



**Fairfax County Public Library
Online Survey of Trustees and Staff**

**APPENDIX A
Open End Responses to the Question:**

Please share any other ideas you have for ensuring the future success of the Fairfax County Public Library.

Comments are reflected *verbatim*
as entered by the respondent



PLEASE SHARE ANY OTHER IDEAS YOU HAVE FOR ENSURING THE FUTURE SUCCESS OF THE FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY.

129 RESPONSES (46% of respondent base)

Trustees (5):

The Library Board needs time to digest and understand information they need to make decisions. From my perspective administration has not adequately followed the laws and procedures governing Library Boards in the Commonwealth and has discouraged the board from being more proactive. As times change, plans and procedures need to also. The Board needs to take the lead in moving the library forward (with the administration), by questioning information rather than just rubber stamping what administration tells us, and by keeping the five year plan current. I do have great hopes for the new administration and hope we can move forward as a team.

County Board of Supervisors should receive a briefing on the needs of the Library. They are the ones who appoint the members to the LBOT and at times they have not given a clear review as to the person they appoint, and then they are unhappy with the LBOT. The BOS should be told that the LBOT should reflect the thoughts of each district they represent and what the Supervisors expect.

The Library system needs additional funding.

I recommend increasing the visibility of the LBOT by encouraging individual trustees to reach out to their district community organizations. I also recommend that individual trustees do what they can to visit their libraries and interact with the staff members. I would also like to see a strategic calendar created for the LBOT to be proactive in its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for library funding.

The Board of Trustees should be a forward thinking body that looks to best practices in public libraries that will serve all library users. The Board must not take a personal bias towards or against one constituency group and use that to drive decision making. There is a need for more robust board governance development so that it can be a more proactive force in steering the library's mission in the community. When there are very few items for consideration brought to the table by board members, it may indicate a lack of engagement toward progressive development. Entire segments of our community do not use the library because they are unaware of its value, or the traditional views of some regarding the role of the library in the community are not working to actually meet current and future needs. The board needs to look at itself in how it can proactively develop FCPL as an indispensable virtual and actual destination for all for Fairfax County. Our citizens deserve a world class library system that will be engaging and evolving for generations to come.

Staff (124):

Staffing models need to change to better serve customers - including more outreach, less staff at the information desk, meeting customers out in the library space and not waiting for customers to come to them. Staff should learn more about how the library fits into the county - the library is a county agency and no different than any other agency. Looking for the new library director to provide direction and new perspectives so the library can move forward with new initiatives that are customer focused, not staff focused. FCPL needs to be willing to change and take risks to survive, even when staff and the public are resistant. The focus on the MLS, and that other degrees and experience is not valued, needs to be adjusted, an MLS doesn't guarantee strong supervisory and leadership skills. Purchase more e-books and popular materials, provide more programs, focus additional resources on early literacy.

Make it an imperative that county, local and state leaders know what an irreplaceable resource they have in the Fairfax County Public Library. This should be a guiding theme in all messaging because otherwise future funds will not be there to support the Library's vision for the future.

We don't need an equal number of managers to staff at the branch level. a person-in-charge doesn't need to be here in order for the library to function. We don't need to be open until 6 on Fridays. All other area systems are open until 6 and are doing fine. We need more DVDs and less useless reference books. We need better online resources for children. I understand all of these things are expensive, but with less assistant and Sunday managers we would have more money to spend on what the customers really want--materials.

For staff, a clear step by step process by which problems between staff and supervisors can be expressed, discussed, and brought to a satisfactory resolution without fear of recrimination. For the public - a wider publicity campaign to make sure all our community members know where our branches are, and that it's free to get a library card. So many people say they've been driving by the building but never knew a library was here. Others are surprised there is no cost to join.

I am extremely disheartened by the actions over the last few years by the Library Board and the Board of Supervisors. The actions of both boards served to undermine the director. The installation of former library staff on the Library Board is a continuation of this mistake, essentially escalating the opinions of a few busybodies to the level of the director. Staff whose opinions and antiquated views were somewhat balanced by the progressive view of the system while they were employees are now given elevated roles to exact change even when it is counter to the overall mission. I sincerely hope the new director is not hogtied by these actions, but I fear they will reverberate for some time. We should increase our hours of operation at all branches immediately. Sunday hours at each branch and all branches open the same hours each day, 9-9 (unless specifically limited by other considerations, such as Tysons temporary). We have more than enough staff to provide basic coverage and limited services at non-peak hours. Our staff-intensive usage is not the same as it once was and likely never will be. However, by providing access for more hours we offer the chance to grow our customers. We need to focus on purchasing more new and bestseller items so as to cut long

wait times down significantly. We should purchase at least 1 item of any requested title-this is instant gratification that the public expects and is an incredibly powerful idea to boast about come budget consideration. We should subscribe to any and all new streaming and content delivery services in a limited-time, evaluation mode as they are offered and advertise that. Every action should be guided only by if the customer is enriched and not by the impact to staff-we are here to do a job, not protect a degree or guarantee employment to future generations. If we serve the customer first the rest will take care of itself.

Less micromanaging of library branch functions by Library Administration and more focus on Library Administration as the center for supporting and helping branches succeed in providing excellent public service. Chain of command within the Library for branch, cataloging, and collections functions should lead up to senior management who are qualified professional librarians in addition to being experienced managers and administrators. Increase proactive support of professional development of the system's professional librarians, i.e., expanding and enhancing knowledges, skills, and abilities directly related to managing libraries and library collections, including broader encouragement of attendance at professional conferences and meetings outside the system. Clearer delineation of job expectations within related Library positions, e.g., Librarian I and Information Assistant, and updating of all Library position descriptions.

We need to do a better job of marketing ourselves to the public. If we can't make a case for our importance to the community, we will disappear. Both the new Director and the Library Board MUST work to get us more funding. Our print collections are in desperate need of updating and expansion, and we lack the means and ability to assist the public with technology. The library is about equal access to information, and in this day and age that means access to technology. On the staff side, we need better training at all levels. Right now there is no consistent way for staff to advance, no consistent training for positions. A top heavy, top down bureaucratic structure smothers attempts to meaningfully engage the public, and makes staff feel unsupported. This feeling is exacerbated by an inconsistent wage structure, where there is no pay-for-performance or even the smallest cost of living adjustment on a regular basis. There is an untapped wealth of experience and ability working for the library with almost no incentive to remain with the County, and that is a shame.

FCPL has too many branches. Since we probably won't be closing any of them, than staff needs to be better distributed throughout the system. I don't work at OK, but wonder why they are without circulation staff for such a long time. Admin needs to look at org charts vs. circ stats and pull branches with too many staff and fill the branches that need more. Please get rid of FCPLEA. They do nothing but use their meetings to moan and whine about FCPL failures. Other than the bag sales, what else do they do that is positive? Start making early literacy in branches more of a priority! Small communities use to have a YS manager plus a part time assistant, which they lost. Please give small communities their part time YS assistant back so they are able to offer more programming. Renee Edwards has been able to increase her staff but YS departments in branches have not been increased. Look at what Prince William, Loudoun, etc are doing in terms of programming and maybe FCPL will realize we need to step up our game. Ted Kavich could also use another person in his dept to focus on adult programming. We are totally missing the mark on programming for 20-40 year olds.

I feel that Library staff are key component to the success of the Fairfax County Public Library. It is very hard to be heard with all the competing agencies looking for increases to their budgets with the Board of Supervisors. I would like to see more interaction with the Board of Supervisors on behalf of the Library.

Although I responded that databases should be decreased this doesn't mean I don't think they have value. We just have too many databases that do the same thing at the expense of having some worth while databases. For example, I would gladly forfeit 3 databases just to get the Consumer Reports database. Studies are now coming out that are proving that "floating" does not work for large library systems. Any info staff member will report that all day long we have to disappoint people by telling them the material they desire is not available at the branch they are standing in. Offering holds is not an acceptable substitute for walking out of the library with book in hand. Our website is one of the worst library websites. It is ridiculous that we are forced to be a part of the county website. Our ILS is embarrassing. It does not serve the staff or patrons well. We cannot move fast enough to replace it. Much of what FCPL does sets our patrons up for frustration. This includes trying to navigate an inefficient website and catalogue as well as forcing them to use self serve machines. All day long patrons rightfully complain about how silly this equipment is. Many library systems offer self serve systems that allow patrons to check out and pay fines all on one machine. We make our patrons bounce around from machine to machine. Our audio and visual collection is deplorable. We are forced to send droves of customers to other nearby systems, like Arlington, if they want to check out DVDs. Our entire system is behind the times. This includes our Ebook vendor. Library systems in the area provide much more user friendly options.

