

Strategic Plan 2019-2021
Wood County District Public Library
Adopted by the Board of Trustees, October 22, 2018

Process & Timeline:

Spring 2017:

The Board and the Administrative Team evaluated:

- WCDPL statistics and trends in usage by the community.
- Bowling Green, Walbridge, and Wood County community demographics.
- Trends in public libraries across Ohio and the nation.
- The prior Strategic Plan 2013-2016 as well as the prior Vision Statement.
- Determined the need to move slowly through the planning process to make sure we listen to our community by:
 - Undertaking a formal, comprehensive community survey process led by Dr. Shannon Orr from BGSU's MPA program.
 - Complementing the survey with a series of community focus groups led by consultant Bryan Cavins.

Summer 2017:

The Board and the Administrative Team met in retreat in June 2017 to consider the above, the process moving forward, and:

- Drafted an update to the Vision Statement, approved in July 2017.
- Evaluated and gave guidance to a Graphic Design Intern related to colors and format for a new logo, color palette, and branding plan. Implementation of the logo and new branding plan began in August 2017 and continues.
- Reviewed reports from Administrative Team members related to Adult Services, Youth Services, and Technology.
- Considered the Strengths of, Opportunities for, and Aspirations of WCDPL.
- Began to draft questions for use in the community survey and the focus groups.

Fall 2017:

In October 2017, the community survey was created and mailed to 2,000 randomly selected registered voters residing within the library's legal service district.

At the same time, three different focus group sessions were held with 1) stakeholders and patrons, 2) with the entire staff, and 3) with a group of middle-school patrons.

- The Focus Group Sessions Report - completed in February 2018.
- The Community Survey Report - completed in May 2018.

Summer 2018:

The Board and the Administrative Team met again in retreat in June 2018 to consider the results of the focus groups and the community survey.

Additionally, the Board considered what all of the above reveals about how the library should move forward as a community service organization. Conversation focused on "why" the library is important to so many, including for those sitting around the table, as well as what the library "believes."

Vision, Mission, Core Values, & Core Services Statement **Adopted by the Board of Trustees, July 17, 2017**

Vision: Deemed an essential asset by the community, WCDPL strives to engage everyone with learning opportunities and creative experiences.

Mission: WCDPL encourages lifelong learning and advances knowledge through literature, information, and exploration.

Core Values:

- Accountability
We take responsibility for our resources, actions, services, materials, and facilities.
- Expertise
We deliver quality, user-focused library services & materials through a skilled staff.
- Freedom
We are free and open to all. We support the free exchange of knowledge.
- Innovation
We explore new ways of doing things and new things to do.
- Passion
We love our communities and the role libraries can serve in them.
- Respect
We treat everyone with dignity.
- Teamwork
We celebrate our diverse experience. We build connections & trust with everyone.

Core Services:

- We offer traditional and virtual library services to our entire legal service district.
 - We provide quality, in-demand, diverse materials to meet the needs of our diverse community.
 - We deliver materials and experiences for babies, preschoolers, and families to build early literacy skills.
 - We collect and share the history, genealogy, and stories of our service district.
 - We link our patrons to our materials with learning, literary, and cultural opportunities.
 - We provide welcoming community gathering spaces.
 - We offer entertainment in a variety of formats and through partnerships.
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Key findings from the Community Survey and the Focus Groups are:

1. There is a high degree of satisfaction with, and trust of, WCDPL by the community.
2. The community simply wants MORE... more collections, more services, more programs and events, and more spaces to gather.
3. The importance of being able to borrow items is crucial, as is meeting lifelong learning needs (including the catalog, research help, studying space, pleasure reading, & youth activities).
4. Keeping the facilities fresh and welcoming for all is very important.
5. Quality customer service and partnerships in the community are very important.
6. Stable public funding with modest growth is crucial, as is the role of private fundraising to support library operations.
7. Development of staff skills and abilities, as well as retention, are very important.

Therefore, WCDPL will engage in the following...

