

September 2, 2021

Press Release: Groton Library Now Fine Free

In response to Groton's Diversity Task Force's recommendation that the Library Trustees reconsider the charging of overdue fines for late library materials in light of the American Library's Association's "Resolution on Monetary Library Fines as a Form of Social Inequity,"
In recognition that fines are an economic barrier to access to those who can least afford it,
In recognition that fines are a penalty only on users who prefer physical to digital items,
In recognition that fines have a disproportionate impact on parents of young children (who borrow piles of picture books at a time), and

In consideration of the overwhelming evidence that eliminating late fines results in:

- Increased use,
- Long overdue items being returned,
- Residents returning from using area fine-free libraries,
- Decades of data proving patrons return materials conscientiously within a few days of the due date (even without penalty),
- A more effective use of valuable and ever-in-short-supply library staff time,
- A more positive dialogue with customers on services rather than on penalties,

And given that Groton is late to this party, with a solid and rapidly increasing majority of libraries across the state and nation eliminating overdue fines,

And understanding that items borrowed but damaged or not returned will still be billed while the patron's account blocked until paid,

The Library Board of Trustees voted to eliminate the charging of overdue fines on library materials effective September 1, 2021.

Library staff are working to clear out fines accrued previously. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Circulation at 978-448-1167 or circulation@gpl.org.

The Groton Public Library Board of Trustees
Vanessa Abraham, Library Director