Please give tech ops more people. They are woefully understaffed for the amount of work, especially with centralized review of materials. Fund people to attend outside training, and allow them to use work hours for this. Such as ALA, PLA, VLA conferences. figure out a way for us to be proactive vice reactive. I am looking forward to the results of this survey being put into practice. When new people move in, is County information on library services being given to them? Something like the old Welcome Wagon, only with information? Perhaps at the places everyone HAS to visit? We get many calls from new residents coming from other countries, wanting to know about services and inquiring as to the cost.

The only way to ensure the future success of the FCPL, is to actually follow the path laid out by a shared vision of the new Director and the Library Board of Trustees. If disgruntled staff and so called "library advocates" are allowed to continue to question every management decision than the library will continue to drift. Time to get on board, retire or find another cause.

Asking for input from staff often. We're the ones working with the customers and listening to their concerns and complaints,

Survey other agencies' services that overlap with ours so we can work together more effectively/efficiently Explore more cross-agency and public/private partnerships Explore grant funding Make employee safety and security more of a priority Support employees

when they are criticized for doing their jobs, such as when people complain about staff following privacy rules or accepted collection management practices Request that county supervisors keep in mind that the makeup of the Trustees should at least somewhat reflect the community. (Translation: the group is overwhelmingly white) Support staff language learning.

I believe it's important that FCPL maintain its personal connection with Library patrons and County citizens. One way we do this is providing top notch front line customer service in the branches including answering our phones with only one automated step to a live person. We should also have enough staff to answer our phones for 4 hours on a Sunday. In addition, branch staff need to be compensated fairly for the work they do. Some time ago there was a plan to look at reclassifying the branch positions as well as others in the library. Several branch positions have been eliminated and lower graded positions have taken on the higher level responsibilities without higher graded pay. In addition, all branch staff are required to have greater technical knowledge and many have supervisory responsibilities without being compensated for these higher levels of responsibility. Many positions are doing the same complexity of work in both the regional and community libraries but the regional staff are compensated more. Job descriptions are not accurately reflecting all the work responsibilities the branch staff have. Also, information staff at FCPL are required to know and do more than surrounding jurisdictions who require information staff to have only one area of expertise such as teen services. FCPL also has a lot of volunteers compared to surrounding jurisdictions. We may have less paid staff but a lot of work is now being done with volunteers to make up for the loss of staff.

Our web site is not user friendly. We need to update it, but this should include usability studies to determine what customers want/need. There is a lot of great information on there (such as the Research, Readerslink, and Homework Help sections that our users are likely not aware of.) -It is difficult to stay on the cutting edge of social media due to DIT policy. Ex. Pinterest is has been used by many libraries for years. We need to advocate at the county level for the flexibility to try new things as they become popular. -We are not able to maintain the collection at the level we would like with current funding, including print, media and ebooks. There are areas where we lag behind local systems. I have seen Grisham holds as high as 1500 for example. We get requests for books in other languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, and more. The language collections we currently have are not very large. Spanish is particularly sparse. -Staff that we currently have is allocated fairly well in my experience, but we don't have the level of staffing really needed to spend as much time outside the branch advocating, marketing, doing outreach events, etc. as we (and probably Admin) would like. -We have some strong community advocates in our Friends organizations and other groups, but it doesn't seem like we are always able to advocate well for ourselves. The Board of Supervisors acts like we are a nice agency to have but certainly not a priority. We should work to show that we are closely aligned with schools and the county's educational goals as well as providing many services to new immigrants and entrepreneurs. - We need to figure out ways to reach nonusers and make the users we have more aware of the breadth of services we have. There are many times when customers express surprise at a service or resource that we provide (ESL conversation groups, a particular database or magazine, 1:1 tech tutoring, and more.)

As stronger connection between Administration and the branches. Transparency and encouraging participation in the direction of the library with branch staff; feeling valued can fuel motivation and creativity. Being open to new ideas and more autonomy within the branches. Having our programs, services and collection reflect the needs and interests of a diverse community.

Investing in the current staff, adding positions to branches/offices that are struggling with workload due to eliminated positions, and promoting from within will ensure a strong workforce. There should be better career paths for those who want to move up in the system, and less competition from outside applicants for promotional opportunities. It's awful for morale and work ethic when one not only puts in the required work, but goes above and beyond what is expected to be recognized for promotion, only to be lost in a sea of internal AND external applicants when applying for a position in an agency in which they are already employed. Machines and technology are an aid to workflow, not a replacement for positions, especially when such technology is not inherently user-friendly and buggy at times. Patrons want to talk to someone when they come to the library, for both reference and account questions, and especially technology questions.

FCPL managers should be trained and empowered to make more decisions themselves, reducing the number of issues that need to go up the chain of command. I would like FCPL to become a culture of yes--figuring out ways to make things happen instead of explaining why they can't.

Capturing more than 35% of County residents as users.

I think FCPL needs perspective. Some of that perspective will come with the new director, but for a while now the library has stopped trying new things, stopped looking beyond its own walls and stopped encouraging staff to make suggestions for improving the library. If the library as a whole is going to remain relevant, it needs to experiment, take ideas from all corners of knowledge and be ready to deliver the information that our communities need in a way that will have the public turn to us when they have a question or an informational inquiry. They should trust their library and trust that it can point them in the direction of their answers. We need to make ourselves present in our communities and offer the services that people will actually use. It's no longer the time to maintain status quo. It's the time to hone what we do so well already until it's working efficiently and dedicate our efforts to community engagement with the right tools.

We are playing catch up and behind the curve on technology. For a system our size we should be taking the lead regionally and why not on the national level.

We need to rewrite the FCPL Strategic Plan to reflect the needs of our diverse communities within FXCO. One size does NOT fit all branches or communities. Plus, we need to look to the future and determine how we, as a system, can utilize new technologies, both for the staff and for our communities. We are no longer a "cutting edge" library system. We lag behind our other county neighbors in trying new ideas/technologies/services. We desperately need an increase in our budget in order to operate efficiently and offer library services to our

communities. This requires support from the Board of Supervisors in the form of adequate dependable yearly funding.

We need to secure more funding in order to fulfill our mission statement. We may need to explore the use of private/public partnerships and/or grants.

I think Library Administration does a fairly good job of seeing that the system functions smoothly and within County laws. Sometimes I get frustrated that so many ideas that have been mentioned to improve how the library functions cannot be implemented because of some County law that would prohibit it. This rigidity severely restricts how many situations can be made to work better. That said, there are so many wonderful, resourceful people in the staff that over time, ways can be found to fix repeated areas that need improvement; scheduling, staffing, training, and staff reviews. In the past, Library Admin has discounted staff feelings as if we're not part of the library system. I firmly hope the new director has an ear to the ground and develops a good relationship with the staff as a whole.

Community libraries are starved for staff while regionals are fully staffed, particularly in Youth Services. Communities are doing almost the same level of YS as regionals with 1/2-1/4 the staff. YS staff should be distributed among communities and regionals as they were before the big budget cut 6 or so years ago - the decision was made then to send full time YS to regionals and part time to communities because a transition to mostly part time staff was expected. However, that plan never materialized and now YS is very unbalanced. FCPL needs to bring back lateral transfers to improve staff moral, especially since many staff members were involuntarily transferred during budget cuts and are hoping to re-transfer closer to home in this very large county. Too much programing that is not literacy-based is being added to the detriment of serving our core FCPL mission. (For example, not enough staff are serving on the information desk on busy weekends because staff are running multiple programs instead.)

The previous Library Director was a very poor leader who diminished the stature of the library in the eyes of the public and County leadership. The Library Board has been weak, ineffectual - a rubberstamp for the Director. They need to step up their game significantly and exercise their full authority and leadership. The library Foundation needs to be completely INDEPENDENT. The Foundation Director should NOT report to the library Director but to the Foundation Board instead. There needs to be a lot more advocacy for library services and funding by the Foundation, Library Board, Library Director and library staff at all levels. The previous Director made advocacy seem like a bad, unwelcome thing - even an inappropriate thing. Front line library staff need to be respected, consulted, included, empowered and communicated with comprehensively. Transparency is vital Policies and initiatives need to be collaborative NOT dictated from on high. The Library Friends need to be valued, appreciated, respected, and consulted as partners and allies and our strongest connection to the community. In recent years Friends have been audited, threatened and told by the Director that they were "no longer friends". The damage done has been enormous and needs to be reversed. Broken relationships need to be restored. We need healing and restoration - between library Admin and front line staff - including our union and staff association. Trust needs to be restored between the Friends , library Admin and the County

leadership. There has been a culture of mistrust and separate camps. These divisions need to be healed. The new library Director has two key jobs - 1) restoring full funding for our libraries as a recognized and valued essential service 2) healing the relationship between library Admin and the Library Board, the front line staff, the library Friends and volunteers, the County leadership, and the general public. There is a great deal of damage to be undone.

We need upper management, the Board, the Foundation & Friends groups to be **STRONG** advocates for the Library with the County & not just "yes men".

