MEETING DATE: Thursday, November 15, 2018
AGENDA ITEM #: 3.
ITEM: PUBLIC COMMENT

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Commission members will be presented with a communication from a patron (that was also sent to the County Librarian and the County’s Chief Administrative Officer, David Twa) and the County Librarian’s response.
November 5, 2018

Aaron Law  
3171 Stonehenge Way  
San Ramon, CA  94583  

Dear Aaron,

Thank you for your emails about your son’s experience at Dougherty Station Library. Separate emails were directed to the Count Administrator, the Library Commission and the County Librarian. This email serves as the response to all three communications. First, as County Librarian, I want to assure you that customer service is a priority for the Library and we take your comments seriously. Your concerns have been shared with front desk personnel, along with a reminder that each and every person must do their best to serve customers in positive and friendly manner.

Your son was asked to leave the library for the day when a group of middle-schoolers were being loud and disruptive in the computer lab. In your letter, you expressed concern was that he was asked to leave along with the group even though he was not being noisy and was simply doing his homework. You feel that he should have been given a warning.

The Dougherty Station Library is one of the busiest libraries in the system and at the close of the school day, over 100 unattended, primarily middle school students come to Dougherty Station Library. Library staff make every effort to balance having a welcoming and safe place for the students, while maintaining library conduct policies to assure that other patrons also have a pleasant experience. The Library does not offer an after school program per se, nor is the library staffed to provide a level of supervision that could be expected at a school or daycare facility. At the beginning of each school year, students are made aware of expectations that they will keep the noise level that naturally occurs after a long day of school within reason; and, that if too loud or overly physical, they will receive a verbal warning. If the noise or disruption continues all the students in the lab are asked to leave the library for the day. By late October, if students in the lab get so noisy that other patrons are unable to use the library and staff can
hear the noise across the library, all students in the lab are immediately asked to leave. Unfortunately, every day there are children who say that they were not the ones talking or being disruptive, but who find themselves in a group that is being loud. Library staff strives to be equitable, but are not always able to address each child’s needs individually. Fortunately, each day is a clean slate and students are welcome back the next day.

I understand that your son is a regular patron of our library and we want him to continue to feel welcome. One suggestion to avoid this situation in the future is for your son to use a computer outside of the lab. These computers can be reserved online ahead of time so that he would be assured to have a seat when he comes. Any staff member would be happy to show you or your son how to make these reservations.

I hope that this addresses your concern and assures your son that he is welcome in the library. Please feel to contact me if you would like to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Melinda S. Cervantes

County Librarian

Cc:  Nancy Kreiser, Deputy County Librarian
     Dena Hollowood, Senior Community Library Manager
Library Commission Email.

Thank you,

Shannon Ladage
OFFICE MANAGER • CONTRA COSTA COUNTY LIBRARY

---Original Message---
From: Aaron.Eunice@gmail.com [mailto:Aaron.Eunice@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 31, 2018 1:05 PM
To: Library Commission
Subject: Commission mail, Concern over Librarian kicking quiet student out of Library - a victim

This message was submitted to the Library Commission.

emailmessage:  This message was submitted to the Library Commission.

subject:  Commission mail, Concern over Librarian kicking quiet student out of Library - a victim

to:  ccclibcommission@ccclib.org

comments:  Dear Library Commission:

I am writing regarding the concern over a librarian kicking a child out of library even though he is using the computer quietly to look up information for school work.

*Incident:
My son (a 5th grade student) was using the computer to research Missouri State information for school state report. He was kicked out of the library by a librarian on duty during that time because the other children are loud in the same computer room.
My son was horrified by the librarian and the treatment. He was frightened to cry. The librarian continued to kick him out even though my son explained to the librarian he was only using the computer to look up information and was not part of the crowd who made the noise.
My son, being horrified and scared, cried and asked to be able to stay in the library to continue to use computer to do his homework quietly. My older daughter also helped talked to the librarian and explained the situation. The librarian refused to listen and kicked my 5th grader out of library because of the other crowd in the same computer room.
The librarian said she was kicking all computer room users out of library even though the noise belonged to some users only.

The crowd (about 4 kids) who were loud in the same computer room all left library quickly when the Librarian kicked them out.

*Location: Dougherty Station Library - Contra Costa County Library (Computer Room)
*Address: 17017 Bollinger Canyon Rd, San Ramon, CA 94582
*Date: 10/30/2018 Tuesday
*Time: Around 3:30pm to 3:45pm.

