

Youth Services at a Glance

March 2026

Teacher Packs- 3

Youth Programs- 33

Youth Attendance- 652

General Interest Programs- 11

General Interest Attendance- 502

Youth Highlights

Seuss Week

Happy birthday Dr. Seuss! To celebrate the fun and silly side of reading, we invited patrons to stop in the youth department for a variety of activities the first week in March. Apple stacking, Truffula tree color matching, bookmark making, and fish crafting, combined with a scavenger hunt and take-home activity packets helped make the week stupendous!

Winter Reading

Our winter reading program wrapped up mid-March with over 50 participants. This is a self-led program, encouraging literacy throughout the winter months. Children through the age of 12 can earn small prizes and stickers for each milestone reached, with the opportunity for a larger prize once they complete the entire challenge. Next winter, we will add a grand prize drawing entry to see if we can increase participation.

Mini Golf

Spring break was a swinging good time at the library this year! Patrons were encouraged to stop in and try their best at our 6-hole mini golf course held in the conference room. Each hole was themed and had a variety of obstacles to putt through. Attendees went home with a custom "KPL Spring Break Mini Golf 2026" sticker and an appreciation for full-size putters.

PLA 2026 Session Highlights

Outside of the impressive \$3500+ books we brought back to add to our library collection, I was able to attend several key sessions each day of the Public Library Association Conference this year.

Building Joy-Centric Libraries: This interactive workshop focused on how libraries can intentionally design spaces, services, and staff practices to foster joy. By incorporating playful and creative elements libraries can spark curiosity and belonging. Joy is something that improves learning, engagement, and community connection. This discussion included the

importance of staff well-being and the connections to creating a joyful patron experience. Drawing from positive psychology frameworks, this session emphasized shifting from problem-solving models to ones that actively cultivate positive experiences.

Not Your Typical Makerspace: This session emphasized active, hands-on learning at its core, using art-integrated projects, digital media creations, STEAM camps, and clubs. Each of these highlighted programs were designed to let youth experiment, explore, and build skills. A key focus was aligning programs with 21st Century skills, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and communication, while also incorporating connected learning principles, helping to link youths' personal interests with peer interaction and real-world applications.

Beyond Storytime: Presenters focused on how to expand traditional storytimes into inclusive experiences. This session emphasized multi-sensory learning using music, movement, and hands-on play to promote early literacy and make programs accessible to a wider range of learning styles and abilities. Much of the information was affirming of the programming that we currently offer to our community and its learners.

Making Space for Teens at the Library: I attended several teen focused sessions this year, hoping to gain skills to inspire more teens to explore and enjoy our library space. This session highlighted the need for teens to feel ownership of library spaces and autonomy in library programs. Presenters explored topics like rethinking layout, reconsidering passive, in-person programming, and volunteer opportunities. Many libraries see increased teen participation by using digital communities like Discord or allowing teen representatives to attend board meetings and provide feedback to library staff. By making intentional changes we are hoping to see our own increase in teen attendance this summer and in the future.