Please do not view the Fairfax County Public Library and its branches as "community centers". By doing so, you are implying that the library is a mere building that can be used for anything be it aerobics classes or birthday parties. This harmful point of view also implies that since a library is just another community center, you do not need librarians to staff it or guide its further development. The point of view also implies that you don't need to have books in it. If you view a public library as a community center, then you have forgotten or dismissed the purpose of why public libraries were established in the first place. Public Libraries were established as true public institutions to help the community and its members educate themselves and gain access to information to improve their life. People know that the library is a place for learning not just for mere recreation. Almost every person who has gone through their own educational process has used a library. In an age of great economic inequality and rising educational costs, public libraries are more important than ever. Please read what some of these people had to say about libraries: "I always knew from that moment, from the time I found myself at home in that little segregated library in the South, all the way up until I walked up the steps of the New York City library, I always felt, in any town, if I can get to a library, I'll be okay. It really helped me as a child, and that never left me. So I have a special place for every library, in my heart of hearts." – Maya Angelou "I have an unshaken conviction that democracy can never be undermined if we maintain our library resources and a national intelligence capable of using them." – Franklin Delano Roosevelt "There is not such a cradle of democracy upon the earth as the Free Public Library, this republic of letters, where neither rank, office, nor wealth receives the slightest consideration." – Andrew Carnegie

Harness the broad and deep knowledge, skill and foresight of staff to shape our future direction and successfully implement plans. Encourage networking outside FCPL by funding staff participation in regional and national professional organizations and training opportunities. Foster trust through open communication up, down, and across the organizational structure.

The Lack of Circulation staff (Library Aides) is very overwhelming and very demanding. There is no camaraderie or morale amongst the staff. The self service is not really self service as certain branches, depending on their community need help with everything. The payment Kiosk is a hardship on a branch that is lacking Library Aides. There is a big gap between Circulation Managers and Circ Aides. Managers feel as if they should not be scheduled for "certain" tasks simply because they are a "Manager". With all the technology, (self service, kiosk machines etc....) I feel that we as a whole really have forgotten about our "Seniors". I

think we are letting our community down by not fully understanding that they are a big part of Library supporters.

The system needs more librarians. I have worked here for many years and in general, not always, the customer service at the information desk provided by Librarian I's is consistently better than the customer service provided by Library Information Assistants. Years ago the Library Information Assistants were at a lower (S16 or S17, I don't recall which) pay grade. This was able to save the county money. Now the Library Information Assistants are S19 employees compared to S20 for the Librarian I position. The difference between salary is not enough to justify continuing to hire Library Information Assistants who in general need much more training (both initial and ongoing) than librarians. We should provide county residents with great customer service, and great customer service for their tax dollars, by moving to hire more librarians who cost only a couple thousand dollars more per year than Library Information Assistants. According to the FY2016 Compensation Plan on the County HR website, is <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hr/pay-plan/fy16/splan16.pdf>, the pay is \$44,566.91 for an S19/Library Information Assistant and \$46,679.15 for an S20/Librarian I. We should welcome those who have chosen librarianship as a career. We should employ those that want to do something they have a passion for doing as a career, rather than those who just want a job. Customers visit libraries expecting to interact with librarians at the reference/information desk. Let's give them what they expect and deserve. I believe the customers that have overwhelmingly positive experiences with the library share those with friends, family and neighbors which can have a positive effect on keeping growth moving forward with new customers who are aware of all of our services.

I think the library should look into being self-advocating. A position should be created dedicated to raising funds for the library. If the library raises it's own funds, it will help offset the numerous budget cuts the library has faced in past years.

Reinstate in-house lateral transfers to expand career opportunities for library staff and facilitate branch staffing. Eliminate or significantly alter the "Float" system in use for library materials at FCPL. Rescind the ban on providing craft activities paired with Early Literacy activities for pre-school children's programs in the branches.

none.

Hire enough staff to support the Library's staggering claims of service excellence Charge for the meeting room use..it is the biggest drain on staff time and energy. Stop mixing putting politics before safety...abolish before and after hours meetings Ask the schools to pull their own weight when "partnering " with the library ...library staff in programming and outreach...library staff do the grunt work, and schools keep all the credit. You KNOW that customers and staff alike oppose the withdrawal process regarding materials Don't tie staff hands when it comes to advocating for the Library any longer

the neighboring counties are growing very fast and advancing in many aspects . Fairfax county is falling behind . county must do something in order to keep up or else we will be falling behind.

The success of the library is dependent on advocating for the library. I think the citizens of Fairfax County are complacent about the library, are unaware of its services. The library has not advocated for its needs in the past and it has suffered because of it. It should be tied to the school system as a vital component of education so that parents will view it as a necessary element in their children's growth. It should be tied to senior centers so that our older citizens see the library as a community and resource. Funding should be maintained for the collection so that we provide our citizens with variety and access to books and media. We have to tell our patrons too often that we don't carry books. I think the staff should be valued by Admin. Recent history has demoralized staff who work very diligently to bring services to customers. There are many roadblocks in HR in particular that don't allow Staff to maximize their employment experience. The ability to transfer to other branches should be reinstated so that staff can work close to home or with a compatible team. The hiring process is cumbersome and discriminates against current employees. Administrative personnel should be required to rotate and spend time in branches so they have a better sense of the workings of daily library use.

The library could benefit from more inter-branch collaboration and sharing of best practices. More technology training is needed among branch staff and minimum proficiency standards should be set for all employees in the system.

The library needs to form more community and corporate partnerships to increase revenue. It also needs to find ways, as found in a study many years ago, to make itself seen as a necessity in the community as opposed to a luxury. An example would be partnerships with the schools, so that the library would be seen as an irreplaceable educational resource. We need to find a way to reach out to non-library users.

The Board of Trustees needs to be advocates, not only for the library as a whole, but for all of the staff. Staff needs to accept the changing world we live and, and adjust accordingly.

Although there are many negatives in what I've submitted for this survey, I feel there is hope for the future. I am hopeful that with our new director and bit of change on the trustee board that we can do a better job of meeting the needs of both our staff and community. We need to do more hiring from within. We need to do more with emerging technologies. We need to make our spaces safe and welcoming for children.

Libraries should be a learning hub for creative spaces and maker spaces ,it should identify the trends and be a well equipped public place with the latest technologies to serve the different groups of the community. Libraries should try to work with private organizations and funders. Older teens and seniors gravitate toward print copy so depending upon the demographics of the branch, the books should be distributed accordingly. Staff should be well informed with the new technologies and trained , technological devices should be updated . Libraries should be build with more open and light filled, have more comfortable furniture so it looks like a welcoming place for all ages and groups!

The greatest weakness to FCPL is the division between branch staff and library administration. While it is certainly better than 3 years ago, hurt feelings and mistrust still

run high. There is a sense that administration cares about little beyond statistics and I've been told many in administration feel branch staff are inflexible to new ideas and backward-looking in their views of what a library can be. I would like to see more opportunities for staff from different departments and offices to get together to meet and/or work together on projects on a more frequent basis. I feel this could go a long way to help lessen the divide. Library branches are extremely behind technologically---both in terms of the equipment available for staff and the public and in terms of training of the staff. Public computers are very outdated, using browsers incapable of accessing the more popular sites. I know several staff who are still uncomfortable performing basic web searches, and this is unacceptable. I would like to see FCPL take a serious look at staffing. There are very few opportunities for full-time employment for anyone not interested in management. This sometimes drives talented people, many of whom start with FCPL part-time, to go elsewhere for full-time work. Many of the non-management positions available require 3-5 years of FTE, making it very challenging for anyone to move from part-time to full-time. In addition, I have doubts that staff are allocated in the best manner. The last 4 years we've seen an extreme lack of direction, with FCPL leaders responding to crises instead of guiding the system towards a new direction. In my view, this has created numerous issues in that branch staff are left to develop their own priorities. Many of these priorities conflict when you go branch to branch. While a new strategic plan will help with this, it is just a tool. Administration will need buy-in from staff to make the plan a reality.

The staff and patrons would equally benefit semi regular visits to the libraries - to introduce themselves to the patrons, attend different age programs, shadow the circulation, pages and information staff. Attend English conversation groups, - help patrons understand what the board does. The board can hear the needs and interests of the patrons first hand. BE proactive. The staff needs to be proactive with promoting the numerous programs FCPL provides - In addition to the Events calendar and the flyers that promote the variety of programs - staff needs to get out from behind the desks and computers and promote the individual programs and engage in conversation the benefits of attending the program(s) give them reasons peak their interests - I have been successful with this approach. This approach increases attendance and enthusiasm. Reference is a powerful source -beneficial when regularly maintained for the staff to help with the patrons and the patrons who benefit from the books. I think we need to maintain- reference books in addition to the online resources. outreach is still crucial to the residents of the county even more than ever with the size of the system and the county. Benefits would help with all ages - booktalking - leading book groups out into the neighborhoods should be done for all ages all these home book groups - we could offer to go out and booktalk -

Other libraries provide free access to Lynda.com, and we should provide access to that service, too. Please stop short-changing the circulation staff of the Library. The long vacancies are killing customer service and undermine staff satisfaction.