We are writing and requesting for a more fair, more reasonable, and more human way of treatment in public. The Librarian could ask the loud crowd to leave. And for the quiet people, we hope the librarian would give a verbal warning first to alert the users in the room (such as: warning computer users in the computer room that they will also be kicked out of library if someone else in the computer room is loud even though you are quiet). Most responsible people would know that one should be quiet in library. However, most people are not accustomed to this treatment: where you will be kicked out of library if there are a few other people making noise.

This way, the quiet computer user is given a verbal alert and has a chance to pack up and leave the computer room and move to another place in library without being victimized, horrified, embarrassed in public and being kicked out of Library. This way, a quiet person will not be deprived of the right to use the county library and will not be subjected to humiliation in public while using public facility responsibly.

Aaron
Contra Costa (San Ramon) Resident
(925) 519 8137

Name: Aaron Law

e-mailaddress: Aaron.Eunice@gmail.com

spambegone: Library

phone: 925 519 8137

v1.1
emailmessage: This message was submitted to the Library Commission.

subject: Commission mail, Concern over Librarian kicking quiet student out of Library - a victim

to: ccclibcommission@ccclib.org

comments: Dear Library Commission:

I am writing regarding the concern over a librarian kicking a child out of library even though he is using the computer quietly to look up information for school work.

*Incident:
My son (a 5th grade student) was using the computer to research Missouri State information for school state report. He was kicked out of the library by a librarian on duty during that time because the other children are loud in the same computer room. My son was horrified by the librarian and the treatment. He was frightened to cry. The librarian continued to kick him out even though my son explained to the librarian he was only using the computer to look up information and was not part of the crowd who made the noise.
My son, being horrified and scared, cried and asked to be able to stay in the library to continue to use computer to do his homework quietly. My older daughter also helped talked to the librarian and explained the situation. The librarian refused to listen and kicked my 5th grader out of library because of the other crowd in the same computer room.
The librarian said she was kicking all computer room users out of library even though the noise belonged to some users only.

The crowd (about 4 kids) who were loud in the same computer room all left library quickly when the Librarian kicked them out.

*Location: Dougherty Station Library - Contra Costa County Library (Computer Room)
*Address: 17017 Bollinger Canyon Rd, San Ramon, CA 94582
*Date: 10/30/2018 Tuesday
*Time: Around 3:30pm to 3:45pm.

We are writing and requesting for a more fair, more reasonable, and more human way of treatment in public. The Librarian could ask the loud crowd to leave. And for the quiet people, we hope the librarian would give a verbal warning first to alert the users in the room (such as: warning computer users in the computer room that they will also be kicked out of library if someone else in the computer room is loud even though you are quiet). Most responsible people would know that one should be quiet in library. However, most people are not accustomed to this treatment: where you will be kicked out of library if there are a few other people making noise.

This way, the quiet computer user is given a verbal alert and has a chance to pack up and leave the computer room and move to another place in library without being victimized, horrified, embarrassed in public and being kicked out of Library. This way, a
quiet person will not be deprived of the right to use the county library and will not be subjected to humiliation in public while using public facility responsibly.

Aaron
Contra Costa (San Ramon) Resident
(925) 519 8137

Name: Aaron Law
email: Aaron.Eunice@gmail.com
spambegone: Library
phone: 925 519 8137

v1.1
Melinda Cervantes

From: David Twa <David.Twa@cao.cccounty.us>
Sent: Wednesday, October 31, 2018 2:46 PM
To: Melinda Cervantes
Subject: FW: Concern over County Librarian kicking quiet student out of Library - a victim

Follow Up Flag: Flag for follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

FYI

From: Aaron Eunice Gmail <aaron.eunice@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 31, 2018 1:40 PM
To: David Twa <David.Twa@cao.cccounty.us>
Subject: Concern over County Librarian kicking quiet student out of Library - a victim

Dear County Administrator's Office:

I am writing regarding the concern over a county librarian kicking a child out of library even though he is using the computer quietly to look up information for school work.

*Incident:
My son (a 5th grade student) was using the computer to research Missouri State information for school state report. He was kicked out of the library by a librarian on duty during that time because the other children are loud in the same computer room.
My son was horrified by the librarian and the treatment. He was frightened to cry. The librarian continued to kick him out even though my son explained to the librarian he was only using the computer to look up information and was not part of the crowd who made the noise.
My son, being horrified and scared, cried and asked to be able to stay in the library to continue to use computer to do his homework quietly. My older daughter also helped talked to the librarian and explained the situation. The librarian refused to listen and kicked my 5th grader out of library because of the other crowd in the same computer room.
The librarian said she was kicking all computer room users out of library even though the noise belonged to some users only.

The crowd (about 4 kids) who were loud in the same computer room all left library quickly when the Librarian kicked them out.

