

# SAILS

Fund: 7000-9506

The **SAILS Library Network** serves 73 public, school, and academic libraries and branches in 39 communities in Southeastern Massachusetts.

## SAILS During the Pandemic

SAILS helped support libraries as they closed and then reopened with curbside and limited in-person services by extending due dates, suspending overdue notices and lost billings, and adjusting holds behavior to support local pickups. SAILS helped school libraries track materials that were still in the hands of students due to the sudden stop of the 2019-20 school year and relaxed policies so that patrons could continue to borrow e-content and place holds even if there were outstanding fines or checkouts on their accounts. They introduced new features in the SAILS mobile app to allow no-contact self-checkout and facilitate curbside pickup of library materials. They also customized notices to inform patrons of new pickup procedures as services changed. For library directors, they provided a platform to share experiences and ideas on how to best serve the public during the pandemic.

## eContent

SAILS worked to expand access to electronic resources by making it easier for patrons to sign up for online cards and use them to access ebooks, digital audiobooks, and videos purchased by SAILS and member libraries. They reallocated funds to purchase more eResources, focusing on titles that have no wait times and used the MBLC LEA grant funds to reduce hold wait times for popular materials. Working with school libraries they connected their students to the larger SAILS Overdrive collection and promoted the collection to students and families as a way to keep reading while schools and libraries were closed.

As a result of the above efforts, last spring, SAILS saw a 40 to 50 percent increase in digital collection borrowing over the previous year. The state grant funds also helped reduce their hold wait time from an average of 54 days to 34 days.

Even as libraries have re-opened, digital collection usage remains higher than last year. Continued funding would allow the network to keep supporting these digital collections and to build services that support new library procedures.