Have all employees in admin come to branches for desk hours weekly (other counties do this and it helps create a better sense of teamwork) -Request more input from branches and create better channels to use input and follow up every time (eg Marketing requesting social media input, or have various admin departments at least acknowledge emails/FairfaxNet

forms that have been filled out, inform what action is being taken- even if it's to do nothing) – Better follow up on collection requests- including the ability for the patron requesting to be added to the holds list (they already input their card number when filling out the online form. Many people are confused why it would ask for that and then not automatically reserve the book for them)

I can see some of the advantages of a floating collection, but no one in management wants to talk about or consider the disadvantages. I have found that the patrons who need the library and its collection the most - lower income and new citizens - are reluctant to place hold so therefore the ONLY materials are the ones we have in this library. A young student who wants a classic book that you would expect every library to have may not be able to place a hold because their parent says no or they don't know when they can get back to the library. This week I had several young customers ask for the 1st Harry Potter book, but all of ours are checked out. Our branch has 8 copies allocated to us while a near by branch has 18. I offered to put the book on hold and tried to sell the child on the hold process but he declined. Weeding is so much more difficult with a floating collection but I don't feel I have the tools to weed properly. I may see that another branch might use an extra copy of a title that I have too many of, but I can't see the condition of their shelves. Do they have sections of the library that are overflowing? Maybe if I send a book they really won't want it because they have no room! I work in a branch where almost every shelf in our fiction section is completely full - how do I deal with that? I am optimistic for the future of FCPL. I work with so many excellent colleagues in my branch. I do feel there is still some resentment towards administration because of things that happened in the past. It comes down to this, often employees did not feel valued. We want our customers to feel that we value them, but staff also need to feel that way.

Since users under 18 are not being surveyed, there should be significant effort made to solicit feedback from this substantial customer base. and not just from their parents but from youthful users and their teachers.

I think we need to increase partnerships with community businesses and organizations.

I think a quick look around the country at libraries that are providing innovative and community-based programming and information would not go awry. We do a nice job as a system, but we could always do better and provide better to the public. We need to decide what it is we wish to be, and then do that well--whether it is focus on the "community center" aspect of the public library today, or to attempt to maintain a more "traditional" role as a place solely for research and information. I, personally, would rather see us move toward a community-based center featuring classes and useful information for everyone.

I think that we need more programming to "compete" with our neighbors, particularly early literacy storytimes for children, But to offer more, we also need more staff; it's challenging to do more with the bare bones staffing at most branches and even more challenging with the frequent turnover in many branches' youth departments (my observation is that this in part a result of too few full-time jobs and too few professional librarian jobs). Lack of career ladder is also a challenge; having worked on many interview panels, it's disappointing to see

that internal candidates, though eager to advance, are so often not the best prepared or most qualified applicants. Our collection would benefit from the development of a popular film collection. We are losing out on so many potential users by not offering popular films. I hear all the time that the library isn't "just books" -- let's prove it to the people who walk through our doors expecting other kinds of media! Our users aren't "just readers."

Initiate committees from youth services managers, branch managers, assistant branch managers, circulation managers and page managers to meet with the new director; to perform strategic planning for their respective departments, brainstorming, etc. since this doesn't get done in management meetings. Purchase popular movies - either DVDs or streaming movies through OverDrive, maybe. Purchase music - either CDs or downloadable music. Purchase resources for staff for programming purposes - puppet collections, music, manipulatives, story reference collections, portable visual presenters. Purchase professional development resources.

INDIVIDUAL BRANCHES SHOULD HAVE MORE AUTONOMY IN DECIDING HOW BEST TO SERVE THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF THEIR COMMUNITIES. ATTEMPTS TO ENCOURAGE CONFORMITY ARE NOT ONLY COUNTERPRODUCTIVE BUT DEMONSTRATE A LACK OF RESPECT FOR THE CREATIVITY AND DECISION-MAKING OF FRONTLINE STAFF MEMBERS. IN MY OPINION, THE BOTTOM LINE IS THAT EMPLOYEE MORALE IS AT AN ALL TIME LOW. EMPLOYEES DO NOT FEEL VALUED. WE'RE UNDERPAID, ESPECIALLY THOSE OF US WHO PUT IN COUNTLESS HOURS OF PREPARATION AT HOME FOR CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS AND BOOK TALKS, AND RATHER THAN BEING TREATED WITH APPRECIATION AND TANGIBLE REWARDS, WE'RE INUNDATED WITH REQUESTS TO DO EVEN MORE BY A DISCONNECTED AND OVERPAID ADMINISTRATION. IDEAS FOR ENSURING THE FUTURE SUCCESS OF FCPL? IF NOTHING ELSE, TRY BEING POSITIVE AND RESPECTFUL OF OUR EFFORTS TO DO A JOB THAT IS OBVIOUSLY DRIVEN MORE BY PASSION THAN ANYTHING ELSE.

I would really like to see our administration advocate for us in a big way. We need a bigger materials budget, more staff vacancies filled, and a library board that enthusiastically advocates for us to grow and thrive. Comparing our budget per capita to neighboring counties has been a disgrace for almost a decade, and we could really benefit from a mouthpiece and standard bearer. I hope the new director will serve in this capacity for us. Weeding the collection is a difficult concept to explain to laymen - we need someone who will tackle this challenge and help us to justify to our users why we discard materials -- even ones that "look" to be in good condition in a superficial way. Some books are meant to have a short lifespan - like children's paperbacks - and do not fit people's idea of "The Library Book" - a leather-bound volume to preserve for the ages. And of course, it will help us to justify weeding if we are able to replace discarded materials with fresh, new, useful items that are in demand. There are so many things the system could do to improve morale and encourage the retention of the most talented, experienced, and enthusiastic staff. Fill vacancies to keep us from being overextended. Allow lateral transfers so that we can move to the branches who need us most. Treat Sunday staff as if they are valuable and necessary, not an afterthought. Seek out our input regularly and make changes that reflect our needs - especially when we tell you something isn't working. What happened to the Staffing Equity survey? What has the Core Team accomplished? How do eligibility lists really work? More & better communication

is always appreciated. We are not afraid of change - what we want is meaningful change, that improves our abilities to serve the public.

Library Board should work with the Aspen Institute initiative on libraries to turn the library outward to the community.

Better maintaining the branches they already have and renovating the ones faster that need repair. More communication between the "higher ups" (the board and upper management) so everyone is involved . The morale is very low due to the lack of full time jobs unavailable and lower income level of all employees compared to other areas of the country.

I believe that our mission to provide free access to educational resources to the public is often undercut by policies that unnecessarily limit Internet access to all who seek it. I believe that more discretion should be afforded to frontline staff when deciding whether to waive policies that block public access to free and necessary information.

Enable branches to better market their programs by providing high quality color printing in the branches, lists of contacts to publications, templates that are more useful than the ones currently available on the Marketing site. Provide tech training to staff to use when working with the public and in anticipation of patrons' needs. Patrons openly dislike Comprise, bristle at Illiad, and other self service requirements imposed by the County, not sure how that fits with being "customer driven." Can Library Board members and Library Administration employees work on representing the Library to the public? I'd like to see them getting out and talking with the public about what is going on with the Library and the services we provide and then reporting back to the Library (maybe through 411) where people went, who they met with, what they learned. It would be helpful for the Library system to have a clear vision, streamlined, supported, and positive.

I would like to see our library system regain it's status as one of the best and most innovative systems in the country. To achieve that goal we need to be forward thinking and embracing cutting edge technologies while ensuring that our collections are fresh and relevant.

KEEPING THE PRESENT demographics in mind, county must spend money teaching English to young kids and adults who are migrating here. It will help everyone in long run. It will help teachers, Police Department and so many other departments.

These questions are far too limiting in their scope. We are hampered in performing both by our lack of vision and our decreasing budget. Asking about what should increase or what is effective is empty without having completed the work of building an internally shared set of priorities. We are still trying to be all things to all people. We cannot succeed in that mission with our current funding. We must choose whether to serve primarily our current users who are already minimally satisfied or to focus on serving the county's increasing populations that are underserved by the library. If we want to be measured by the length of our hold lists, our circulation and door counts, our program attendance, we will continue to shrink in impact. Instead we need to define our service mission and performance metrics in new ways

-- by outcomes and not transactions. I also think we need to recruit, inform, and engage citizen advisory groups to help us shape the service priorities we will be evaluated against in the future. These groups must reflect our affluent primary user populations in the county, but they cannot ONLY represent those populations. For example, we might explicitly say that the year 2020 will be the year FCPL targets New Americans in the County and work to identify the needs, outcomes, and services THAT population expects from libraries. 2025 might be the year of the Young Professional. The LOBs evaluation process will and should identify where overlapping services exist and force us to develop collaborative service models that neither abrogate current responsibilities, nor pretend that we alone provide relevant educational, literacy, intellectual, and community-building content and activities. This survey does a disservice to the urgent need for FCPL to invest in deep opportunities for staff development including both service skill-building and management ability. Finally, this survey insufficiently addresses the extreme need for self-advocacy.

