working on the computer and a phone will ring and the person will talk OUT LOUD, as if nothing is going on around them.

BTW, unfortunately, on several occasions the library has appeared to be used as an after-school warehouse for older children, who are too often unruly--I do not imply this is a problem with the library, but with parents using the library as babysitters rather than attend to their own children.

The teen room is very disruptive.

Many respondents commented on the Worthington Park location. Most respondents shared their appreciation for library service in the northeast part of our district, especially for the purposes of picking up reserves and returning materials. A few

respondents suggested that the Worthington Park location be closed to maintain service at the other two locations.

The library is a great place, especially glad the Worth Park Library is open, as there was nothing in that area. Hope it stays open. I will vote FOR any library issues that i have the opportunity to vote on.

We live within walking distance from Worthington Park library and are very thankful that it has opened.

I hope that the Worthington Park Library will be able to stay open. It has been wonderful having it so close to my home instead of having to go downtown Worthington.

I LOVE the Worthington Park location. It is an important addition to our part of the Worthington schools community.

Love, love, love Worthington Park location. Nice, small option for those who live close with the option of having materials delivered for pick-up and drop off there. Essential. Please try to keep it open.

The Worthington Park "Store-Front" Library has become a great asset to this area of Columbus/Worthington/Westerville. I seldom made the trip to the main branch, but frequent this location often.

get rid of park library and keep all of the present programs at the other two libraries.

I would look at how busy the park road library is. is it paying for itself? when the lease is up i would take another look at that location. the community lived years without it we can again.

Other feedback

Hundreds of respondents used the open-ended space to praise Worthington Libraries and to express their support.

The Worthington Libraries provide high value, important services for quality of life in Worthington.

I LOVE the Worthington Libraries! They are a true asset to our community and I am a frequent user!

Worthington libraries is the greatest public resource in this community. We must do all we can to preserve it as the dynamic entity it is.

The library is fantastic. There is a reason awards have been won! It has become a community center besides a library. It is now a "destination" rather than a place to obtain books, etc.

Our Library system deserves the awards it receives. It is wonderful! We should make every effort to maintain its quality and diversity through good times and bad.

Thanks for the wonderful service . You guys are awesome.

Thank you for everything you do at the library. We are so fortunate to have such a wonderful resource in our community. Our libraries have the best features, services, and personnel possible. THANK YOU!!!!

I am 62 years old, and disabled. My days would be sorely lacking without the library and its programs.

I am a Korean-American who has lived in USA almost 25 years. I think, the Library is very important institution to the community and also for myself. I use this institution quite often and appreciate their works.

I am thankful for the great job you all do for me and the community, BRAVO!

Your service and programs are outstanding.

You all are fabulous and good luck with this challenge. You have my support with whatever you come up with.

I love all that Old Worthington Library has offered my family throughout the years. My children are now 21, 18, 16. We still use the library often and would vote to increase funding to keep services in place! Thanks for all you do!!

I just want to say every experience we have had with Northwest Library has been top notch.

I hope that the Worthington Park Library will be able to stay open. It has been wonderful having it so close to my home instead of having to go downtown Worthington. Thanks for letting me share. Good luck with the budget. You all rock in my book. :)

Good Luck. I wish people/ government could see what a valuable resource you are. Let the community know what we can do to help!

Do what you need to do to balance the budget. I will support you in your decisions.

As is often said, the library makes excellent use of our tax dollars!

Many respondents also shared moving remarks on the value that libraries bring to society in general.

A dynamic and quality library is the reflection of an educated and thinking community. Compromising on library standards is the worst indication of a community that is losing its commitment to excellence for its children and its adults.

A free public library is essential to a free democracy. It is a pillar of an educated, informed, well-served and egalitarian society. Without that, my first and second generation immigrant parents would have had a much poorer life, and so would I. This is bottom-line stuff for our society and its values.

I am VERY angry that libraries are being cut via financing! They are islands of hope, knowledge and GROWTH for all people.

I believe that libraries are a great equalizer, providing access to reading, resources, education, and computer services --- regardless of one's income, age, ability.

If we had no libraries, an the growth of illiteracy would grow, as would creativity and community wholesomeness. Libraries are fortresses on behalf of the world against ignorance and intolerance.

Imagine a world without libraries. I grew up in a country where books were available the a mobile library every two weeks. 1 book per person. Due to circumstances I was forced to more or less educate myself. Had I not had access to that lifeline of knowledge I would not have been able to emigrate to TheUnited States nor would I have had the great honour to become one of its citizens.

