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ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2010-2011 ANNUAL REPORT

The 2010-2011 year was notable for the financial challenges experienced by the School Department. While the tradition of excellence in the classroom, performing and visual arts, and athletics continued in the 2010-2011 school year, the Arlington Public Schools were significantly impacted by three financial challenges – a FY2011 budget reduction of \$3.9 million, which was partially offset by funds raised through the Bridge The Gap campaign, a deficit of \$1.5 million from the previous fiscal year, and the prospect of significant reductions in the FY2012 budget. Fortunately, the fiscal year ended with positive outcomes for the Arlington Public Schools

The FY2011 budget reductions sustained by the School Department impacted all aspects of the District's ability to provide a quality education for all students. Class sizes increased. Course offerings were reduced. Textbooks, educational materials, and professional development were inadequately funded. These reductions followed multiple years of reductions in which reductions were targeted in administration, educational supplies and materials, support staff, curriculum leadership, and facilities. As a result, there was little else in the FY2011 budget to reduce other than personnel. The nearly \$600,000 in funds raised through the efforts of hundreds of volunteers in the Bridge The Gap campaign provided a restoration of some teaching positions and demonstrated the generosity and strong support of the schools in the community.

The second financial challenge experienced by the School Department was the \$1.5 million deficit in the FY2010 budget. The deficit resulted from a combination of lost revenue and increased costs. The grants, fees, and credits that were anticipated in the FY2010 budget did not come in as forecast. Additionally, we experienced significant increased expenses in special education, particularly for out-of-district placements. We did not have reserves in the School Department budget to offset the combination of reduced revenues and increased expenses, nor were cost reduction measures implemented in October 2009 sufficient to offset the shortfall in FY2010. Due to conservative estimates in the FY2011 budget for grants, fees, and credit revenue, as well as revenue allocated to Arlington from the federal Jobs Bill for Education in August 2011, the shortfall was offset with these revenues. A Special Town Meeting was held in November to approve a reduction to the FY2011 school appropriation by \$1,525,021 to offset the amount of free cash used to close the FY2010 school budget deficit. Because the deficit could be offset by the newly realized revenue from the Jobs Bill and grants, staffing and services were preserved as voted

by the School Committee and approved by Town Meeting in May 2010, as were the positions supported by the Bridge the Gap fundraising efforts. Finally, further actions to address the budget deficit resulted in greater transparency and improved budget tracking mechanisms.

The third financial challenge that overshadowed spring 2011 was the prospect of another multi-million dollar reduction in the school budget for 2011-2012, following on the heels of over \$3 million in reductions for 2010-2011. The five-year plan that was the basis for the 2005 override ended in FY2010, causing a funding cliff in FY2011, which then continued into FY12. The School Department developed two FY12 budgets – one without an override and one with an override. Once again, due to the generosity of the Arlington community, a property tax override was approved in June based on a three year budget plan that would confine general budget growth to 3.5% and special education growth to 7%. Since the override changes in health care plan design for all Town and School employees has produced savings to extend the three year plan commitment to five-years.

Despite the challenges presented by reduced resources, the students in the Arlington Public Schools continued to perform at very high levels as evidenced by data provided later in this report. This success is due to our motivated students, great teachers, dedicated administrators, involved parents, and a supportive community. The School Department continued the focus of building upon past successes and moving forward on three District Goals:

- Ensure all Arlington students are well-prepared for academics, social, emotional and vocational success in the 21st century.
- Create systems for increased communication and collaboration across the district.
- Provide the tools, infrastructure, and systems to support district initiatives and learning environments.

The results of our efforts included:

- Clear expectations for what every child should know and be able to do (standards based education) continued to be refined and integrated into daily life in the classroom. District-wide common assessments in mathematics, English, and writing help teachers pace their instruction and inform them which students have mastered the skills and content and who needs further instruction. Curriculum overviews of every discipline K-12 can be accessed on the district website.
- Our intensive reading program, which focuses on early intervention and intensive support for struggling readers, demonstrated

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continued success in its fifth year of implementation. All K-5 students were assessed three times during the school year. Data from these assessments determined the level of support provided for students not meeting benchmark standards. This initiative has helped many more students read at grade level. In June, 95% of students in Grade 5 were reading at grade-level benchmarks.

- At all levels, teachers and administrators focused on incorporating 21st century skills into every classroom. While the curriculum content remained in place, greater emphasis on team work, working in a multicultural global society, hard work, communication skills, creative problem-solving, and the ability to evaluate and synthesize information was emphasized.
- Our students continued to perform very well on MCAS, Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO) for English Language Learners (ELL), and Advanced Placement Exams;

Elementary 2010 MCAS results:

- * Brackett was among the highest performers in the state for Third Grade Reading (#4), Fourth Grade English (#2), Fifth Grade English (#2); Fifth Grade Math (#2); Fifth Grade Science (#1).
- * Stratton was among the highest performers for Fifth Grade Math (#3); Fifth Grade Science (#6).
- * Peirce was among the highest performers for Fifth Grade Science (#4).
- *Commendations:* In September 2010, the Governor and the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education identified Arlington High School and three elementary schools, Brackett, Peirce, and Stratton, as Commendation Schools for High Growth in Student Achievement.
- English Language Learner students demonstrated high achievement on the AMAOs far exceeding state averages in all categories.
- *Advanced Placement Results:* The College Board recognized Arlington High School for continuous improvement and high achievement while also expanding participation in AP courses.
 - * 26 students were AP scholars. This designation is granted to students who receive scores of 3 or higher (highest score is 5)

on 3 or more AP exams.

- * 12 students were AP Scholars with Honors. This designation is granted to students who received an average of score of at least 3.25 on all AP exams taken and scores of 3 or higher on 4 or more of these exams.
- * 26 students were AP Scholars with Distinction. This designation is granted to students who received an average grade of at least 3.5 on all AP exams and grades of 3 or higher on 5 or more of these exams.
- * 1 student was a National AP scholar. This designation is granted to students in the US who receive an average grade of at least 4 on all AP exams and grades of 4 or higher on 8 or more of these exams.

To ensure a safe learning and working environment, work was prioritized over the year to address the list of health, safety, and workplace needs, including: implementing a bullying prevention plan in response to state legislation, a new email system, safety protocols developed through the Federal Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) grant, and PowerSchool portal for parents to access grades, attendance, and update demographic information.