- Embracing a broader range of educational programs, including more types of tutoring for all ages supplied by the library whether that's by fostering charitable/educational partnerships, solicitation & scheduling of volunteers, etc. - Inclusion of more media (DVDs, video games, etc) in the collection and ways for patrons to enjoy/use/learn from all types of media in branches. - More patron-driven actions, from collection development, to displays and library programming.

We need to focus on quality customer service more than on technology. The public tends to respond well to staff people and less so to machinery - if they have to choose between a living library employee and a pay station, they have reason to prefer the live body.

Allow the talent from within your staff to be used. I am a library aide, but I completed an MLS last year so I'd like to be doing some librarian-like tasks as I work on getting a librarian job somewhere. That would both help me not be bored while at work and allow me to get some librarian-like experience I could bring up when applying and interviewing for jobs. It would also help FCPL be able to offer more programs and other services to library users. However, I'm only allowed to do things when there's no one else to do them and they must get done (e.g. need another person to have full booktalking teams). I realize you don't expect a library aide to have the knowledge, but I don't understand why you're not willing to use it while you have it! At least at the branch where I'm working, you'd be able to offer more services & programs (which I think could use a drastic improvement based on what I've seen other library systems around Fairfax offering). Increase our presence on social media such that each branch has its own Facebook page. That would allow each branch to do much more marketing of its events and hopefully increase attendance, which can be dismal (I see events getting cancelled due to low or no registration on a regular basis).

I think staff should be encouraged to let go of some of the "old ways" - especially the need to staff the branches' service desks at all times (when roving staff could be much more helpful and effective) and to have backup desk staff whenever possible (when those staff members could be better serving our customers elsewhere). How about the idea of closing the desk so staff can run a second story time on a busy morning? Or making do with a skeleton crew so staff can attend a critical training workshop? I think staff have so many creative and

innovative ideas and our work culture should encourage them to develop these projects. While I appreciate all that the Library Board does, I feel FCPL has fallen very far behind in recent years - reverting to the old model of staffing/service when so many other public libraries have embraced change, streamlining and innovation. Outside of work, I am very plugged into my local community and I hear complaints from so many of my friends and acquaintances: Why can't FCPL circulate popular movies on DVD and music on CD or download? Why can't branches offer more story times when the existing ones fill up as soon as registration opens? Why can't my local branch be open earlier/later with just a few staff members so I can pick up my holds? Etc.

FCPL needs to be more nimble and adapt quickly to changing needs. Each branch needs to be tailored to the needs of its community. All branches should have Sunday hours, at least during the school year. At one time, all FCPL branches had Sunday hours. Branches need more youth services staff to offer more programming and literacy/pre-literacy programs. FCPL needs to keep up with technology, such as wireless printing, that would be of great value to the community. FCPL branches should also offer more services to recent immigrants. Thank you.

The Library Board is becoming an employee forum - not a representative community forum - where one quarter of the members are library retirees. Doesn't matter which "side" they are on - they are partisan - having an agenda that may not represent the community. This needs to be considered in future board appointments - is this in accordance with Board guidelines ... Hope Ms. Hudson will work to ensure that all Library staff work together in a transparent, collaborative fashion and in the best interest of FCPL..

Perhaps form partnerships with private companies that have resources to assist with collection development/purchasing, or programming needs of the branches. Have a library representative to interface with/ on FCPS school board/school system. Library Administrators that oversee the branches MAY be overwhelmed with all the branches they oversee. Branch administrators need to support their branch managers and get to see how they work at the branch level. In branch manager evaluation, the administrators also need to KNOW the work of the branch manager. Most branches are very low staffed and become overwhelmed during the SRP, and busy times. For the system as a whole, staff need to have the resources to best serve their public. At the branch where I work, we only have ONE PC at our service desk. There is only ONE drop for a PC. Oftentimes, customers have to wait for lengthy periods of time for a staff member to assist them, when the self-service check out machines cannot. Staff scrambles to assist the waiting customers but cannot, because they are limited to one PC. Staff must take customer business to the back work room, look at the computer back there, then come back to assist the customer again. That is not good customer service. If we are to serve our public properly, then we need to have the proper resources. The library system is a vibrant system staffed by people who love what they do. We can only serve the system if we have proper support and resource necessary. This does not mean spending a lot of money or buying a lot of things, but it does mean, please support front line staff, and ask what you can do to help us help our customers in the best ways possible.

I would like to see more training for front line staff in what is available as online resources and what customers can do on self serve basis. Don't need to know all the details, but I think most circulation side staff are unaware of what is available. I would also like to see more outreach to nonusers and more partnerships with other agencies or community groups that support the same mission. We also need to take a system-wide look at the day to day work flow and see if we can work more effectively. We are working on an old staffing model but are never fully staffed. We need clearer priorities and broader job descriptions. We spend too much time on trying to find out how a task is "supposed" to be done, while policies and rules fluctuate. Staff need a clear idea of what the out come should be and the empowerment to make that happen.

Finding a way to make Fairfax County value the library in the budget (which allocates much less funding to the library system than surrounding counties) is of utmost importance. We can't improve if our resources are continually shrinking.

We have fallen way behind in the use of social media. We need to better case for why libraries are vital to every citizen of Fairfax County, not just Mommies and children. Our SharePoint site is slow and user hostile. I do not like it when a patron has to wait and wait for pages to load. More and more we are on the front lines of the homelessness situation. The public space has shrunk down to the post office and the library and more and more we are put in the position of first responders to crises. DC has social workers in its libraries, we should too. Many immigrants don't have the means to get to the library. Many others don't understand that a library card is free and that we offer them services that they would value. I think we should have bookmobiles visiting apartments in the county where we know a lot of new immigrants have settled.

Look at staff equity for regional vs community branches, and for the workload for Youth Services staff vs. adult staff. Community branches are hampered by the minimal staff allowing for little flexibility, which in turn affects customer service and programming. Youth Services staff seem to have all the responsibilities and jobs of adult services staff, plus additional programming and readers advisory responsibilities. Again, affects customer service and programming. Programming should have more consistent approach across regional and community branches as to what and how much is offered. Branches should work together by area to best offer programming according to area, staffing, and/or staff expertise. No need for every branch to have every program if there is better coordination. The children's collection in nonfiction is seriously deficient. Lots of old books that should have been discarded years ago, but haven't been because not enough new titles to replace them. New children's acquisitions manager is doing a GREAT JOB catching up in fiction, but going to take a lot of work to address the years of neglect in nonfiction. May need extra staff time for this. Lots of worn-out children's books that used to be replaced regularly and aren't anymore. Series especially. With all the donations we get, we have avenues to replace them, but again the system can't coordinate or keep up with demand. Collection in general needs system-wide weeding of old, inaccurate, and even detrimental books. Look at medical books to see how much we have that is ten, even twenty years old against collection guidelines. Better weeding would also show us the desperate need for more and newer nonfiction, notable in the health arena. In staffing, lateral opportunities should be made available again.

Staff have been denied the opportunities available within the system for more appropriate placement or skills development by this NEW policy of not allowing laterals first.

Thanks!

I think there should be more job opportunities within community branches as well as job promotions.

If FCPL flows latest technology more quickly, it would be good, for example 3-D printer, Wi-Fi printing from customer's laptop etc.

The library should better manage the collections. The floating collection does not seem properly balanced. Small libraries on major traffic routes seem to have collections that keep getting larger and more unwieldy. Also, the ordering and managing of certain types of books seems to add to the growing collection without adding much value. We order many print copies of popular best sellers by James Patterson, Nora Roberts, David Baldacci et al, who are constantly publishing books. After their initial popularity wears off, they take up valuable space on shelves. Additionally, we keep certain types of books - travel guides, test prep books, and technology books after they become obsolete. This also takes up valuable shelf space. These types of books need to be culled more frequently.

Strengthen the educational role of the library. Reinstate FCPL Ask-a-Librarian. Do we refer customers who want eBooks to another library system? It is a professional outreach -- let's keep it local. Consider adding some depth to the collection, even at the expense of reducing the number of copies of other titles. Having a long wait list for a popular title is a reader's advisory opportunity. Connect to the customer. Take advantage of the tutor revolution in education. This is an opportunity, not a problem, for libraries. There is still a strong association of books with libraries -- let's support self-publishers from concept through final product. Take every opportunity possible to establish partnerships for services - tax and legal, social services, business . Be honest about workload -- our work has changed -- staff retraining is the best way to ensure a future. Thank you for asking.