Our country is a democracy and a democracy can only work if its Citizens are informed. Our Libraries provide this necessary and essential service and the opportunity for us all to learn and be informed.

Many respondents offered suggestions for cutting costs and seeking alternative sources of funding. Respondents advocated ceasing services that are duplicated elsewhere in the community, taking advantage of volunteers, exploring fees for some services, soliciting donations and many additional ideas for raising funds and cutting costs.

Increase your already outstanding volunteer program to provide some services presently being provided by staff.

How about staffing with more volunteers? OR, people volunteering for their special interests programs?

Note that we live in Delaware County and we drive past the Powell library on our way to Northwest. I have no idea how many of your patrons are not residents of your particular district and hence pay no taxes for support. We would have no complaint if a users fee of some sort would be levied on those of us not living within your taxing district.

Worthington residents voted for and paid for our library. The rest of the crowd should pay a fee for entry.

How about opening the meeting rooms for, For-Profit companies and charging a fair fee to use the space?

I don't use library computers, but I see a lot of people using them. I'm sort of ambivalent on must how much computing power you should be providing to the community. You're not an internet cafe. Perhaps there is a way to charge a nominal fee for usage time.

I'd fully support you doubling or tripling all of your fines.

Perhaps there are also many opportunities to fund raise... selling book carrying bags with community generated art from an pay-to-enter art competition.

Is there a library fund where people could make tax deductible donations to?

Why don't you allow people to donate new books, CD's, and DVDs? I buy all sorts of new books a year, and if I donate it to the Library it just goes for out for sale for a dollar or two. Couldn't there be a list of items needed for circulation we could commit to sponsoring by donating the item?

Are there grant monies that might be available to fund some of the community support and outreach programs?

Look at the biggest expenses first; that is often where a small change can have a big influence on annual costs. For example, lowering the thermostat temperature in winter and raising it in summer just a couple degrees can make a significant difference. Also, keep in mind that air conditioning is more expensive than heating, so raising the summertime temperature by two degrees will save more money than lowering the heating temperature in winter.

Some respondents took the opportunity to make other kinds of suggestions and raise other concerns.

A vending machine would be nice....AND the ability to scan documents from the copier and save on email or computer (resumes, applications etc).

Please again provide bags for carrying books -- otherwise, will result in books being more damaged by rain and elements when transported.

More of the up to date music cd collection. I'd also like to see a broader array of technology (computer science/IT) books!

The Worthington Library needs more WORD computers. Also more time is needed rather than the limit of 60 minutes which is not enough time; more computers would give up more time per computer.

It would be nice to some programs for homeschool families and additional lending abilities for homeschool teachers (like those available to public school teachers).

People in the area are using the library parking spaces for their activiites, for example, farmers market, school, etc. Perhaps signs could be posted limiting parking to library customers only.

Would like the keyboards cleanedflu season....never know who wiped what were.....

I don't like that some people use the public spaces as their own private tutoring space.

Finally, several respondents included feedback on the survey itself. Some felt the survey was too long and others expressed uncertainty about the distinction between the personal and community ratings.

Survey too long but I hope it helps

It is a pain to check the same boxes for community; the same applies to it as applies to me.

I can only answer these questions for myself and not for the community.

I did not answer questions about what is important to the community because I would have no way of knowing what other people/strangers want/need/think.

Conclusions

The results of the service priority survey demonstrate the strong support that Worthington Libraries enjoys in the community. Thousands of people took the time to fill out the survey and hundreds voiced their support of the Library and praised library staff. Although responses to the survey indicate some clear service priorities within the community, by and large, respondents seem to believe that each of the Library's services and programs offer some value to the community as a whole.

Survey results affirm providing access to books and encouraging lifelong learning are top service priorities for the Library.

In contrast, some respondents express wariness about services, materials and programs they perceive as straying from the library's core mission, including computers, popular DVDs and music/film programs.

Responses were sometimes mixed, especially when it comes to new media and technologies. Although some respondents acknowledge their reliance on the Library for access to computers and the Internet, and tout the possibilities inherent in new media and technologies, others express concern that emphasis on such services is overtaking what they perceive as the library's core mission: providing access to books.

Respondents generally showed a willingness to give up certain services, materials and programs—at least temporarily—and offered many creative ways the Library could save money, from using more volunteers, implementing user fees, increasing fines and reducing hours.

The administrative staff and board of trustees will use this data to inform the development of the library's next strategic plan and to chart the future course of Worthington Libraries.