The schools continued to work in partnership with the police, Town, and community to ensure consistent and coordinated responses to inappropriate student behaviors. The Diversion Program started in 2006, which focuses on restitution and rehabilitation for first time, non-violent behavior, has proven to be an effective model. We have partnered again this year with community and nonprofit organizations to provide more options for counseling services. Meeting the social and emotional needs of children is as high a priority as meeting the academic needs of our students.

The Town has made a substantial investment in our school buildings, and we continued to improve and streamline the maintenance of these buildings, as well as plan for major renovations or rebuilds.

Thompson Elementary School

The Thompson School Building Committee met every two weeks to complete the feasibility study for the new Thompson school. On February 9, the Thompson School received approval for a new building from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). Our architects worked through the spring to develop the schematic plans for the new school building. Town Meeting approved a \$20 million budget for the building in May. The projected time line is to complete the construction drawings by December, 2011, go out to bid in January 2012, and start construction in April 2012.

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The School Committee approved a June 2011 closing of the Thompson School primarily for two reasons:

1. To allow the District the opportunity to bid out the project and begin construction as early as possible, which would likely save the Town money in total project costs, without the need to wait until the end of the following school year or to move students mid-year.

2. To save money in the FY2012 budget. The Thompson School physical plant was difficult to maintain in good working order. Major building systems, including the roof, boiler, hot water heater, and windows were at the end of their useful life. To keep the building open for another year ran the risk of requiring major and expensive emergency repairs.

Stratton Elementary School

Through the efforts of the School Department's CFO and the Deputy Town Manager, the Stratton School was awarded funding through the Massachusetts School Building Authority's Green Repair Program, which provided partial funding for the upgrade of boilers, roofs and windows to improve energy efficiency in otherwise sound school buildings. This new MSBA program coordinated well with work already underway at Stratton with funds from the Town Capital budget. The additional funding from MSBA allowed a greater scope to the project than would have been possible with Town funding alone. Rather than replace only some of the classroom windows, the Green Repair Program provided funds to replace all of the windows in the classroom wing. The project was completed during the summer 2011.

Addressing the FY2010 Budget Shortfall

Following the budget shortfall, the School Department took actions that will provide earlier warning systems and, therefore, prevent against a similar situation occurring. These actions include implementing a new position control system, updating and making purchase procedures available online, and developing increasingly detailed budgets in a singular format, including monthly tracking reports. The Department also updated and expanded the chart of accounts.

Finally, through a combination of factors including being under budget for out-of-district tuitions, receiving better than expected grant and fee revenue, and careful spending, the District ended 2010-2011 with a budget surplus in circuit breaker money (special education reimbursement money from the state) that was allocated as a reserve for special education in 2011-2012.

Bridge The Gap Campaign

Through the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and the generosity of the community, nearly \$600,000 was raised to offset the expected reductions due the projected \$3.9 million reduction needed to balance the

FY2011 budget. The funds raised partially restored classroom, physical education, elementary art and music, and world language teachers. The funds also restored some mathematics and reading support, as well as library teaching assistants for all of the elementary schools. High school athletic fees were reduced.

The continued success of the Arlington Public Schools is due to a team of talented professionals working together towards our shared vision: All students will achieve at their full social, emotional, creative, and academic potential, and will be prepared for higher level academics, workforce success, active citizenship, and life-long learning. The Arlington Public Schools are committed to helping every student achieve their highest potential. The District Goals listed below are essentially the same goals of last year but with different objectives for this year. Ninety-seven percent of the objectives were accomplished.

The 2010-2011 District Goals approved by the School Committee are as follows:

Arlington Public Schools District Goals 2010-2011

APS Mission: All students will achieve at their full social, emotional, creative and academic potential, and will be prepared for higher level academics, workforce success, active citizenship, and life-long learning.

Themes for 2010-2011 District Goals:

- Increasing academic achievement in reading, writing, science, and math for all learners with attention to subgroup populations: Low Income, Special Education and Limited English Proficiency.
- Responding to new anti-bullying law.
- Building a collaborative and inclusive culture for regular and special education teachers and parents.
- Expanding technology tools to support the implementation of the district goals.
- Increasing communication and collaboration toward district goals with all stakeholders.

Goal 1: Ensure all Arlington students are well-prepared for academics, social, emotional, and vocational success in the 21st century.

a. Increase achievement in reading K-8

- Augment Response To Intervention (RTI) tiered reading support K-6.
- K-2: More time on reading for identified students.
- Gr. 3-5: Monitor independent reading.
- Gr. 6: Extend RTI reading program and prog-

ress monitoring.

- Increase progress monitoring for Tier3 students. Expand reading service to all Supported Learning Center & Language-Based special education students.
- Provide training in curriculum content and standards, i.e. Foundations, reading comprehension, etc., for all special education and ELL teachers.
- Hold individual Data Review & Service meetings for special education students who are in Warning/Needs Improvement (W/NI).
- Analyze district special education 2010 subgroup data for MCAS and Growth results. Develop intervention plans based on data.
- Share and monitor Individual Student Success Plans (ISSP) with teachers, reading specialists, counselors, special education liaisons, and administrators.
- Implement co-taught inclusion model at the Peirce School Gr. 1-5.
- Build teacher capacity (PD):
 - * Expand differentiated instruction (DI) tools for classroom teachers.
 - * Expand repertoire of vocabulary instructional techniques.
- Expand non-fiction reading across the curriculum, using Teaching American History (TAH) resources in Gr. 3-5.

b. Increase student achievement in mathematics K-8

- Complete Assessing Math Concepts (AMC) training for Gr. 2 teachers, including ELL and special education teachers.
- Integrate AMC into the classroom curriculum and common assessment schedule in Gr. K-2.
- K-2 Math RTI Initiative: Begin Math Response To Intervention (RTI) planning for structure and best practices. Pilot math RTI at Hardy School.
- 4. Grades 6-8:
 - * Teachers administer common assessments to all students to improve teaching and learning.
 - * Offer math support to students with Needs Improvement (NI) and Warning (W) on MCAS.
 - * Share and monitor ISSP plans with teachers, reading specialists, counselors, and special education liaisons.