Because we believe in the importance of learning something new every day and that the library's role in lifelong learning remains vital, we will:

- Continue to deliver quality traditional library services using inviting collections of popular and classical items to meet the lifelong learning needs of patrons of all ages and backgrounds.
- Leverage our new Memorandum of Understanding with Wood County Job & Family Services, partnerships with other organizations, and our access to learning opportunities provided by Lynda.com in order to support local workforce development efforts. We will do this one-on-one as we assist library patrons as well as through promotion of Lynda.com to local groups and businesses.
- Promote the importance of digital literacy and the evaluation of information at every opportunity, including increasing our digital literacy training capabilities.
- Collect and deliver to the community an in-depth collection of local history resources that document our shared community story, including expanding the ability to readily record oral histories.
- Increase promotion and support to our annual Youth Summer Reading Program that contributes to establishing and maintaining consistent reading progress and proficiency.

Because we believe that reading and learning are particularly important in the earliest stages of life, we will:

- Continue and expand our vast array of community partnerships to provide meaningful family-centered interactive learning opportunities through a rich language-based active learning environment to promote the development of cognitive, social, behavioral, and emotional skills foundational for both school success and lifelong productivity.
- Expand our parenting collection and services in order to connect caregivers with resources, positive strategies, and evidence-based practices to raise readers, including the promotion of our 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten and Every Child Ready to Read @ Your Library initiatives.
- Maintain our focus on book-based library programs for youth so they expand connections between their experiences with books, their curiosity, and research.
- Expand our bookmobile and outreach efforts to daycares, pre-schools, and K-5 school-aged students throughout our service district. This will include expanding staffing as well as acquiring a second vehicle dedicated to outreach activities.

Because we believe that the library's role as a community gathering space is important, we will:

- Undertake a comprehensive space-planning process for the BG library to maximize the facility's ability to serve the community into the future by making sure we are using existing square footage in the most efficient way possible.
- Keep our facilities and grounds looking and feeling fresh, inviting, and safe by following the established maintenance schedule and making regular investments in building maintenance and new furnishings, fixtures, and equipment.
- Improve the patron experience as one enters the BG library and the Checkout area, as well as how patrons interact with staff throughout each engagement, breaking down barriers to service and minimizing the need to send patrons to multiple desks throughout the building.

Because we believe that the library must adapt to remain relevant to our community, we will:

- Introduce self-checkout service and self-pickup of holds for those patrons that prefer to handle their own borrowing transactions. This includes offering 24/7 pickup of materials via lockers outside the building.
- Implement a comprehensive “Library of Things” initiative where patrons may borrow non-book items such as telescopes, musical instruments, tools, games, etc.
- Introduce personalized library services directed by patron needs and interests wherever possible.
- Increase adult program opportunities off-site where people already gather in order to increase library visibility throughout the community.
- Expand our large print, physical audiobook, and e-book/e-audiobook collections to meet the unique local demand by adult patrons.
- Investigate creation of library service kiosks in select areas of our service district, possibly in partnership with other libraries.
- Deploy a “Welcome Packet” to new cardholders and new homeowners in our district.
- Expand our author visit opportunities through a new WCDPL Speaker Series.
- Support the County’s efforts to celebrate the bicentennial of Wood County in 2020.

Because we believe in maintaining the public’s trust with the resources entrusted to us, we will:

- Pass a November 2020 levy campaign through the Citizens in Support of Our Library levy committee.
- Advocate for continued stability and modest growth in the State of Ohio’s Public Library Fund.
- Work with the Friends of the Library Board in order to expand membership (new & renewing), benefits, engagement, and volunteerism, as well as the organization’s ability to support library efforts monetarily.
- Work with the Library Foundation Board in order to implement a planned-giving program and increase the Foundation’s ability to support library efforts monetarily.
- Increase investments in public relations, marketing, and advertising in order to ensure reaching as many in our community as possible. This will include regular print newsletters at least 3 times per year to patrons, voters, donors, volunteers, and community stakeholders to ensure quality communication with all stakeholders.

Because we believe that the single most important library asset in serving our community is our staff, we will:

- Evaluate the configuration of Administrative Staffing to determine how future organizational needs may best be met through reorganization of responsibilities.
- Work to increase employee retention, including in the areas of pay and benefits.
- Plan for “near” retirements and utilize succession planning wherever possible.
- Reorganize staff where needed to deliver new and priority services, including breaking down traditional library departments where appropriate.
- Devote a full 1% of appropriated funds for staff training each year.
- Utilize the Lynda.com service for internal training to expand staff skills in serving the community.
- Embed more staff members within various community organizations to increase awareness of the library throughout the community.