

To: Engage Gwinnett Community Services Work Group

From: Nancy Stanbery-Kellam  
Executive Director  
Gwinnett County Public Library

Date: January 4, 2010

Re: December 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting Questions

1. Can you characterize savings of tiered system?

The potential savings would have been in the area of personnel due to reduced hours of access in some locations.

2. What is the capacity and current usage of each library?

GCPL has 10,000 and 20,000 square foot buildings. The square footage dictates the number of computers, shelving, public seating capacity and to some degree staffing.

	Buford	Centerville	Collins Hill	Dacula	Duluth	Five Forks	Grayson
Sq. Footage	10,624	12,040	20,750	20,055	10,499	20,135	20,055
FY09 Annual Door Count	261,243	268,238	375,259	315,348	311,088	342,985	287,853

	Lawrenceville	Lilburn	Mountain Park	Norcross	Peachtree Corners	Snellville	Suwanee
Sq. Footage	28,309	10,260	10,260	10,624	14,852	10,260	20,477
FY09 Annual Door Count	355,829	283,095	276,549	240,341	277,102	213,323	383,252

System Total Square Footage: 219,200  
System Total FY09 Annual Door Count: 4,191,505

GCPL does not meet recommended State Standards for personnel, square footage, computer access, and most recently hours of operation.

3. What does traffic in libraries represent (i.e. kids waiting for parents)?

Library use includes use by all ages. Sometimes, age is a predictor of the kind of use or the time of day use. Library services used include: Reference/homework or readers' advisory assistance from librarians, access to 1 million plus item collections – including books, magazines, audio books, DVD's, and electronic collections that include books and databases, computers for library resources, computers for word processing, computers for general internet access, wireless internet access, pick up holds, print, photocopy, attend juvenile, teen or adult library programming, tutoring, use specialized reference sources, Inter-Library Loan, browse materials organized by audience and format for checkout or use meeting room at 3 branches. Some customers do come just for the atmosphere or to socialize.

4. Can any services be privatized with cost savings?

Some services are already privatized including the book courier, some IT, billing and overdue notices, and debt collection. Previously security services were outsourced but have been cancelled for lack of funding. The library does not know of other tasks that it would be cost efficient to outsource at this time.

5. Percent of shelving hours done by paid personnel vs. volunteers.

Approximately 60% of the shelving is done by paid personnel.

6. Other work volunteers could do?

Volunteers might be able to help customers with computer software (non-library resource) questions, support circulation activities, perform light indoor/outdoor facility maintenance, assist branch hosted programs, or serve as interpreters and greeters.

What additional training or other considerations would be needed? Cost for these?

The cost would be primarily staff time. Each volunteer would need to complete 20 hours of training that would include overviews of public service, library hardware and software, and library collections. Regular training updates would need to be completed as the library is fairly dynamic with regard to operations. Volunteers would need to sign commitment agreements with the library. Previous training cost estimates for a class of 20 volunteers ran about \$10,000. (Estimate includes staff time, materials, annual subscriptions, computer access etc.)

7. Have any public libraries in the U.S. been privatized?

There are subscription/membership libraries in the U.S. A membership library contradicts the philosophy of a public library as it limits access to some rather than providing access to all. According to recent research, subscriber fees at subscription/membership libraries are modest (one example, \$125/year) but the charge does not cover anywhere near the actual cost largely because these institutions are endowed or have other sources of predictable income like rent.

8. Could libraries operate with fewer paid staff? What would the staffing model look like?

Staffing decreases would by necessity cause a decrease in the level of service and/or a decrease in hours open to the public.

9. How has (can) technology lower staffing needs?

The technology adopted by the library to this point has allowed for the management of growth rather resulting in the reduction of personnel. Customer self-check, customer computer reservations, self-service photocopying and printing and the Website have all supported and encouraged growth.

The next new branch will offer customers the opportunity for self payment of fines at the checkout counter. This will be monitored to calculate staff time savings. Sometimes technology shifts time to other staff rather than actually eliminating the need for staff.

There are some hardware/software solutions to automate the check-in of materials but they require a substantial upfront and ongoing investment of money.

10. What are minimum staffing requirements?

During open hours, a Branch Manager, an Assistant Branch Manager and a Librarian must be present. The remainder of the staff and composition of the staff depend on the volume at the

work location, open hours, the specific needs of the community using the branch and to some extent the size of the building.

11. How are materials budgets divided up (i.e., how much for new books, magazines, etc.)?

The materials budget is tracked in the following manner for most budgetary purposes:

- Children (Birth to 5<sup>th</sup> Grade) Print and Audio/Visual Materials – 24%
- Teens (Grades 6-9) Print and Audio/Visual Materials – 5%.
- Adults (Includes Grades 10-12) Print and Audio/Visual Materials – 60%
- Reference and Electronic Resources for All Ages (Includes emerging formats) – 11%

12. What would you do if you have 10 percent less (or more) money?

In addition to operation and materials cuts already made in CY 2009 that will be retained in CY2010, there would have to be some version of or combination of a reduction of hours, a redistribution of hours, or branch closures.

An addition to the budget would allow for an increase in hours of operation.

13. Do all libraries need the same hours and services?

Preliminary survey results indicate that respondents are almost equally divided on this question:

- “It is most important to me that each branch of the Gwinnett Public Library has the exact same hours of operation on the same days of the week – 47.9%”
- “It is most important to me that I have access to at least one library branch somewhere in the county seven days a week – 52.1%”

In general, children’s materials and programs, hold pick up ability, computer access, fiction and non-fiction materials seem to be minimal service expectations for each location.

14. What is the “cost” for receiving state funding? Fees we can collect? Other restrictions?

State law rather than State funding restricts the collection of fees for basic library services such as checking out materials or using computers.

As of February 1<sup>st</sup>, the library will be charging fees for meeting room maintenance and use of computers without a library card. In addition library customers will no longer be able to check out materials if their account exceeds \$15.

15. What would be the “cost” of not receiving state funding? (i.e., Galileo)

**Annual State Grant for professional salaries, library materials and operational support.**

	<b>FY2008</b>	<b>FY2009</b>	<b>FY2010</b>
<b>State Grant:</b>			
Materials	424,585	303,527	143,471
Salaries and benefits	627,701	625,084	571,021
Operational	378,988		

