



Report for Compliance with Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiencies Act

I. Unit of government submitting this report

- a. Name of Library: Winnetka-Northfield Public Library District
- b. Address of Main Office: 768 Oak Street, Winnetka, IL 60093

II. Information about our library

- a. We are located in **Cook** County. There are **99** public libraries in our County.
- b. The population of our district is **18,495** (as of the 2020 census).
- c. We have **44** employees (excluding board members).
- d. Our annual operating budget for FY23-24 is **\$4,552,250**.
- e. Our library's equalized assessed valuation (EAV) for 2022 was **\$2,368,829,816** (the most recent information available).

III. Information about our Committee

Committee Members

- a. Board President: Melissa Mitchell
- b. Trustee: Travis Gosselin
- c. Trustee: Thomas Sundell
- d. Trustee: Ranjini Shankar
- e. Trustee: Sarah Munoz
- f. Trustee: Matthew Kinnich
- g. Executive Director: Monica Dombrowski
- h. District Resident: Katherine Casale MacNally
- i. District Resident: Samantha Tideman

IV. Core Programs and Services Offered by our Library

- a. Our library offers the following core programs and services: Physical and electronic resource collections; youth, family, and adult programs inside and outside of our library buildings; reference and reader's advisory services; research help and expertise; technology and device help; public computers; high-speed wireless internet; copiers, scanners, fax machines, and printers; public restrooms; indoor and outdoor spaces for reading, studying, working, meeting, gathering, and playing; equipment for making things; children's play areas and toys.

- b. Other core services/programs we could possibly provide: Additional space for studying, working, meeting, gathering, and playing.

V. Awards & Recognition

Our library and/or staff has received the following awards, distinctions, recognitions, and/or honors: Executive Director Monica Dombrowski is a recipient of the following awards and recognition: the American Library Association’s Carnegie Whitney Grant (2015); Library Journal Mover & Shaker, Digital Developer category (2017); founder and inaugural chair of the Public Library Association’s Digital Literacy Committee (2016-2019); appointee to and member of the Illinois Library Association’s Public Policy Committee (2019-2022); appointee to and member of the Illinois Library Association’s Advocacy Committee (2023-2026); nominee for the Illinois Library Association’s Executive Board (2024). IT Manager Mark Swenson was the 2019 recipient of the Winnetka-Northfield-Glencoe Chamber of Commerce’s Winnetka-Northfield Library Employee of the Year. Adult Services Librarian Jill Brasseur was the 2016 recipient of the same award.

VI. Intergovernmental Agreements

We have intergovernmental agreements with the following other units of government:

Entity	Services Offered
Kenilworth Public Library District	All library services that are offered to Winnetka-Northfield Public Library District residents.

Based on this agreement and intergovernmental cooperation, we have increased our efficiency in the following ways (list cost savings, avoiding duplicated services, etc.): Negated the need for an additional library building—which requires maintenance, staff, and collections—within a 1–2-mile geographic radius.

VII. Community Partnerships

We partner with the following organizations (list all):

Organization	Services Offered
Winnetka Park District	Storytimes, Events, Event & Program Marketing
Northfield Park District	Storytimes, Events, Event & Program Marketing
Kenilworth Park District	Storytimes, Events, Event & Program Marketing
Family Action Network	Events & Event Marketing
Illinois Libraries Presents	Events & Event Marketing
NorthShore Senior Center	Events & Event Marketing
Alliance for Early Childhood	Events & Event Marketing
Winnetka Historical Society	Events, Event Marketing, Digitization, Digital Hosting
The Book Stall	Events & Event Marketing
School District 36	Events, Event Marketing, Reading Programs, Class Visits
School District 29	Events, Event Marketing, Reading Programs, Class Visits
Harkness House for Children	Events & Event Marketing
League of Women Voters	Events, Event Marketing, Space
Winnetka Weeders	Events, Event Marketing, Outdoor Space
Northfield Garden Club	Outdoor Space

