

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 in one document 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 Waukegan Public Library (WPL) environmental scan performed by active engagement of community members by the Library's outreach team. Literacy 2020 is predicated on the necessity of addressing the root cause of the needs of our community: functional literacy. Both the United Way survey and WPL's environmental scan revealed that an absence of functional literacy was a common thread in all demographic segments, from early learners to adults. 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.

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 vision set by the Board of Trustees, identifies six strategic objectives that guide the Library's work over the course of the five-year period of this Strategic Direction. The objectives address the most important areas of focus for the Library at this time: offering outcome-aligned achievement for WPL learners; developing Library services to meet the changing needs of our community; engaging our community in robust and meaningful ways; managing the Library's internal framework in a responsible, sustainable way; creating a collaborative culture among staff; and developing a dynamic Library environment to foster learning and discovery. The six strategic objectives articulate the many and varied essential contributions made by each department towards the Library's work to improve the quality of life in Waukegan.

Waukegan Public Library's Literacy 2020 Strategic Direction focuses on nurturing individual successes so as to create a positive cumulative 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 ensure that they are relevant to the community's literacy, learning, and discovery needs. Additionally, the Library will work to help patrons recognize the ways in which literacy is essential to their lives, as well as to broaden horizons and provide unique, enriching experiences.

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

Waukegan Public Library's mission statement encompasses the ways the Library plans to work towards its vision: by delivering creative, innovative, and relevant classes and programming, and developing its collection and services to support and enrich the community. Needs-focused programming and services allow 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 its patrons will yield positive economic and achievement indicators for the community as a whole.



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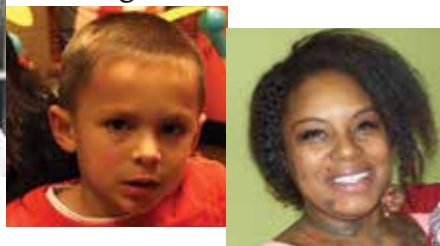
Strategic Plan Areas of Impact

To move the community towards the Library's vision, the Library developed a five-year targeted goal: to produce measurable gains for WPL learners by the 2020 fiscal year. To carry out this plan to impact patrons' overall literacy through its full portfolio of services, the Library established four strategic areas of impact, approved by the Board of Trustees in 2014. 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 learning outcomes for multiple areas of impact.

Kindergarten
Readiness



Grade-level
Reading



Career and
College Readiness



Adult Learning



Operating Plan

Overview

The Operating Plan, drafted by staff members, speaks to the internal approach to achieve the goals outlined by the Board of Trustees. It develops the Board of Trustees-approved Strategic Plan into targeted work that is implemented by staff. The Operating Plan is inclusive of all Library work, including patron-facing services as well as administrative and facility operations. Throughout the five year period of the Literacy 2020 Strategic Direction, the Library's Leadership Team, comprised of the Executive Director, Assistant Director, and departmental managers, will periodically revisit each Objective's goals and update them as appropriate to reflect the Library's progress. As such, the Operating Plan should be considered a flexible document, one intended to adapt to the Library's needs until 2020.

Values

The Waukegan Public Library is:

Free

We provide access to learning opportunities through our classes, our collection, and our community services.

Educational

We support our community through learning in four key areas: kindergarten readiness, grade-level reading, college and career readiness, and adult learning.

Fun

We create a place to explore, imagine, relax, and play.

Responsible

We commit to fiscal responsibility and the development of our staff and resources to better serve our community.

Diverse

We welcome people of all ages and celebrate our community's many cultures, languages, and ideas.

Relevant

We respond to our community's changing needs.

Transformational

We provide the support needed to succeed.

Waukegan Public Library's Values are designed to be meaningful to staff and patrons, and to elaborate on the themes of the mission and vision. The Values identify seven key words to encapsulate the Library's philosophy. Each Value is accompanied by an explanatory sentence which illustrates the Library's commitment to that Value. The Values encourage staff members and patrons alike to take ownership of the Library's facilities and programming, and to be invested in its success.



Operating Plan Strategic Objectives

Introduction

The Library's Literacy 2020 Strategic Objectives represent a holistic approach to targeted and purposeful organizational development between the 2015 and 2020 fiscal years. They address both our patron-facing services as well as the internal framework that makes possible our work in the community. Each Objective is accompanied by several discrete goals, which are specific, measurable, and attainable. The goals represent the work necessary to achieve our broader Objectives. Regular updates to the Literacy 2020 Strategic Direction will allow these goals to change as the Library's needs change over the five-year period.

1. Develop complementary services which strategically impact Waukegan's literacy needs, provide opportunities for enrichment and enjoyment, and improve patrons' quality of life.
2. Ensure equity of access to robust library services for all members of our community.
3. Maintain an outward focus to ensure purposeful community engagement and partnership development.
4. Commit to strategic and sustainable organizational development through sound management of Library operations.
5. Strengthen the Library's culture to encourage achievement, innovation, and communication among staff.
6. Create a dynamic environment that adapts to staff and patrons' diverse needs and fosters learning and discovery.

Evaluation

The Literacy 2020 Strategic Direction may be evaluated in several ways: by its short-term impact on patrons, communicated through patron interactions; its long-term impact on patrons, observed through analysis of data tracked over time, including learner progress and service usage; and the ancillary impact our individual patrons' 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



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to success, meeting them where they are and guiding them to new growth and achievement.

Appendix

Learning Outcomes

Introduction

The Learning Outcomes represent specific goals that can be quantifiably measured through pre- and post-assessment to track the Library's success. Learning Outcomes are aligned with the Library's instructional delivery framework, called Learning Centers. Learning Outcomes are written for each applicable area of impact within each Learning Center.

The five Learning Centers are: Early Learning Center, After-School Learning Center (further divided into elementary/middle grades, and high school); Adult Learning Center; Summer Learning Center; and Experiential Learning Center.

Learning Centers often contain Learning 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 preschool-age children for success in school.

After-School Learning Center

After-School Learning Outcomes promote increased grade-level achievement in STREAM subject areas: science, technology, reading, engineering, art, and math.

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," the loss of learning over the



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summer, and to encourage year-long learning opportunities.

Experiential Learning Center

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

Evaluation

Evaluation of the Learning Outcomes includes the analysis of metrics unique to each service, class, or exhibit. Both quantitative and qualitative data will be analyzed on an ongoing basis to ensure that those engaging with the Library's resources and services increase their literacy and skill levels. Data tracking will enable the Library to observe long-term trends.