c. Increase student achievement in writing K-12

- Gr. 3-5: Analyze student strengths and weaknesses on topic development. Revisit Looking at Student Work (LASW) using writing rubrics; set benchmarks for assessments.
- K-5: Revise writing common assessments.
- Gr.3 Initiative: Introduce Lucy Calkins Writing Program to support integration of genre writing into current elementary writing program.
- Gr.5: Adopt Gr. 6-12 MLA based research and writing skills.
- Gr.6-12: Develop common writing assessments.

d. Improve student achievement in science content and process skills and increase student awareness of opportunities in STEM fields K-12

- Gr. 9-12: Explore and implement instructional strategies for delivering science content and process skills in light of reduced student contact time.
- Utilize Verizon and Gateway Institute (Museum of Science) resources to increase student awareness and opportunities in STEM fields.

e. Improve the social/emotional climate in all schools

- Develop and begin to implement APS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan by Dec. 31, 2010.
- Develop School Committee policy consistent with anti-bullying law by June 2011.
- Provide administrators with professional development on investigation of bullying complaints.
- Develop standard protocols, corrective actions, and codes of conduct/discipline for bullying for all schools.
- Provide professional development during the fall to explain school safety and reporting protocols to teachers and staff.
- Research and begin to implement programs to enhance school climate.
 - * Gr. 3-5 - Implement anti-bullying curriculum, Open Circle, in all elementary schools.
 - * Gr. 6-8 – Implement World of Difference Program (peer leaders) to increase student and adult respect for differences.
 - * Gr. 9-12 – Research and develop programs to reduce student stress.

f. Improve transitions to higher education and the world of work.

- * Gr. 9 students will take Naviance “Learning Styles” inventory.
- * Gr. 10 students will take Naviance “Career Interest” inventory.
- * Gr.11-12 students will utilize expanded Naviance program in college process and post-secondary planning.

g. Expand common assessments in all subjects Gr. 6-12 to provide consistency of instruction and student outcomes.

- * Gr. 6-8: Develop and administer common open response reading comprehension assessments and writing assessments twice a year to all students to monitor and improve classroom teaching and learning.
- * Provide time for teachers to develop common assessments and grading rubrics and to evaluate student performance on common assessments.

h. Implementation of the Teaching American History Grant (TAH).

Goal 2: Create systems for increased communication and collaboration across the district.

a. Improve communication between the schools and parents

- The focus this year is on bullying prevention in response to legislation.
- Form Bullying Task Force.
- Explain bullying policies through online written communication and school handbooks.
- Use parent meetings and parent forums to explain the scope and intent of the bullying law and the district’s response.
- Explain safety protocols developed through REMS grant to parents via APS
- Pilot Safety Net (formerly Connect-Ed) for parent communication at AHS, OMS, Peirce, Hardy, and Stratton.
- Gr. 9-12: Implement PowerSchool portal for parents to access grades, attendance and update demographic information.
- Consistently provide hard-copy of parent communications to families without home computer access.

b. Improve communication between the district and the community.

- Collaborate with ACMi to extend and enhance programming efforts to show various elements of the Arlington Public Schools.
- Provide Superintendent’s monthly newsletter highlighting activities, progress, and events within the APS to all residents. Subscription option to newsletter available on the website.
- Post budget documents and power point presentations on district website.

c. Improve internal professional communication among schools, departments, and other groups

- Develop common Collaborative Learning Teams (CLT) format, and schedule meetings to share results of CLT work.
- Use Google Docs to share work within departments.
- Develop common procedures and formats for reporting incidents of bullying.
- Share monthly budget report within district.
- Increase collaboration among guidance/ teachers/special education liaisons for improved monitoring and oversight of at-risk students.

d. Improve Special Education collaboration

- Establish monthly meetings with Principals, Director of Special Education, and Assistant Directors.
- Clarify list of common student accommodations for all staff as part of professional development in the fall.
- Use PowerSchool to list accommodations (SpEd and 504).
- Use district administrative meetings to improve communication among Special Education Administrators, Principals, and Department Leaders.
- Create an Inclusion Design Team with all stakeholders to develop common vision, evaluate current status, examine best practices, and establish time table for resulting change actions.

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Goal 3: Provide the tools, infrastructure and systems to support district initiatives and learning environments

a. Expand and implement technology tools to improve communication

- Implement new district Google-based, secure email system.
- Develop K-12 calendar.
- Update Acceptable Use Agreement (AUP) for staff and students. Have all staff sign updated AUP.
- Train all staff on new Google applications.
- Implement Google Docs for in-district professional collaboration.
- Use Google Docs as tool for self-study at AHS in preparation for NEASC accreditation visit in 2012.
- Make available all 504 plans in Power-School.
- Review technology program and develop district technology plan for the state.

b. Develop and implement budget tracking system.

- Develop position control system.
- Review and update purchasing procedures. Disseminate procedures by hardcopy and post on the website.
- Develop singular budget format for all stakeholders.
- Develop updated and expanded chart of accounts.

c. Complete feasibility study and develop schematics for new or renovated Thompson Elementary School

- Complete feasibility study.
- (Prepare documents for January Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) board meeting.

d. Develop redistricting plan

- Provide School Committee with interim redistricting report by December, 2010 (implementation upon completion Thompson school project).

MINUTEMAN REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



About Minuteman

Minuteman is a four-year public high school serving the member towns of: Acton, Arlington, Belmont, Bolton, Boxborough, Carlisle, Concord, Dover, Lancaster, Lexington, Lincoln, Needham, Stow, Sudbury, Wayland, and Weston. Minuteman combines rigorous academics in preparation for college with relevant career and technical programs.

Arlington Enrollment

As of October 1, 2011, One hundred twenty three (123) high school students and sixteen (16) post graduate students were enrolled at Minuteman providing a full time equivalent (FTE) of one hundred thirty-nine (139) residents of Arlington.