Winnetka Youth Organization (operations suspended)	Events & Event Marketing
SCORE	Events & Event Marketing
Counseling Center of the North Shore	Events, Event & Services Marketing
North Shore Art League	Events & Event Marketing
Winnetka Northfield Glencoe Chamber of Commerce	Events, Event Marketing, Space
Fields BMW	Events, Event Marketing, Space
Friends of the Winnetka-Northfield Public Library	Event & Program Marketing, Space
New Trier Township	Event & Services Marketing, Information & Referrals
Winnetka Police Department	Events, Event Marketing, Retirement Baton Engraving
Winnetka Presbyterian Church	Parking Lot Space (Sundays before opening)
Wilmette Public Library District	Events & Event Marketing

VIII. Review of Laws, Policies, Rules and Procedures, Training Materials, and other Documents

We have reviewed the following non-exhaustive list of laws, policies, training materials, and other documents applicable to the Library to evaluate our compliance and determine if any of the foregoing should be amended.

- State laws applicable to Libraries
- Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/1 et seq.)
- Policy on public comment
- Designation of OMA officer (5 ILCS 120/1.05(a))
- All Board Members have completed OMA Training (5 ILCS 120/1.05(b))
- Schedule of Regular Meetings of the Library Board (5 ILCS 120/2.03)
- Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1 et seq.)
- Designation of FOIA Officer(s)
- FOIA Officer Training (5 ILCS 140/3.5(b))
- Computation and Retention of FOIA Requests (5 ILCS 140/3.5(a))
- Posting Other Required FOIA Information (5 ILCS 140/4(a); 5 ILCS 140/4(b))
- List of Types of Categories of FOIA Records under Library Control (5 ILCS 140/5)
- Periodic Meetings to Review Closed Meeting Minutes (5 ILCS 120/2.06(d))
- IMRF Total Compensation Posting (5 ILCS 120/7.3)
- Designation of Whistleblower Auditing Official (50 ILCS 105/4.1 et seq.)
- Proper filing of statement of economic interests (5 ILCS 420/4A-101; 5 ILCS 420/4A-101.5 et seq.)
- Sexual harassment prevention training (775 ILCS 5/2-109(C))
- Intergovernmental agreements
- Budget and financial documents
- State Ethics Laws, including, but not limited to the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/1-1 et seq)
- Professional Ethics guidelines (Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement)

- ☒ Library Policies (as applicable)

IX. What have we done well?

- a. Budget/levy freezes or reductions:
 - i. We held a flat levy for FY22-23.
 - ii. Our 5-year levy increase average is 2.4% in comparison to the 5-year COLA average increase of 4.1%.
 - iii. Created and distributed an annual report containing financial information.
- b. New programs or services offered to residents:
 - i. Largely addressed in section IX.e. below, including several new services.
 - ii. Expansion of Studio programming to Northfield location.
 - iii. The Library of Things.
 - iv. Teen Learn-It Kits.
 - v. Early Literacy Kits.
 - vi. STEAM kits.
 - vii. Expanded digital collection, resulting in decreased wait times for materials.
 - viii. Expanded class/event offerings (e.g., multilingual story times, technology classes, author events).
- c. Ethics ordinances adopted:
 - i. As an organization we follow ALA's Code of Ethics. Nothing formal otherwise.
- d. Timely FOIA compliance:
 - i. Number of FOIA request in the following calendar years:
 - 1. 2021: 8
 - 2. 2022: 6
 - 3. 2023: 5
 - 4. 2024 YTD: 3
 - ii. The longest response time was for a request in which we received an initial request on 5/27/22 and responded, were then given a revised request on 6/8/22 and due to the size of the request and multiple communications back and forth we received an extension and sent the final response, completed the request, on 8/15/22. Typically, most other FOIA responses are given in a matter of days.
- e. Responsiveness to the public:
 - i. We send after-event/program survey emails asking for feedback, booking similar events and speakers that have been particular hits.
 - ii. We installed kiosks in the branches to ask for ongoing suggestions.
 - iii. Member of several consortiums to increase buying/lending power and offer and larger collection to residents.
 - iv. A recently installed programming dashboard now tracks key metrics about what we're offering (speaker popularity, cost, number of attendees, popular event categories, cost per attendee, etc.) to help us make more data-driven decisions.

