

To: Jessica MacPhail

From: Robert Margis

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Recommending the continuation of fines-free on children's materials. Recommending expanding fines-free to all Racine Public Library materials.

How does the library benefit from fines-free?

- **Mission integrity**
 - Fine collection does not support our mission to enhance our community's quality of life by providing information, ideas, and creative works.
 - Removing fines for children's materials has contributed positively to our library's vision where residents have positive experiences in a dynamic, participatory, people-focused organization.
 - Removing fines on all materials would further advance our library's vision to serve our community.
- **Positive public image**
 - Fines-free for children's materials has reduced stressful and negative interactions regarding punitive fines. 0% of Racine Public Library cards are now blocked due to Racine children's materials fines.
 - Removing fines on all materials would further reduce stressful and negative interactions with the public. 9.8% of all Racine Public Library cards remain blocked because of fines exceeding \$10.00.
 - It is very difficult to get customers back who have had negative experiences with fines.
 - Customers staying away from the library because of negative experiences for so long it can become a generational issue when children are not brought to the library.
- **The opportunity to serve low-income families**
 - Fines disproportionately affect low-income families more, adding another barrier to visiting the library.
 - The Colorado study shows that this keeps families away from the library.
 - 63.2% of Racine Unified School District students are economically disadvantaged. 86.5% of students in the district who are economically disadvantaged are not proficient in reading. Over all students in Racine, 77.2% are not proficient in reading compared to 55.1% Statewide.
- **Sustainable budget model**
 - Research shows no difference in overdue rates between libraries charging fines and libraries not charging fines. In Racine we maintained the same rate of 0.8% items billed for after 2 months overdue both before and after implementing children's materials fine free.
 - The library's budget should not profit from life circumstances often out of our customer's control.
 - The library's budget should serve all customers equally and should not create a strain on the people we serve.

- \$30,700 or 0.87% of Racine Public Library's total budget came from overdue fine revenue in 2017.
- **Decreased replacement costs for non-returned items**
 - Many customer keep overdue items instead of returning them and incur a fine.
- **Decreased staff time and other budget expenses.**
 - The money spent collecting fines can outweigh the revenue from fines.
 - For our library, expenses would include staff time handling fine disputes, fine collection, billing postage, credit card processing, and collection agency services.