Minuteman experienced a 7% increase in the Freshman Class resulting in the largest freshman class in 12 years. The "Benefits of Minuteman" are clear:

- Experience the Modern American High School. Minuteman offers a distinctly modern learning experience where students venture beyond a traditional high school curriculum to explore their interests and discover their passion, whether that's Bio-technology, Robotics, Environmental Technology, or something else entirely from among our twenty majors.
- Believe in Yourself. Students graduate from Minuteman with an enduring self-confidence that they can achieve anything they set out to do, no matter how high the hurdle, how long the road, how loud the skeptics.
- Prepare for College and Life. Minuteman equips students with the academic foundation and study skills to succeed in college and the industry certifications and acumen to succeed in business, affording every student a unique flexibility upon graduation to pursue their dreams.
- Learn from Experts. Minuteman's teachers are demonstrated experts in their respective fields, injecting a depth of knowledge and experience into their classes that is rarely found in public or private schools.
- Be More Than Just Another Student. There

is no such thing as “just another student” at Minuteman – instead, teachers and staff personally invest themselves in truly knowing each student and working closely with them to realize their full, individual potential.

- Make a Fresh Start. From their very first day of school, Minuteman students are given the opportunity to make a fresh start among new friends and new teachers who will see them as they are and not as who they once were.

Arlington High School and Minuteman Half Day Program

Minuteman offers a unique program allowing juniors and seniors, who have passed the MCAS, enrollment on a half day-every day basis in a career major. This allows a student to graduate from Arlington High School and receive a competency certificate from Minuteman. Currently, no Arlington students participate.

Minuteman offers ‘Post Graduate’ programs to Arlington residents of any age who are seeking to enhance their skill development. Post-Graduate Students are charged tuition to offset operating costs.

2011 Arlington Graduates and Awards

Christine Andrews, Culinary Arts/Baking
Michael Boom, Hospitality
Amy Bucci, Drafting
Tony-Valentino Cabral, Programming & Web
Amanda Carley, Early Education & Care
Stephen Colarusso, Metal Fabrication
Alejandro Cuellar, Biotechnology
Samantha Der Torossian, Culinary Arts/Baking
Jacob Dores-Lahti, Programming & Web
Jesus Estrada, Automotive Technology
Christopher Goode, culinary Arts/Baking
Michelle Jones, Culinary Arts/Baking
Joseph King, Plumbing
Erik Landskov, Programming & Web
Christopher Lydon, Plumbing
Shawn Lydon, Electrical Wiring
Shayne MacAuley, Plumbing
Dennis Nefedov, Programming & Web
Justin O’Connor, Plumbing
James Pailer, Electrical Wiring
Iruma Shibuya, Hospitality
Molly Sousa, Marketing
Edward Woods, Electrical Wiring

At the 2011 graduation, Alejandro Cuellar was awarded the Minuteman Drama Club Award, Amanda Carley was awarded the Eugene Victor Memorial Award, Amy Bucci the Beverly W. Lydiard Memorial Award. Christine Andrews the Arlington Dollars for Scholars, the Bonnie Hilda Memorial Award, the Minuteman National Honor Society Award, the Minuteman Parent

Association Commercial Services Division/Academic Scholar Award, and the Samuel Nigro Award. Christopher Goode was awarded the Friends of Minuteman. Edward Woods, the Jed Dowd Memorial Award. Erik Landskov the Felicia M. DeLorenzo Memorial Award, the Minuteman Parent Association Science Technology Division Award. Joseph King was awarded the Minuteman Parent Association Trades Division Award. Michael Bloom, the Minuteman Parent Association Commercial Service Division Award. Michelle Jones, the Arlington Rotary Club Award and the Margaret Rosselli Memorial Scholarship. Stephen Colarusso the Cambridge Savings Bank Award and the Felicia M. DeLorenzo Memorial Award.

SkillsUSA

Below is a list of State Results, by student and category. These awards are given to students of superior academic achievement and significant participation in school or community activities.

Jeffrey Davie, Carpentry, Silver Medalist PG
Patrick Boisvert, Plumbing, Silver Medalist PG
Alejandro Cuellar, Biotechnology, Gold Medalist, and 3rd Place in National Results
Christine Andrews, Culinary Arts, Silver Medalist
Peter Kelly, Biotechnology, Bronze Medalist
Kelsey Wakelin, Environmental Science, Bronze Medalist
Anthony Senesi, State Officer Candidate, Elected

Class of 2011 Graduate Achievement Highlights

- 73% college bound or advanced Technical Training, 12% career bound and 4% military. Overall, graduates achieved an 89% positive placement rate.
- 100% of Dental graduates passed the National Dental Board examination.
- 90% of Early Education and Care program completers were certified by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care.
- 78% of Cosmetology graduates passed State Board examinations.
- Health Occupation graduates achieved 78% in college acceptance.
- 86% of Environmental Technology graduates earned the Massachusetts Grade II Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator License.
- Valedictorian Michael Breen, Biotechnology graduate from Bolton attending University of Rochester in Rochester, NY. Salutatorian Benjamin Basseches, Pre-Engineering graduate from Lexington attending Brown University in Providence, RI.

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Capital Projects

Lexington Water Department is requiring replacement of several major components of the school's water supply system. This work will be completed in December 2011; estimated total cost of \$120,000 is covered out of our FY2012 budget.

An emergency \$475,000 capital project was successfully completed. Lexington issued an order at the end of June 2011 in regards to the area of the school known as the Trades Hall. The order restricted access and occupancy to the Trades Hall immediately. Minuteman had to obtain a waiver from DCAM to hire a design architect, demolish the interior area and rebuild the area under current building codes in order to open school in the fall.

MSBA Update: Minuteman is in the "pipeline" of the Vocational School Repair and Renew program announced by the State Treasurer's office in 2010. The Feasibility Study financing was unanimously approved by all 16 member towns in 2010. The School Building Committees will review various models to accommodate member community enrollment, as well as various levels of non-member enrollment. A final project model is expected by 2014.

Curriculum and Instruction

Since 2008 all 9th grade students have English and Math every day, rather than a "week-on-week-off" schedule, thus providing more consistent and concentrated instruction as well as project-based learning.

The Educational Program planning process has identified several new programs that offer students increased choices in career majors, including Criminal Justice/Bio-Security, Animal Science and the Technical Theater Arts. Two programs phased out in 2010 included Office Technology and Auto Body Repair. Drafting and Design Visual Communications will be phased out by 2014.