It is a pleasure to work at the library because it's such a positive place where everyone believes in the value of the libraries, reading, literacy and technology access. With a little work I believe we could become a truly strong and cohesive team that makes even more progress in enriching the lives of Fairfax County residents and making the library a destination (virtually and literally) in Northern Virginia. Members of the board of trustees could use additional instruction from the BOS member who appointed them in terms of understanding their role as advocates for Fairfax County residents and not library employees; it might also be better if they devoted their time to big picture issues such as policies, instead of getting overly involved in day-to-day library issues. It's inefficient for the board to take on tasks that require more time and energy than they are able to invest as volunteers who basically just meet once a month. To be honest, I wish the library did not have a board at all. I have not been able to determine the value they add to the library. The criteria for appointees should prevent library retirees from being appointed to the board so there is more representation of the community at large and not just library staff. How about

staff exchange programs so staff can better understand what employees in other departments do. The library should be a more dynamic and constantly changing workplace -- that matches the community and customer demands -- all staff should be trained to be able to go with the flow instead of putting up obstacles at every turning point. A new career path should be created for branch staff who do not have MLS degrees. We have many exceptional circulation staff in place who could easily serve as assistant managers at branches and should be given the opportunity.

Automated services, while flashy, are not the answer to the library's fundamental issue of continued relevance. People who oversee admin need to see that these projects to automate everything in the library are a disservice to employees, patrons, and taxpayers. As a ground-level employee, I consider all these vaunted automation projects (fine payment, self-service, internet sign-up, employee sign in, new holds labels, etc.) as simple "smoke and mirror" techniques to disguise the fact that admin (as leaders and stewards of library direction) haven't really done anything that fundamentally makes libraries a relevant institution in contemporary society in many years. At the same time, admin position numbers continue to grow while ground-level real working employee positions are held vacant or are removed altogether.

The collection needs a major infusion of funds. There should be staff training days throughout the year when the library is closed and staff are able to attend training on certain topics, such as SharePoint. It is very difficult to keep up. Webinars are helpful but some skills require hands-on training. Youth Services Departments in most community libraries are too small: 1.5 positions. I would increase this to 2.0 positions.

The library DVD collection is sad. It really needs beefing up. So many patrons are disappointed by our skimpy, sad DVD collection--especially adult level DVDs.

Have administrators work in the branches at least once a quarter for at least a day to get a real idea of what's going on. Improve communication at all levels. More opportunities for training and learning new skills. More support for mobile economy and small businesses.

As a long-time staff member (20 years) I have watched FCPL's ability to provide the resources which the community expects decrease in proportion to the dramatic reduction in the financial resources allocated to the Library. This reduction year after year seems to me to represent a lack of understanding of the value the Library provides to the community. Our customers expect and deserve a well-balanced print and digital materials collection secured by an up-to-date security system against theft and a current customer database. They expect our buildings to provide adequate wireless Internet access. They expect support not only for students in standard K-12 curriculum, but also support for college-level research for HS AP students and our local college students, as well as adults in our college-educated community who wish to continue their education (lifelong learning). We want to be continuing our support for reading groups of all ages. We have a growing ESL community who expects help learning English and completing Federal Government forms. We have job-seekers who must apply online. Residents who work in the IT community expect up-to-date equipment and print materials. Parents of preschoolers want activities where they can expose their children

to reading. We have reached the point where we are failing to meet our customers' expectations on almost every point mentioned above. Door count continues to decline, as does circulation. In my view we must build back up our adult non-fiction print collection, now dangerously outdated, and correct the print/digital balance. New print non-fiction seems to often "walk" directly from the New shelves. Wireless capacity must be increased; at peak hours one must often wait to get on the Internet on personal devices. We are not providing much programming for young professionals and seniors. We cannot fulfill our mission of community engagement and lifelong learning w/o funding. Corporate sponsorship? Grants?

I would like for the collection to have more popular Spanish titles. For example, popular children books in Spanish like the Diary of the Wimpy Kid. We need to have more current and popular titles for adults and children of Spanish heritages.

I think that the future success of the library depends on the entire system moving forward together as one unit and supporting one another. I think that the past needs to be in the past and that past issues need to be "tabled" to allow us to examine the possibilities of what we can do as one large system. Having said that, each branch serves a different and diverse community and I think that there needs to be varying services branch by branch based on the community's needs. I think we have to not be afraid to "fail" when we try a new idea and I think that new ideas should be embraced even if they do not produce the expected results. I think that management in general needs to be less wary of one another. We should all be working as a team to create the best possible working environment and, subsequently, library system for the customers of Fairfax County. I think all staff members need to remember that they represent this fabulous system in every interaction with customers and other county agencies and departments.

The library should be an open, welcoming, place you can't wait to come too. That means staff need to be friendly, go above and beyond to be helpful, be personable. The facilities need to be appealing, and cater to the communities needs. We must target marketing to young families to develop the love of the library early and continue to foster that at every level. The library has so much more than books to read but it does not seem that the general public is aware of this. Marketing needs to be overhauled and staff needs to receive training and coaching on how to upsell services to regular patrons as well as new patrons. Branches should be tailoring their programming and events to the interests of the community not what they think is a good time.

Explore, research, learn from other institutions, how to create a system where the policies and procedures serve the mission, rather than the reverse.

People who are not library users have no idea of the services we offer. The challenge is finding ways to get the word out to them. To truly be effective, though, the library needs more funding, including funding to increase staffing levels at poorly staffed branches. Outreach cannot happen when there are not enough people to be at the branch. Preschoolers are well served at FCPL. Elementary students are well served in the summertime. It would be great to expand services year round to elementary students, tweens and teens. Youth

services departments need larger budgets to create programs that are appealing to these users. The question about the non book collection lumps audiobooks and DVDs together. I think that a more robust DVD collection would bring many more users into the library - we should increase the range of movies we offer, which would entice non users into the branch. Then they would become aware of all the other wonderful services we provide. The audiobooks on CD are not as important - we should taper off with those and focus on downloadable audiobooks instead. Downloadable movies would be great as well, but that is not something we currently offer on a useful scale. Many libraries are loaning all sorts of things besides books - sewing machines, fishing rods, power tools, etc. It would be nice to move and grow in new ways that would attract new users to the library while also maintaining our focus on the library's mission.

I would like to see the library keep step with trends in customer behavior. More digital media (titles and variety).

- Staff development: Minimally adequate training is offered but with branches at low levels of staffing it's difficult to ask to incorporate training time in the schedule. Either allow staff people to attend training on their own time or build in a required number of training hours for staff schedules (Staff Day doesn't count, at all). - Manager development. Managers are very protective of having a certain number of staff covering the desk but that number is subjective to each manager. Few managers have worked at more than one library and so the concept of "busy-ness" is sometimes grossly miscalculated. Also, managers need leadership and problem-solving. Just because a person made a terrific aide or assistant doesn't mean they'll be a good supervisor. It's a different skill set that needs development, coaching and mentoring. - Allow lateral transfers. Later transfers fosters a more cohesive spirit. People can transfer to different branches to experience different demographics and learn. - Career path. Separate from staff training. It's odd how's there's a terrific mentoring program for the library aide job which most likely won't be there in ten years. No future management or information services fostering is available to lower level positions unless one is lucky enough to work with someone who takes their own time to mentor them.

Director has the opportunity to have a strong presence (picture, messaging, interviews with authors and users) for all to see from FCPL website.

it is my experience that we do not have enough non-fiction books to meet the needs of students and adult learners. We have too much emphasis upon fiction and e-books, although all books and materials are good. Our collections have diminished and patrons are visiting other jurisdictions. Lack of funding and staff shortages have contributed to a diminishing of help to the public. Many people who come in comment about how important the library is to them, but they do bring up issues about not enough books for children's reports, research projects, too much noise, being closed Wednesday evenings, not having favorite newspapers (New York Times, etc, and magazines, and other issues. We seem to be constantly cutting what they want. I am very concerned about the take over of one particular library, Woodrow Wilson, by 20 or 30 noisy, rowdy kids, average age about 12 for hours after school, all day when school is out, who do nothing but play computer games. We staff apparently do not have the authority to much of anything about this. Adult computer users have great difficulty

getting their turns and face noise and distraction. It has gotten much worse this year due to policy changes. Many adults have complained about this and have told us they are no longer using our library. This is not a forward thinking situation for our future to allow this. For myself, personally, the lack of air conditioning and heat balance is a problem. I feel demoralized when I have to work in 80 degree temperature, sweating. It gives me a headache and makes me tired. After supposedly working on this for over a year, my branch does not have an adequate solution. This does not make for a happy staff or a happy users who wonder why this situation exists. We need to solve basic problems before dreaming about some fancy gimmick to attract more users.