*Location: Dougherty Station Library - Contra Costa County Library (Computer Room)
*Address: 17017 Bollinger Canyon Rd, San Ramon, CA 94582
*Date: 10/30/2018 Tuesday
*Time: Around 3:30pm to 3:45pm.

We are writing and requesting for a more fair, more reasonable, and more human way of treatment in public. The Librarian could ask the loud crowd to leave. And for the quiet people, we hope the librarian would give a verbal warning first to alert the users in the room (such as: warning computer users in the computer room that they will also be kicked out of library if someone else in the computer room is loud even though you are quiet). Most responsible people would know that one should be quiet in library. However, most people are not accustomed to this treatment: you are quiet and you will be kicked out of library without any verbal warning if there are a few other people making noise.

We hope a verbal alert will be given before the librarian start kicking quiet and responsible users out of library. This way, the quiet computer user is given a verbal alert and has a chance to pack up and leave the computer room and move
to another place in library without being victimized, horrified, embarrassed in public and being kicked out of Library.
This way, a quiet person will not be deprived of the right to use the county library and will not be subjected to
humiliation in public while using public facility responsibly.

Thank you.

Aaron
Contra Costa (San Ramon) Resident

(We have written the concern to the Library contact and we would like to bring this to county office regarding the
concern.)
Dear Aaron,
Thank you for reaching out to Library Administration, County Administration and to the Library Commission. I understand that your son is a regular visitor to the Dougherty Station Library and should have had a joyful experience, not one ending in tears. For this I deeply apologize.

Please allow me a few days to look into the specific circumstances so I can be as responsive as possible.

Regards,
Melinda

Melinda S. Cervantes
COUNTY LIBRARIAN  •  CONTRA COSTA COUNTY LIBRARY
Library Administration | 777 Arnold Drive, Ste. 210 | Martinez, CA 94553
mcervant@ccclib.org | 925.608.7701 | Follow us on facebook | twitter

-----Original Message-----
From: Aaron.Eunice@gmail.com [mailto:Aaron.Eunice@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 31, 2018 1:05 PM
To: Library Commission <ccclibcommission@ccclib.org>
Subject: Commission mail, Concern over Librarian kicking quiet student out of Library - a victim

This message was submitted to the Library Commission.

eemailmessage: This message was submitted to the Library Commission.

subject: Commission mail, Concern over Librarian kicking quiet student out of Library - a victim
to: ccclibcommission@ccclib.org

comments: Dear Library Commission:

I am writing regarding the concern over a librarian kicking a child out of library even though he is using the computer quietly to look up information for school work.

*Incident:
My son (a 5th grade student) was using the computer to research Missouri State information for school state report. He was kicked out of the library by a librarian on duty during that time because the other children are loud in the same computer room. My son was horrified by the librarian and the treatment. He was frightened to cry. The librarian continued to kick him out even though my son explained to the librarian he was only using the computer to look up information and was not part of the crowd who made the noise.

My son, being horrified and scared, cried and asked to be able to stay in the library to continue to use computer to do his homework quietly. My older daughter also helped talked to the librarian and explained the situation. The librarian refused to listen and kicked my 5th grader out of library because of the other crowd in the same computer room.
The librarian said she was kicking all computer room users out of library even though the noise belonged to some users only.

The crowd (about 4 kids) who were loud in the same computer room all left library quickly when the Librarian kicked them out.

*Location: Dougherty Station Library - Contra Costa County Library (Computer Room)*
*Address: 17017 Bollinger Canyon Rd, San Ramon, CA 94582*  
*Date: 10/30/2018 Tuesday*  
*Time: Around 3:30pm to 3:45pm.*

We are writing and requesting for a more fair, more reasonable, and more human way of treatment in public. The Librarian could ask the loud crowd to leave. And for the quiet people, we hope the librarian would give a verbal warning first to alert the users in the room (such as: warning computer users in the computer room that they will also be kicked out of library if someone else in the computer room is loud even though you are quiet). Most responsible people would know that one should be quiet in library. However, most people are not accustomed to this treatment: where you will be kicked out of library if there are a few other people making noise.

This way, the quiet computer user is given a verbal alert and has a chance to pack up and leave the computer room and move to another place in library without being victimized, horrified, embarrassed in public and being kicked out of Library. This way, a quiet person will not be deprived of the right to use the county library and will not be subjected to humiliation in public while using public facility responsibly.

Aaron  
Contra Costa (San Ramon) Resident  
(925) 519 8137

Name: Aaron Law  
emailaddress: Aaron.Eunice@gmail.com  
spambegone: Library  
phone: 925 519 8137

v1.1