Professional Development

The Minuteman staff have created academic and Career and Technical Education (CTE) goals that emphasize formative assessment practices, teacher-to-teacher peer observations, Executive Function support, Reading Consultancies, and Academic-Career and Technical curriculum integration. The integration of technology to enhance student learning is an ongoing commitment.

Student Access, Participation and Support

An Executive Function initiative was launched last year. Minuteman provides students with resources to enhance their planning and organization skills.

Minuteman continues to support a full-time Reading Specialist. In addition to working with the students on his own caseload, he consults with academic and

CTE teachers toward the development and application of a school-wide reading program.

The Special Education department successfully implemented the Student Learning Center (SLC). The SLC allows students to understand their disability, develop skills, and techniques to minimize the impact of the student's disability, and to promote independence and personal responsibility. The SLC supports the transition to college.

Minuteman offers 16 sports with three levels (Varsity, Junior Varsity and Freshman) throughout the school year. Over the past 7 years the number of participants has doubled in many of the sports offered. Students have more than 20 clubs and activities.

The Minuteman Parent Association (MPA) meets monthly and supports all aspects of the Minuteman community. In addition, the Grant-a-Wish program supports numerous initiatives and incentives for student achievement.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Mission

The Robbins Library is a vital community center that connects people with traditional and technological resources for life-long learning, intellectual pursuits, and leisure. The Library responds to citizens' needs with services and activities in a welcoming setting built on a history of free and equal access to information for all Arlington residents.

Usage

The Library continued the pattern of previous years with increases in circulation of library materials and again experienced the highest circulation in its history. (641,994 - Fiscal Year 2011). The number of visits to the library increased to over 320,000 while many residents from home remotely accessed the wealth and variety of resources offered. As in the previous year, residents increasingly relied on the Library for its free services in this time of continued economic hardship. All ages enjoyed Library programs, computer workstations for access to the Internet, and electronic databases. Job seekers utilized the computers for resume writing, employment opportunities, and online job applications. Professional librarians at the Reference Desk, in the Children's Room, and at Fox Branch, assisted the public in meeting their informational needs through the Library's book and periodical collections and with electronic resources. Although the Robbins Library continued to be closed Thursday mornings, the public enjoyed Sunday afternoon hours funded through private donations. Library staff worked diligently to meet the demands of the continued high usage despite vacan-

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cies in several departments.

Accomplishments

Strategic Plan

Library administration and staff continued to strive to implement the goals that were identified in the long-range plan for FY2011-2013. Many of the accomplishments of 2011 were a direct result of this plan. The Library is very proud that it maintained a high quality of services to the public despite staffing shortages in the Adult Services, Children's, Fox Branch, and Administrative departments for the first half of the year due to a freeze on hiring.

Programming and Collections

- Implemented a very successful series of programs targeted to adults age 50+ with a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.
- Offered a very popular summer reading program for all ages and a Community Read series in the fall.
- Continued to provide a wide variety of creative children's programs with funding from the Anne Russell Fund.
- Initiated a very popular Independent Film Series.
- Co-sponsored with the Garden Club another sold-out Books in Bloom fundraiser.
- Instituted a collection of early readers for children just learning to read with a grant from the Arlington Rotary Club.
- Provided books and audiovisual materials, art prints, databases, computer equipment, museum passes, and programs for the Robbins and Fox Libraries with funding from the library trust funds and Friends of the Robbins Library.



Books in Bloom Reception

Marketing

- Developed a marketing plan to better inform the public about library services.
- Continued to utilize social media to promote library programs and services.

Use of Emerging Technologies

- Engaged in a successful web development project that gives the library user a focused website with professional standard design, usability, and technical specifications including a separate mobile site.
- Initiated i-chat reference service that gives the librarians an additional way to serve the public remotely and provide excellent customer service in real time.
- Installed a BookScan Station for scanning books and documents that can be saved to a USB drive or to email as an attachment.
- Other technological services included the installation of a new Comcast circuit through the Minuteman Library Network that improved capacity and internet speed for public computer users at the Main and Fox branch libraries, the addition of both wireless internet service and a public catalog station at the Fox branch.
- Handled the re-barcoding of thousands of materials for streamlined processing through the state-wide delivery system.

Awards

Received an Honorable Mention in the Massachusetts Library Association Public Relations Contest for Books in Bloom.

Hours

Initiated Friday hours at the Fox Branch Library with funding from the Friends of Fox. Continued Sunday openings with private funds raised by the Board of Library Trustees and the Friends of the Robbins Library for the fourth year in a row.

Services for Adults

Adults and young adults of middle and high school age utilized the services provided by the librarians in the Adult Services Department for school, work and personal life. The Library continued to staff the Reference Desk whenever the Library was open to the public and tried to provide two librarians whenever possible during busy hours. Fifty-five online databases were provided by municipal funding, the Minuteman Library Network, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and the Metrowest Regional Library System. The databases reflected a wide variety of subject areas including biography, literature, business, careers, consumerism,

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downloadable audio, exam and test preparation, genealogy, health, history, language learning, local history, newspapers, politics, and scholarly journals. With the public workstations in almost constant use, the staff assisted patrons in the use of the Internet, electronic databases, and with computer troubleshooting. The Library recorded 206,706 visits to its website, an increase of 18% from last year and 35% over 2009.

Among the many monthly book and audiovisual displays that staff created to highlight the collections were the very popular foreign films display, New Year-New You, business, Shakespeare's birthday, Animee and Manga, summer reading, Dennis Lehane, New Orleans, Steve Jobs, British TV Shows, Classic Literature on Playaways, holiday cooking, and Christmas movies. Again the Library sponsored a summer reading program for adult and young adults with a raffle for gift certificates funded by the Friends of the Library. Many local organizations also took advantage of the Library's exhibit space in the lobby to publicize their organizations and to present informational displays.

The ever-popular Speed Read collection provided the opportunity to browse this small collection of new and popular materials for which there was a significant demand. The Library continued its efforts to assist English Language Learners by increasing that collection and offering a quarterly English Language Learners newsletter.

A new and innovative series of programs entitled "Plugged In" provided active adults aged 50+ with the opportunity to remain active, enriched and connected in the next phase of life. These programs included possibilities and challenges of life after 50, library's online databases, affording retirement, wellness, career transitions, creativity, concert, networking, movie night, singing, resumes and interviewing, active wisdom and holiday technology gift guide. The series was funded with a federal grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.



