

Did you know? ... 2026 Library Budget: The Impact

Our April issue noted that the town budget, voted on by East Kingston residents on March 10, did not pass. This also meant that our library's proposed budget for 2026 did not pass. As a result, the Board of Trustees and our staff found it necessary to adjust plans to programming as well as other items.

Here is an update we promised.

Changes Necessary to Make

After several conversations with our staff during monthly meetings, the Board made the difficult decision to discontinue the After School Club in its current form at the end of this school year. We know it meant much to many of you, and we've heard from families about how much their kids look forward to it.

While we all deeply value its role as a way for kids to gather following the school day, two realities led us here.

- 1) With the 2026 budget not passing, we had to remove funding for an additional staff that would make the current drop-in model possible.
- 2) We've also not been able to build the steady base of parent and community volunteers that a program of this type and size required.

Together, those factors mean we can't responsibly continue as we have this year.

Next School Year

For the coming school year, we'll be offering specific, interest-based clubs on designated days — clubs like D&D, and Gardening. Sign-ups will be required in advance, and each club will have a limit on how many children can enroll. The bus from EKES will drop kids at the library on days they're signed up for a specific program.

In the fiscally tight short term, this focused club approach is the best option because it lets us continue to provide a place for kids while working with the current staffing and volunteer support.

While we are still working out details, we wanted our families to know about this discontinuation now, so you have time to make other after-school arrangements, for next year, if needed.

The Board intends to review this annually; as circumstances change, we'll revisit what's possible.

If you have any thoughts and reactions, please feel free to email chair.ekplbod@gmail.com.

Thank you, as always, for your support as we navigate these challenges together.