

Literacy 2020

Strategic Direction 2014-2020

The Library as a Learning Center

Vision

Mission

Impact

Kindergarten
Readiness

Grade-level Reading

Career and College
Readiness



Adult Learning



WAUKEGAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

putting quality in your life

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Executive Summary

Waukegan Public Library's Literacy 2020 Strategic Direction combines the Board of Trustees-approved Strategic Plan and the Library's Operating Plan, set by the Executive Director. It covers the period between 2014 and 2020. It enumerates ambitious, yet achievable, goals to measurably impact the community.

The Literacy 2020 Strategic Direction is rooted in community needs observed via a 2013 United Way survey and the 2012 WPL environmental scan performed through active engagement of community members by the Library's engagement team. As a civic organization dedicated to fostering learning and active pursuit of knowledge, and with its established community engagement, the Library is uniquely suited to address these challenges. Literacy 2020 is predicated on the necessity of addressing the root cause of the needs of our community: functional literacy, defined as the skills required to live and work successfully in today's society. Both the United Way survey and WPL's own environmental scan revealed that an absence of functional literacy was a common thread in all demographic segments, from early learners to adults.

The Literacy 2020 Strategic Plan establishes four key areas of impact where the Library will concentrate its focus: kindergarten readiness, grade-level reading, college and career readiness, and adult learning. WPL's complementary Operating Plan, developed by staff to achieve the goals set by the board, creates five distinct Learning Centers through which programs and classes are delivered: Early Learning, After-School Learning, Adult Learning, Summer Learning, and Experiential Learning. Each learning center is paired with measurable outcomes for relevant areas of impact.

Waukegan Public Library's Literacy 2020 strategy focuses on nurturing individual successes among our patrons so as to create a cumulative positive impact on the community.



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Strategic Plan

Vision *A community that is always learning and discovering.*

Adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2014, the Library's vision is for a community that recognizes the importance of learning and is invested in its success. To foster this kind of environment, the Library is committed to maintaining active community engagement to ensure that our classes, programming, collection, Library services, and exhibits are continuously reevaluated to be relevant to the community's literacy, learning, and discovery needs. Additionally, the Library will help patrons recognize literacy as essential to their lives, broaden horizons and provide unique, enriching experiences.

Mission *To provide the path to empower and support learning and discovery*

WPL's mission statement encompasses how the Library will achieve its vision, by delivering creative, innovative, and relevant classes, programming, and services to support and enrich the community. A needs-focused approach allows the Library to address challenges across the board. The Library's emphasis on outcome-based learning promotes measurable, quantifiable success, as evidenced by increasing achievement, attendance, and engagement.

In the 21st century, literacy is inextricably intertwined with success. The ability to function independently in an increasingly fast-paced, digital world requires critical thinking, facility with technology, creativity, and dedication to pursuing opportunities for learning and discovery. When successful, the Library's approach to developing literacy among Waukegan Public Library patrons will yield positive economic and achievement indicators for the community as a whole.



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Strategic Plan Areas of Impact

To activate the community and move it towards the Board vision, the Library developed a five-year targeted goal: to produce measurable gains of 25% for WPL learners by the 2020 fiscal year. To carry out this plan to impact patrons' overall literacy, the Library established four strategic areas of impact, approved by the Board in 2014: kindergarten readiness; grade-level reading; college and career readiness; adult learning. The Library will work to achieve this broad goal with an outcomes-driven approach. The Library outcomes are defined by Learning Centers designed to deliver appropriate instruction to target the four impact areas. Often, Learning Centers will incorporate defined, measurable outcomes for multiple impact areas.

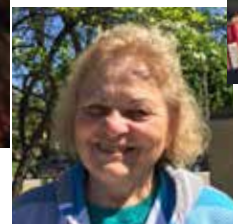
Kindergarten
Readiness



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Operating Plan Overview

An actionable plan

The Operating Plan, drafted by staff members, speaks to the internal processes for achieving the goals outlined by the Board of Trustees. It develops the Board-approved strategic plan into action steps that that will be implemented by staff, with measurable outcomes to move towards success.