Drumming workshop for adults

Arlington residents enthusiastically participated in the ninth annual Arlington Reads Together program that promoted closer ties among community members through reading *Zeitoun*. The book is the true story of a Muslim family's heroic struggle against the forces of nature and racism in the days following Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. A variety of programs included book discussions, a conversation with an American Muslim woman, New Orleans family festival, documentary film on the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and a food drive for the Arlington Food Pantry. The Community Read project was sponsored by the Board of Library Trustees, Friends of the Library, and the Diversity Task Group of Vision 2020.



Community Reads New Orleans Festival

Two author programs were enthusiastically received. In the spring three Arlington authors celebrated the publication of their new books with readings and commentary: Gary Braver (Gary Goshgarian), Emily Fox-Kales and Elif Armbruster. In October a large crowd at Town Hall was entertained by the popular and the nationally recognized novelist Dennis Lehane who read from his not yet published thriller and answered questions from the audience.

The Community Room and Conference Room were used by approximately 100 local organizations for a total of 997 meetings. In addition, the two study rooms were in constant demand by students and tutors and the Local History Room received heavy usage by researchers with Independent Research Cards. The Reading Room was also the site of several exhibits including a photographic history of Elizabeth Island prepared by Richard Duffy and the Arlington Historical Society. Several citizens also rented the Reading Room for private functions when the library was closed.

Services to Young Adults

Young adults in grades six through twelve continued to make use of the facility and services. The Reference Desk staff assisted students with class assignments

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and bibliographic instruction and offered orientations to classes from the Ottoson Middle School. Teens continued to make use of the young adult area, enjoyed the teen blog and Facebook page and borrowed items from the book, books on CD, and Playaway collections. Young adults participated in the programs planned by Library staff and the Young Adult Advisory Committee including writing workshops, anti-Valentine's Day party, Teen Gap Year Fair, gaming, crocheting, martial arts, introduction to writing scripts for screen, cinematography, interviewing seniors for oral histories, scrabble tournament, bookmaking, summer job training, interviewing skills, songwriting, leading a crafts workshop for children, and assistance with the children's book sale. A notable highlight was the Give Me Five program where innovators in the fields of technology and science presented an interactive workshop for teens on thinking creatively and problem solving. Teenagers participated in the summer reading program and had the opportunity to win raffle prizes funded by trust funds, Friends of the Robbins Library and local businesses. Multiple copies of titles on the middle and high school summer reading lists were available for students.

Services for Children

Children from infancy to fifth grade enjoyed the materials and programs offered by the Children's Department. Materials included books, magazines, books on tape, music and spoken word on CD, Playaways, DVDs and videocassettes, CD-ROMs, puppets, and educational toys. Children and parents participated in 331 activities at the Robbins and Fox Libraries including storytimes in English and Spanish languages, sing-alongs for infants and toddlers, celebration of National poetry month, craft times, craft fair with the Recreation Department, toddler programs, workshops, and various performances. A highlight of the year was the 3rd annual Scrabble Tournament that matched the vocabulary skills of elementary and middle school aged children. Approximately 1,000 children participated in the summer reading program with a theme of Puzzles Games and More. Funding from the trust funds, Friends of the Library, and local businesses enabled children who participated to choose a free book to keep and to win small prizes. The children's librarians offered assistance to children, parents, and teachers in researching homework assignments and for general use of the book collection and the Internet. The public continued to request the very popular graded and subject booklists that are updated and created annually by Library staff. The Library continued to prepare Quick Pick boxes with thematic picture books to assist parents who do not have time to browse the shelves. The Head of Children's Services partnered with the Arlington Rotary Club and reading specialists in the schools to provide easy reader materials for beginning readers.

The public and school Libraries continued their cooperative efforts, although the ongoing lack of elementary school librarians continues to negatively impact this partnership. The public Library maintained collaboration with the schools through letters to teachers, attendance at elementary school faculty meetings, assignment support for teachers and students, extended loan periods for teachers, Library tours, and preparation of curriculum kits. The children's librarians presented book talks in the schools and instruction for classes at the Library as well as preparing the summer reading list titles for the elementary schools. Staff worked with the reading specialists at the schools to support at risk readers in the summer, presented a mini-class for early education students at Arlington High School and instructed library aides in the elementary schools on weeding procedures.

Russell Fund

The Library is very fortunate to have the Anne A. Russell Children's Educational and Cultural Enrichment Fund, which sponsors many special programs for children that could not be afforded through the municipal budget. In 2011 these included: chess for children and parents, Skype to Tanzania, Positive Parenting, crafts, several concerts including the Arlington Philharmonic, Hamstead Players rendition of Alice in Wonderland, Japanese Cherry Blossom Festival, parent/child Yoga, Kidstock performance, Dream Tale Puppets, Triveni Dance Troupe, KNEX, Lever Arts, Kidasso and creative movement classes for infants and caregivers. Over 800 children and adults attended three concerts on the grounds of the Library during the summer. The Russell Fund also finances the very popular infant-toddler sing-alongs. The fund continued to provide kindergarten packets to children to introduce them to the Library and baby bundle packets to new parents with information on library services for infants and toddlers. The Library held several sessions of a Baby Brunch to welcome parents and infants to the Robbins and Fox Libraries.



Family Reading at Fox Library

Edith Fox Library and Community Center

Children and adults in East Arlington continued to enjoy branch library services on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays throughout the year. Beginning in October the library opened on Fridays with funding from the Friends of Fox. Children and parents enjoyed story times, sing-a-longs, craft programs, drop-in play, a Chinese New Year party, Baby Brunch, mask making, science mind-challenge, poetry, parenting workshops, movie night, Spanish story times, drumming, reviews of children's books, performance of Little Red Riding Hood, origami, tanagrams, Japanese storytelling, birds of prey, magic art and scanimation, dance party, Friday Mural Celebration, Marc Brown birthday party, workshop on how to read to infants, storycrafts, puppet show, CTW video game design and the summer reading program. Elementary and nursery schools brought classes to the Library for stories and instruction. All ages enjoyed the monthly book displays that highlighted the collection and exhibits from community groups and the schools. The branch staff is to be commended for their efforts to maintain operations without a branch head the first half of the year due to a freeze on filling vacancies. Several new bookcases were purchased with funding from the Friends of Fox Library.