The Library is stuck in 1997. There are NO children's room or Teen rooms/services much less tween. Youth service departments exist in name only. Programming is sporadic and monthly story-times do not fulfill the "Every child ready to read" mission. Children over 5 are forgotten. The buildings are not set up for browsing or hanging out they are not the modern community centers they should be. There is NO real DVD collection and not enough copies of what we do own. Holds take forever. There is nothing "outside the box" NO realia, e-readers, playaways, no tablets, no fishing poles, cake pans, mp3 players, etc... Nothing is being circulated/or available in house, outside of books. The buildings were designed for warehousing the books and loaning the meeting rooms, which should be filled with library programs. The regional libraries should be bright beautiful buildings with fun innovative areas for children and teens and multiple programming rooms for all ages. The community should have children's space and actually be community centers. We should have programming budgets to support the programs and initiatives. The staff should be able to meet and exchange ideas and concerns not just constantly be "trained" The YS Managers should have some input in the children's and YA services. There should be multiple Teen and children's librarians working under them. Children's and Adult services should be separate entities that work together. Adult and YS Info should be separate, not just whomever is at the desk. Each group Teens, children's, and adults should having it's own customers. Marketing should reflect the different needs of different age groups. Computers should not be sitting on top the children's fiction. Outdoor spaces, pop-up libraries and other innovative programs should be explored. We should not be happy with just circulating bestsellers, photocopies, and loaning the room space to the public. The webpage and OPAC should be functioning useful tool

The staff is not supported by the system, the BOT nor the County. The County's non-support is shown by the budget. The BOT were allowed to get involved in day-to-day operations which was way beyond their mandate and the system is paying big-time for this. Admin lately has been all over the place with procedures that it is impossible for staff to know what the procedure de jour is one any particular day. The hiring process is a mess. Everything is governed by numbers so if a candidate is really good at interviewing then that candidate will be hired regardless if the hire is the best for the branch or the system. Immediate supervisors have no say with the use of eligibility lists. A candidate on the eligibility list has more say on the hiring than a supervisor. Being able to interview well doesn't mean this person is the best candidate; there have been so many questionable hires and the system will be paying for this practice for years to come. We have hires at Admin (HR in particular) that have greatly contributed to the hiring mess. It is not reassuring when the LHR manager says things at meetings that she doesn't know how the library is staffed! The staffing levels are too low - we

have to jettison partnerships or change the way we are staffed. Staff is being asked to do too much and are burning out. Partnerships are overtaking what we do. We cannot be everything to everyone. Staff are not trained to be social workers, teachers, therapists, day care providers, and the list goes on; but are asked to accommodate numerous special interests; VITA or GIVE Tutoring. If we are to be a 24-7 space for the special interests and just have a few rows of books; then just say so. then staff can decide if this is what they want. There is little room for a career anymore at FCPL. Sadly then seems to be no concern from the County, BOT or Admin if we have librarians or just clerks!

We've gotten too good at managing fewer resources year after year to the point where it may seem we're expendable. There doesn't appear to be any growth; instead of aggressively advocating for more staff, open hours, resources (\$\$\$), and more even more branches I feel we're an agency that's gotten good at just dealing with less. That can erode our opportunity for growth. I've loved working for the system but it feels increasingly like a dead end with more chances for cutbacks than possibility of growth as a system.

I have three items: 1). Many of our patrons would benefit from charging stations which would charge their iphone, android phone, tablet, etc. I have seen this is Arlington Central's Young Adult room. The charging station is located in an easy-to-find, front and center space. The cables are secured so that they cannot be stolen. 2). Arlington Central library has adopted a "different zones" (noise, talking) area. One zone is complete quiet; one allows for some moderated but fairly quiet talking; and another zone is unregulated as far as talking and noise. Would it be in our best interests to ask them how those zones are working for them? 3). Back to Arlington. I like how they have signs up requesting that seating in their Children's Room and seating in their YA room is specifically for children/youth and their caregiver/s. I was with my middle school son (he was at a book display, and I was sitting at a table), and I was approached and asked if I was with a child (I thanked her and pointed to my son) - I appreciated that!!! I want those areas to be specifically just for kids and their caregivers. We frequently have adult business-people (with no child or youth in tow) come and monopolize the seating in our kids' areas (even though some of the furniture is small!!!). Because we have no signs and no policy about this, I have seen families who should have had a table/seats have to leave those areas (because adults with NO children were taking up tables/chairs/sofas) and that isn't fair at all: adults have free reign of the entire library, but we only have one (relatively small) children's area. Please consider making this a priority. Many thanks!

Budget drives a lot of the decision that the Library System has to make. the survey didn't touch on the effect the budget cuts have on library services and programs. To reach the ideal level of services and increase certain programs, we need staff, training, and budget to achieve the highest level of services and provide and offer our customers and our community the kind of programs and services. Thank you.

The Public Opinion is what drives library procedures and customer service, but the public does not always understand the reasoning behind tough decisions (like the weeding debacle) Although I agree with soliciting public input for the future needs of the public library, they probably don't understand what the changes they want the library to make will cost, or

impact other library services. I think a better survey question would ask "which services would you like to limit or eliminate in order to facilitate these increases you would like to see?" In truth, many services, such as adult literacy are not offered at my library, so I don't know how well the library is meeting that need. Also, with the county removing duplicity, that service might be done better through the schools. On the other hand, libraries with a bigger Senior population would probably want fewer children's programs (and fewer noisy children in the library) and more technology tutoring. Reaching the county residents that do not come to the Library is a HUGE issue in trying to understand what they need and how to reach them. Many times, mouth-to-mouth invitations may be the only way to reach them and would require more resources and a more concerted effort from the Library Board, the Library Foundation and Library Management. Having a "come to the Library Day (or week)" would be more productive than a "Staff Day" and would be a better way to spend Library funds.

Please update staff and library technology and social media policies.

Community requests for meeting rooms and study carrels are increasing. Future renovations should take that into consideration. Handicap access especially to bathrooms could be better.

Sadly, I find this survey to be narrowly focused. You are not asking some very important questions. What we deal with in the branch all day every day is issues with noise and people with poor hygiene. Because Fairfax County does not embrace policies that are practiced by every other library system in the area we are driving customers away. Customers have stopped attending and leading library programs due to the presence of malodorous customers. Some of these customers have been seen with soiled pants and excrement on their hands...a very real public health safety risk. Yet, staff is left powerless to do anything. FCPL has actually been forced to terminate programs because attendees have refused to return. As for noise, not everyone embraces the idea of the public library as "community center". There is currently no place people can turn for a quiet place to sit and read, study, work or reflect. Even most church doors are locked! What we see and experience at the branch level is that the majority of the public misses the quiet library. It seems that one thing we had to offer which was completely free we just threw away.

I live in Loudoun County, and there's a few things they do that I think we should consider doing ourselves. To pay for prints using the honor policy. At Loudoun a patron can just hand money to the person at the circulation desk, and it's paid for. To not require people to log into a printer to print things out. To have short-term use internet computers that don't require logging in. To have the default password (1111) posted at each computer station. To have study carrel usage managed by the honor policy. Rather than having to sign up with a librarian, in Loudoun County they have the study carrel sign up posted on the front of each carrel door where you sign in for as much time as you think you need up to the maximum time allowed. These may all seem like minute details, but if all of these things were instituted it would save the information desk staff so much time, and the honor policy I think would foster a feeling of trust and respect among the staff and patrons.

Gear the collection, services and programs to what the patrons want rather than what a library typically offers. Don't be afraid to try new things and fail. We learn from both successful and unsuccessful endeavors.

There needs to be more collaboration with people who actually work in branches before major decisions are made about policies. That perspective is really lacking.

A healthy and robust system can exist when the staff is healthy. Not physically only but mentally. The little things that can make things easier for the morale and mental well being of the staff are not adequately addressed. For instance, Lateral Appointments will allow people to move from one location or another without having to apply for their own job. This would boost morale. The fact that the already stretched staff is pulled some more when there are Open positions and no OT is asked for by the respective Branch Managers. Perhaps a pool may be created to draw upon in times of need. Inadequate training to Managers leads to issues where the staff have no recourse but to seek another job placement. The problem is never addressed since it involves Managers. If properly addressed, the system will have a far more responsive staff. The system should reconsider its structure. It is top heavy for every 6 in a department at least 3 are Managers. (?). Given the rapid evolving technology, more effort should be made to get the staff skills required to succeed. Cross training will build cohesive teams in branches. There are no avenues for Information Services Assistant other than going out and seeking a MLS degree to move in the system. Many hold Masters in allied subjects. These should be utilized and some pathways for upward mobility should be found. Finally, if we are kind to each other, it will be a far compelling place to work in. :)

Busy community libraries could use more staff. Summer business is challenging. Covering leave is a challenge year round. Many customers have shared that they do not care for the payment kiosks at all. Personal interaction and the ability to make change were more civilized. More items in print would be good for our aging population, who don't care to read on a screen. I personally would like to see a focus on people, and not just technology. The library is a hub for the community, but not if it's impersonal and poorly staffed with only Express Checkouts available. I'd like, of course, to see more budget allowed to the library, to expand the collection, and keep our good human resources. Thanks for asking.