- v. We've increased the programming budget and joined two programming consortiums in the last two years to allow us to provide more programming.
- vi. Added digital access to the Wall Street Journal, New York Times, and The Economist.
- vii. Reinstating dedicated Northfield staff at the Northfield branch.
- viii. Embarking on a renovation project to expand the Northfield Library.
- ix. Keeping virtual and hybrid programs post-COVID.
- x. Hiring additional staff dedicated to The Studio.
- xi. Bringing Studio Programs to the Northfield branch.
- xii. Increasing the size of the Youth Collection at both branches, including purchasing additional mobile shelving so we could expand the collection, and adapt (and re-adapt) the space to the dynamic needs of the patrons.
- xiii. Bringing back the toys and adding new play/activity furniture for the youth areas.
- xiv. Increasing our presence in the community outside our buildings, which, in turn, led to:
 1. Creating the position of a dedicated Community Engagement Librarian, and the promotion from within of an existing staff member into this position.
 2. Delivery of hard-copy materials to homebound patrons.
 3. Community event participation such as the Winnetka Children's Fair, Northfield Market & Music Nights, Winnetka Farmers' Market, and the Northfield Holiday Market.
 4. Numerous Park District Programs in both Winnetka and Northfield (including summer storytimes at camps, which we're now expanding to Kenilworth's Park District), the Winnetka 4th of July Parade, the Winnetka Fall Fest, and Winnetka Spooky Stories.
 5. Collaborating with staff at the Carleton Washburne School (Winnetka's 7th & 8th grades) to offer Dungeons & Dragons ("D&D") and Anime Clubs.
 6. Back-to-School nights at all the area elementary schools.
- xv. Partnered with the Winnetka Historical Society to digitize the Winnetka Talk and make it available through the District's website.
- xvi. Launched new website.
- xvii. Upgraded to higher speed internet.
- f. Any new intergovernmental agreements
 - i. N/A.
- g. Any increase in statistics, etc. in last decade [2013-2023].

	FY 12-13	FY22-23	% Change	FY23-24 YTD (23JUL – 24JAN)
Youth Programs	319	627	96.5%	354
Youth Attendees	13,266	13,407	1.1%	10,723

Adult Programs	255	220	-13.7%	128
Adult Attendees	3,285	5,313	61.7%	3,292
Physical Visitors	293,560	151,371	-48.4%	103,919
Physical Circulation	424,917	372,980	-12.2%	224,408
Virtual Circulation	7,816	110,571	1314.7%	77,326
Total Circulation	231,325	483,551	109.0%	301,734

X. What inefficiencies did we identify and what are our next steps?

In the process of renewing our contract for library services with the Kenilworth Public Library District, we noted that it could be more efficient for Kenilworth to dissolve their Library District and join ours (or Wilmette’s), as they currently have an elected Board with no building, collections, or services. Alternatively, Kenilworth could choose to build their own library to serve their residents. We have proposed these ideas to their Board for consideration over the length of the current contract (5 years).

XI. What can we do better or more efficiently?

We need to continue to hire more staff and move more of our budget dollars into the Personnel bucket in place of Capital Outlay. This will be accomplished once our Northfield Renovation project is complete and we have more public service points and a proper workroom for staff.

XII. Studies on governmental efficiencies

In preparing this report, we reviewed several studies on local government efficiency. These studies show that the average local government in Illinois serves 1,800 residents compared to the national median of 2,850 individuals.

XIII. Our committee’s recommendations regarding increased accountability and efficiency:

Continue to monitor patron feedback and made adjustments to collections, programs, services, and spaces accordingly.

Report filed with Cook County on February 22nd, 2024.