Behind the Scenes

Library staff worked diligently to offer quality services to the community. The number of items borrowed from, and loaned to, other libraries continued to increase. Despite the fact that the public can request items electronically, the staff must still locate the materials and process them for loan and return. The Adult Services, Children's, Fox Branch and Technical Services Departments selected, ordered, cataloged, and processed 18,276 new items including books, magazines, music compact discs, books on CD, DVDs, CD-ROMs, puppets, and educational toys.

The Circulation Department checked out and returned 641,994 items to the shelves, coordinated the volunteer program, relabeled the paperback collection, maintained the books in good order on the shelves and shifted collections, updated the periodical list, checked shelves for missing items, and continued to work on special projects to automate the serials check-in and to add duplicate barcodes to the front cover of all materials to participate in the state-wide automated delivery system. The Library collected \$55,127 in overdue fines and lost book money that was returned to the general Town fund.

The Adult Services Department continued to order various tax forms and serve as a distribution center to assist patrons in filing their state and federal income taxes. This department also selected, weeded and updated the adult and teen collections, performed preservation work on fragile materials, prepared various

handouts of book and DVD holdings, created a staff favorites booklist, prepared a list of described films for the visually impaired, updated the Business Resources brochure, selected new materials for the Chinese Language collection, evaluated and selected new databases, processed archival photographs, coordinated the adult summer reading program, maintained the list of large print books owned, ordered multiple copies of books for the monthly book discussion club, responded to local history questions of which many were from out-of-state patrons, and created booklists and displays.

The Library continued its efforts to meet patron demands for new audiovisual materials including DVDs, music CDs, and books on cassette and CD. The library also subscribed to the Overdrive Advantage program to provide additional e-books for Arlington residents. The Friends DVD rental collection continued to prove very successful and the proceeds from the rentals will allow for the further expansion of the collection.

The Children's Services Department selected, weeded and updated the children's collections, offered story times, planned and publicized all programs, prepared the monthly children's newsletter, created new and updated graded and subject booklists, initiated book bags for book clubs, continued the quick pick bags for parents and relocated several collections for better access.

The Technical Services Department processed all new materials, updated the records in the automated catalog, maintained selector accounts, relabeled the paperback collection and processed books that need rebinding.

Library administration coordinated several special projects: implementation of the second year of the new long range plan for library services for FY2011-FY2013, consolidation of the Assistant Director and Head Adult Services positions, coordination of the Community Read, implementation of a federally funded grant to improve services to adults in the 50-70 year age range, scheduling of private functions in the Reading Room to raise additional revenue, completion of the moisture proofing of the basement periodical storage room, acknowledgement of donors to the annual and Sunday fundraising appeal, and scheduling the meeting rooms. The Town applied for a waiver of the municipal appropriation requirement because the FY2011 Library budget did not meet state standards for certification and state aid. This state grant in the amount of \$42,993 is used for participation in the Minuteman Library Network and to purchase Library materials.

Technology investments in 2011 were again focused on supporting and extending customer services such as developing a new user focused website, initiation of i-chat reference service, installation of a book and document scanning station, installation of a new Comcast circuit through the Minuteman Library Network

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for improved Internet speed, effective air-conditioning for the computer room, and the addition of wireless Internet service at the Fox. The library continued to support touch screens and e-commerce capability at both self check stations that allows library members to make electronic payments in-library. Additional netbooks were added for a second year to meet a growing demand for wireless Internet usage.

Outreach efforts included participation in an Eco-fest fair at Town Hall, presentation to the Senior Center on low vision, research of historical photographs for another Town department, partnership with the Board of Health and Recreation Department for Turn Off the TV Week and participation in the state-wide Snapshot Day at the library. Marketing efforts included the development of a new website and the use of social media including Facebook, Twitter, and email newsletters to keep the public aware of services that are available.



*Board of Trustees (L-R)
Seated - Francis Murphy, Joyce Radochia
Standing - Brigid Kennedy-Pfister, Heather Calvin,
Katharine Fennelly, and Barbara Muldoon*

Board of Trustees

The seven-member Board of Trustees continued its commitment to administer the trust funds for the optimum benefit of the community, raise private funds to augment the municipal budget, and advocate for adequate staffing and delivery of essential Library services. Several Board members continued to serve on a Town-wide advisory committee to develop a policy for all Town trust funds. The Board approved funding in FY2011 for materials for the adult, children's, young adult, and Fox Branch collections. These included reference and circulating books, books on CD, music CDs, non-fiction DVDs, playaways, foreign language literature, language learning, local history, and art prints. Other services funded included the summer reading programs, activities for children, Community Read, author program, public relations, volunteer appreciation, and staff deve-

lopment. The Trustees also instituted a very popular monthly independent film series. The Board conducted a mail solicitation of individuals and businesses to raise funds for the collections and took steps to create a library foundation in 2012. It also raised private funds in conjunction with the Friends of the Library for Sunday openings from September 2011 to May 2012 and will continue this endeavor next year. Board members participated in Town Day by staffing a table providing information on Library activities and resources.



Town Day Booth, 2011

Friends of the Library

The Friends of the Robbins Library, with a membership of 450, continues to assist the Robbins and Fox Branch libraries with programming, fundraising, and advocacy efforts. This vital support group raises supplemental funds for materials and equipment not provided through the municipal budget including travel and gardening books, Chinese books and Chinese DVDs, audiobooks, music CDs, language learning audiobooks, Playaways, children's materials, online databases, shelving for the teen area, and mini-laptop computers for use within the library. They also sponsor the family museum pass program and provide books and small prizes for the adult, teen and children's summer reading programs. The Friends hosted a wide variety of programs including: genealogy, Colonial era music with Diane Taraz, antique appraisal with Skinner's, jazz band concert, and Irish heritage. The Friends co-sponsored the very successful Books in Bloom event with the Arlington Garden Club. The annual Children's/Young Adult book sale, co-sponsored by the Russell Fund, with able assistance from members of the Library's Youth Advisory Board, helped raise needed funds. As part of the Town Day celebration in September book lovers flocked to annual book sale. Many visitors also regularly peruse and make purchases from the ongoing book sale on the fourth floor of the Library. The rental DVD collection continues to draw many users to the convenient loca-

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tion on the first floor. The library is very appreciative of the efforts of the Friends Board of Directors and part-time coordinator who plan many activities in support of the library.