Answers regarding programs and services are not a one size fits all. The answers are branch specific because the community needs are different. Staffing numbers are bare bones. This puts enormous pressure on staff when there are vacancies. Long term this takes a toll on staff morale. We depend on volunteers to provide many of our daily operational tasks as well as programming needs. Recruiting dependable volunteers who will represent FCPL can be challenging especially in more depressed socio-economic areas. Some questions included in Library Resources and Technology sections of this survey included items which would have better fit in a Programming section. There is a difference between a technology or service we make available to customers such as WiFi and technologies we have forced customers to use in an effort to cut costs and reduce staffing such as payment Kiosks. Self-service actually requires a great deal of assistance and often is not good customer service. Programming often requires resources. Branches are dependent on local community friends groups to provide those resources. This creates a great deal of inequality of services. Irregular hours

are confusing to customers. Fundamentally I do not feel this survey covers the issues that have caused such stress in this system. Branch staff often do not feel consulted, included, supported or valued. Many problems have been created by severe budget cuts, but without a significant change in funding we are only selecting which service or program to cut, not what we might like to expand. Libraries may be valued nostalgically, but they are not being funded realistically.

At this point in time it does not appear that the County truly supports the Library. Funding is continually slashed each year. There comes a point when we can no longer continue to do more with less, we have gotten to a point that with less we will have to do less. The library is not a priority for the County, but it need to be. Staff at all the branches deserve to know what the priorities are for the Library Board and Library Administration. Once all library staff know what the priorities are they will need appropriate levels of funding and staff to accomplish those goals.

I feel that the staff needs to be more friendly not just to adults but to children. There seems to be a lack of consistency in the quality of programs at various branches. When programs are offered for the under 5 age group it would be nice to incorporate time for the care givers to get to know each other. Also, more authors at branch libraries for book talks. Training for those who want it on devices once a month at branches at a specific time when it is being offered. Some people will feel more comfortable that way.

The floating collection does not work well with Children's collections. It is a rare event if I can ever actually find a book that a parent or child is looking for in my branch collection. I am operating mostly off of placing holds for children's/JFIC or YA books. Children's collections should not float, nor should specialized collections that are relevant to particular branches, like certain language specific collections. The payment kiosks provide a big problem for our senior citizen library users. They are repeatedly frustrated by the kiosks for printing, book sales or photocopying. Users also have a hard time because the kiosks don't take \$20 bills--that is what most people have and the kiosks wont' take it.

I would like to see the world languages collection expanded (both print and electronic) for our diverse community and more ESL resources for our community. We get a lot of feedback from customers wanting more materials. The improvements in self service (checkout stations and comprise) were a win-win for staff and customers. However, next upgrade of payment machine should handle \$20 and give change in dollar bills. Many people carry 20's because that is all the ATMs dispense and no one wants to carry around \$5+ in quarters. The comprise screens could be made more user friendly. The customer should be able to cancel out easily, especially at the final payment step. Improve technology for the staff. I would also like more "mobile" tools for library staff that could move into the stacks to support maintaining the print collection. Businesses use portable bar code readers to take inventory. Staff could check bar codes at the shelf for holds, missing or misplaced books. Think of the labor savings if books did not have to moved on and off the shelves on carts to the circulation desk. We need more flexibility for future improvements in catalog/SIRSI/COTS software to accommodate technological improvements. I don't like the library homepage. The layout isn't appealing. You have to dig down more than one screen to realize how many services are

available. I bet a lot of people have no idea what the library offers. I often have to explain to customers where to look on the homepage to make a payment for find ebooks. It could really use a makeover. Keep the "partnership" arrangements with other Fairfax County entities coming. For example, I think the 1000 book before kindergarten program coming in the fall will be a tremendous hit. I'm looking forward to helping with the FCPS summer lunch program. On the right track to make the library vital to the community.

Keep the collection in good order and steadily growing; support the staff; continue to advance present staff when warranted and deserved.

In order to fulfill our mission of increasing the number of users and reaching our non-users it is very important to have inviting areas, appropriate programs and quality collection for our youngest users and their parents. Our youth of today, are our users of tomorrow. We need more youth services staff for each of our libraries to provide quality programs and information for our users and we need the support from our administration to make this happen. I refer to monetary and physical support. I believe that providing an atmosphere that is similar to a community center (not completely) will invite these users to our libraries. I have seen such a difference in libraries, such as the main branch in Williamsburg, VA and our neighbor, the Loudoun County libraries, where the focus is first on children and patrons flock to these places. Isn't this what we desire?

There are only two concerns that are important to elected officials, corporate executives, opinion leaders and to a great extent the residents - education and business. I have not seen the Library develop and follow through on strategies to tie the Library in a visible way to educational and business objectives in the County. The Library is out of sight and out of mind as far as the professional educators and business leaders are concerned. Marketing the Library as an economic asset has been discussed for years but no one seems to know how to follow through. There are people who have figured this out - Valerie Gross in Howard County, Maryland is one example. But here the public library wastes time, effort and money on useless endeavors like looking for leadership deficits everywhere but where they actually are - at the top of the agency. Hiring consultants like Steve Gladis is not going to fix what is wrong. The Library needs to stop treating people who have different ideas from the agreed-upon party line as disloyal or subversive. The number of talented people who have given up on working for us and gone elsewhere should be a wake-up call. The Library needs a turnaround specialist to focus on why our circulation numbers and door counts have declined steadily for years and then develop remedies. I hope that the new Director and new Deputy Director will do exactly that.

There is a need to increase staff at the branches - particularly the Community branches - in order to serve each patron who walks in the door in a timely and efficient manner. A (voluntary) increase for part time staff hours to 28 hours per week may help. Improve the use of social media to reach out to the customers. Work with local large companies for donations such as a summer bus for the children to come to the library. Arlington County has a very successful program in place., Fairfax County has several huge companies who could be approached. Help us help the patrons with needed resources.

The workload of youth services staff is much greater than that of adult services. There needs to be some crossover in areas such as collection maintenance especially during busy times of the year such as the spring and summer. The Youth Services Manager at a Community Library needs to be reclassified to a higher grade level. The Librarian I classification is the same as a non-manager at a Regional Library in adult services. Also a Youth Services Manager at a Community Library is only one step above the people they supervise (Info Asst S19).

More open spaces, outreach, and cultural focus

Due to decreased staffing, budget cuts and no access to vertical transfers staff moral is very low. Longer lunch/dinner times, currently 30 minutes, would help staff return to work refreshed.

Should continue to increase services; it draws more of the community and revenue in.

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors should be embarrassed by what they have done to their library system. Members of the Board of Supervisors care more about their "districts" than they do about the system as a whole. There are way too many branches in FCPL. If you live in Burke there are three libraries within 10 minutes of your house. Fairfax County opened new branches while at the same time the budget for materials was slashed. Bond money may have paid for the construction of the new buildings but not for the staff or materials needed to function. They have spread the limited resources among 22 branches and in doing so diluted the value of the entire system. When budgets are tight in other jurisdictions difficult choices are made to close certain branches. That would never happen in Fairfax - the local Supervisor would not allow it. In Fairfax changes affect all or none of the branches - there is no determining of what financially would make the most sense for the system as a whole. The Library Administration is too far removed from the front lines. There are non-librarians, some of which have never worked in a branch, making policy decisions that affect the entire system. They are making these decisions without even consulting the most valuable resource in FCPL - the managers that run the libraries. Their knowledge and experience is the key to getting the best value out of the diminished resources we now are facing. Even with a new Director - a librarian who has actually worked in and managed libraries - cannot affect much change unless the politics of Fairfax stop driving all the major decisions and issues facing this system.

The Library Board has ventured too far into the operational policies and procedures to be of benefit. Further, including former staff members, particularly of this system on the library board is both reckless and dangerous on the part of the Board of Supervisors. Too, the Library Board has enabled staff to continue with bad behavior both in supporting known problem staff within the system and providing them a direct line to provide feedback when displeased with management. Decisions often feel they are made based on these employees and a desire to "make them go away or be quiet." They have been systematically unable to even articulate their own priorities, nor do they advocate effectively.

Please do everything you can to invest in staff education and development. FCPL is lucky to have such a talented, committed and impressive workforce. Please use us to your benefit, and ours, with more opportunities for learning, and wide-reaching exposure to new ideas and technologies.

Sufficient and equitable staffing across branches is a must. We should not rely, as we do now, on volunteered overtime. Understaffing is stressful, and not being able to take leave at least somewhat freely is also stressful. (Must we always ask for anything more than a day off two months or more in advance? Effectively, that 's how it is at my branch.) Getting County HR, and the FOCUS system, to allow the creation of individual part-time positions, or to allow part-time positions that are split from a full-time position be used at different locations. Electronic resources will inevitably increase, but physical books are not disappearing. The public still likes physical books, and likes having the option of choosing between print and electronic materials. Increase promotion of Library programs and offerings that cannot be delivered via electronic devices. (I'm sure that if I sat here long enough, other things would come to mind...)