Values

Ethos & commitment

WPL's new staff values are designed to be meaningful to staff and patrons, and to elaborate on the themes of the mission and vision. The Values represent the Library's commitment to its staff and patrons. The Values identify seven key words to encapsulate the staff's philosophy: **free, educational, fun, responsible, diverse, relevant, and transformational**. The Values encourage staff members and patrons alike to take ownership of the Library's programming, services, and facilities, and to be invested in its success.

Outcomes

Attainable and measurable learning goals

Learning Outcomes are aligned with the Library's Learning Centers (instructional delivery framework). The five Learning Centers are: Early Learning, After-School Learning (further divided into elementary/middle grades, and high school); Adult Learning, Summer Learning, and Experiential Learning.



Operating Plan

Learning Centers & Outcomes

Attainable and measurable learning goals

Learning Centers often contain outcomes for several areas of impact, because the Library believes that a holistic approach – one that articulates ancillary Adult Learning outcomes within the Early Learning Center, for example – will have the greatest impact on the community as a whole.

EARLY LEARNING CENTER

Early Childhood Learning Outcomes target emerging literacy skills that will prepare pre-school age children for success in school, and help their parents to learn strategies to be their child's first teacher.

AFTER SCHOOL LEARNING CENTER

After School Learning Outcomes promote increased grade-level achievement in STREAM subject areas: science, technology, reading, engineering, art, and math. For students in grades 9-12, the learning outcomes support young adults access and use of college preparatory and career readiness resources. Outcomes for the After School Learning Center also work to promote parents' use of Library resources and technology to support their children's learning and career and college goals.

ADULT LEARNING CENTER

Adult Learning Outcomes are targeted to develop the functional literacy necessary to achieve success in the 21st century: basic literacy, cultural literacy, financial literacy, health literacy, informational literacy, and digital literacy.

SUMMER LEARNING CENTER

Summer Learning Outcomes are designed to reduce the impact of "summer slide" (loss of learning over the summer) and to encourage year-long learning opportunities. Outcomes for adult learners also include the ability to support their children and young adults to retain learning over the summer.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CENTER

Experiential Learning Outcomes promote learning through innovative experiences and exhibits in the Library in support of developing cultural and functional literacy.



Operating Plan

Evaluation of Outcomes

Data-driven metrics

Each outcome statement is measurable, with metrics and data collection unique to each service, class, or exhibit. The outcomes will be assessed on an ongoing basis to ensure that they are adequately addressing our patrons' needs and responding to any changes. Data tracking will enable the Library to observe long-term trends.

The Literacy 2020 areas of impact and outcome objectives influence all Library services, departments and functions. Waukegan Public Library's plan of operation and internal policies ensure that each function such as engineering and maintenance, finance and human resources supports the Literacy 2020 strategic objectives.

Library Services

Collection, programs, and customer services

The Literacy 2020 areas of impact, as well as the associated Learning Centers and outcomes, influence all Library services. Waukegan Public Library's internal policies ensure that each department works to support the Literacy 2020 strategic objectives.

Sustainability

Responsible planning for the future

The Waukegan Public Library is committed to long-term sustainability through responsible fiscal management and investment in the future through the development of the Waukegan Public Library Foundation, the strategic pursuit of grant funding, and the nurturing of relationships with key community partners. The Library will invest in its staff by providing opportunities for professional learning and training.

Evaluation

Defining success

The Literacy 2020 Strategic Direction may be evaluated in several ways: by its short-term impact on patrons, its long-term impact on patrons, and the ancillary impact our individual patron successes have on our community as a whole. Creating a culture of learning among our patrons will have a broader influence on our local economy. Literacy is the first step towards a new life. Waukegan Public Library is committed to supporting our patrons' path to success, meeting them where they are and guiding them to new growth and achievement.