Town Day Book Sale

Acknowledgments

Staff Resignations

Nancy Gentile who worked for the library for twenty-five years as both Head of Adult Services and Adult Services Librarian left in March to assume to Branch Librarian position at the Framingham Public Library.

Jennifer DeRemer who served the library for over 27 years as Adult Services Librarian and Head of Adult Services retired in June.

Both librarians will be missed for their dedication, creativity, enthusiasm, and commitment to quality customer service.

Donations

In FY2011 residents, businesses, and organizations donated over \$59,000 for general purposes, materials, and opening of the Robbins Library on Sundays. The Library acknowledges with appreciation these gifts which allow for the purchase of books and audiovisual materials, which would be unaffordable through the municipal budget alone. As in previous years the programs and services of the Anne A. Russell Educational and Cultural Enrichment Fund have enriched the community. The Library is also grateful to Arlington resident Richard Duffy who continues to donate the profits from the sale of his book, *Arlington Then and Now*, to the Library.

The Friends of the Library donated over \$65,000 to the Robbins and Fox Libraries for programs, membership to fifteen museums, library materials, website design, Community Read, equipment, shelving, and raffle prizes for summer reading program.

The library is grateful to the Friends of Fox Library and the volunteers at the Little Fox Children's Clothing store for funding the personnel costs of both a partial

day and all day Friday at the Fox Library and for children's programs and shelving.

Volunteers

Again this year the Library system benefited from the work of dedicated volunteers. The Library staff is grateful for the contributions made by volunteers who donated over 3,400 hours assisting with many aspects of Library operations. Beverly Brinkerhoff and Page Lindsay gave significant hours to operate the important homebound delivery program. Also deserving of special note is Anne Honeycutt who has facilitated the popular book discussion group for more than a decade. Liz Eagan, Richard McElroy, Ave Rangone, Dinesh Gupta, and Nancy Ashley maintained the ongoing Friends of the Library book sale on the fourth floor.

Volunteers assisting at the Robbins Library in a variety of capacities were: Glen Barnes, Susanne Blair, Bill Bradley, Susan Campbell, Sandra Canzanelli, Janet Casey, Duane Crabtree, Noreen Cronin, Ginny Gardner, Kim Haase, Carol Hoover, Ann Honeycutt, Michelle John, Vivian Juusola, Ben Kleiman, Maxim Litvinov, Mary Lynch, Janet MacMillan, Cynthia McGinty, Brad McKenna, Anne Macchi, Barbara Middleton, Debbie Minns, Kristen Oleson, Marjorie Willis, and Christine Wiseman. The Library is grateful for the work of participants in the Town's Senior Citizen Community Service Reimbursement Program.

The Fox Library is grateful to volunteers Debbie Hayes and Joanne Burns for their efforts.

The Library also acknowledges the efforts of the following students, many of whom volunteered at the Library to fulfill their community service requirements for high school: Olivia Ambo, Suchana Chauhgain, Jasmina Coggins, Amy Curral, Kendra Davie, Grace Gutierrez, Sara Gutierrez, Anne Higgins, Corie Mikita, Mary Morrison, Elizabeth Scannell, Natasha Singh, Edie Voges, and Aidan Wilcox.

Special recognition is given to volunteers Joanne Burns, Susanne Dorson, and Amy Weitzman who started the Little Fox Children's Shop at the Fox Library and who are assisted by their many volunteers.

Library administration and Trustees are very grateful to the Friends of the Robbins Library Board members for all their support: Nancy Ashley, Andy Ananthakrishnan, Susi Barbarossa, Andrew Fischer, John Gearin, Amy McElroy (Coordinator), Sally Naish, Judi Paradis, Skye Stewart, Wendy Watson, and Timothy Wilson.

The Library is also appreciative to the many volunteers assisting with the Town Day and Youth book sale.

Future Goals

In 2012 the Library intends to continue its commitment to implementing the goals identified in the strategic plan. Among the goals to be achieved are:

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Hours

- Explore means to expand Library hours to offer Saturday hours during the summer.
- Continue efforts to reinstate Thursday morning hours through increased municipal funding.

Programs

- Continue to offer programs for children, teens, and adults that reflect their needs, interests, and expectations.
- Secure funding for the Plugged In series that offers programs targeted at adults over 50 years old.
- Establish programming for adults in their 20s and 30s.

Collections

- Evaluate existing procedures for the selection, ordering and processing of items for the Library collection to ensure efficiency.
- Create a strategy and explore funding sources to increase access to digital content (eBooks and downloadable audio books).

Facility

- Conduct a space allocation study to examine needed changes to first floor configuration to improve the layout of collections and services with specific attention to public computer use, Reference Desk, Reading Room, and Teen area.
- Create a more welcoming, useful and aesthetically pleasing library space by reviewing the need for replacement of upholstered chairs and lighting improvements throughout the Library.
- Improve the ventilation, plumbing and the physical appearance of the first floor restrooms.

Emerging Technologies

- Move forward with innovative, high value computer/electronic services utilizing effective technologies to improve staff productivity and customer service.
- Provide training for the public on use of self-checkout stations.
- Review user services and explore new methods and technologies to improve speed and convenience (e.g. mobile service staff).
- Investigate the possibility of offering SMS (text) reference service.
- Improve our services to current and potential eBook users by offering classes that demonstrate to patrons how to download library eBooks to their portable devices and by providing resources that clearly explain to patrons how to use our eBooks collection.
- Explore potential digitization projects including the local history collection.
- Develop a plan for the implementation of RFID technology in FY2016.

Marketing and Partnerships

- Expand efforts to form partnerships with community organizations and businesses.
- Continue to implement strategies including social media to market library resources and services.

Funding/Fundraising

- Work with the recently established Robbins Library Foundation.
- Continue to work with the Friends of Fox to secure private funding to supplement the municipal budget.
- Continue efforts to meet the state municipal appropriation requirement to avoid potential loss of state certification and the denial of borrowing and interlibrary loan privileges at local libraries.