Oconee County Public Library
inquire. connect. discover.

Library Strategic Plan

2026-2028

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Executive Summary

The library last completed a Strategic Plan in 2023. Much has been accomplished since that time in terms of the Library of Things and other library services, as well as the addition of some new and updated spaces inside of the libraries. There remains work to be done especially in the areas of seeking out and utilizing volunteers, communication between the main library and branch locations, and taking advantage of new technologies and services.

The new plan will focus the library on how to best use our people and our other resources to continue to serve our community. While we will continue to focus a great deal on outreach, we also understand that our existing spaces need our care and attention so that we can offer more to our users.

We also know that our community has valuable human and material resources that need to be connected to people in our community who need them. Our focus will be on how to recruit and best utilize volunteers, how to improve our communication and training so that our staff is best equipped and highly motivated to serve our community, and to find new and innovative ways to provide programs and experiences for our users.

Mission

The Oconee County Public Library provides resources and experiences to satisfy curiosity, promote improving literacy, connect people with their community, and encourage lifelong discovery.

Vision

The library is a hub for the community, with resources people need and want, programs and services that help people satisfy curiosity or try something new, and staff that is trained and prepared to help people reach their goals.

Operations

- Goal 1: Update and improve volunteer recruitment, training, and evaluation.
    - Objective 1: Modernize the volunteer program by developing an online application system.
    - Objective 2: Formalize the volunteer program by creating "job descriptions" and recruiting for specific tasks.
    - Objective 3: Develop an assessment tool to allow volunteers to see their worth.
- Goal 2: Redesign the Bookmobile service model to serve individuals who cannot visit a branch during normal operating hours, rather than just serving isolated areas.
    - Objective 1: Seek out new areas like shopping centers, medical offices, or apartment complexes where population density is higher.
    - Objective 2: Work with non-traditional community partners such as food banks and others to incorporate literacy with other services (utilizing Library Resource Associate).
- Goal 3: Improve staff training and evaluation.
    - Objective 1: Incorporate regular cross-training between branches so that staff are comfortable covering other locations during staff shortages.
    - Objective 2: Formalize training and evaluation with the introduction of Work Plans.
    - Objective 3: Create formal opportunities for more frequent meetings between managers and staff.

Community Involvement

- Goal 1: Participate in more community and school events as staffing and resources allow.
    - Objective 1: Seek opportunities to expand library services beyond the physical buildings through more community partnerships.
    - Objective 2: Encourage managers and senior staff to participate in civic and community organizations where time permits.
    - Objective 3: Support staff members through paying for memberships, conferences, or other opportunities to increase community engagement.
- Goal 2: Seek local partners for language services, especially when bilingual staff are not available.
    - Objective 1: Cultivate and support our volunteer network to supplement paid staff.
    - Objective 2: Find incentives to encourage staff to receive additional training in Spanish language and cultural sensitivity.
- Goal 3: Explore databases related to skills development for patrons and staff.
    - Objective 1: Find new tools to allow staff to assist patrons to learn critical digital literacy skills.
    - Objective 2: Expand our tech help to more branches and more hours available.
- Goal 4: Provide resources for parents to guide their children in using library resources.
    - Objective 1: Provide curated lists of resources from a variety of sources to help parents choose appropriate materials for their children.
    - Objective 2: Maintain and update the list or database as new materials/trends etc., emerge.

Programming

- Goal 1: Offer more programming related to technology and workforce development.
    - Objective 1: Seek out local expertise (Clemson University, Tri-County Technical College, Hamilton Career Center) to offer programming about digital literacy, AI, etc.
    - Objective 2: Partner with the Department of Employment and Workforce, SC Works, and others to offer resume classes, interviewing skills, soft skills in the workplace, etc.
- Goal 2: Promote Functional Literacy programming as staff and resources allow.
    - Objective 1: Continue and expand partnerships with local schools to encourage reading literacy.
    - Objective 2: Continue Spanish programming through community partners to include expanded ESL/ESOL and pathways to citizenship.
    - Objective 3: Seek out volunteers to supplement staff involvement.
- Goal 3: Seek partnerships with local businesses and organizations to expand programming.
    - Objective 1: Expand existing parameters to include local food and beverage industry, local merchants, and others.
    - Objective 2: Leverage existing partnerships with Extension Service, Healthy Oconee Coalition, and others to offer more healthy food demonstrations and health related programs.
- Goal 4: Expand program offerings for homeschool families.
- Goal 5: Offer more programming or classes in civics, voting, and community involvement.

Libraries

- Goal 1: Reconsider the layout and functionality of existing library spaces.
    - Objective 1: Reexamine children's areas at Walhalla and Seneca locations.
    - Objective 2: Explore possible areas for additional quiet spaces.
- Goal 2: Expand or enhance technological services.
    - Objective 1: Examine new printing solutions to replace coin op towers with an emphasis on air printing.
    - Objective 2: Expand tech offerings like 3D printing, laser engraving, and 3D scanning.
    - Objective 3: Explore possible space for portable/one-off maker space.
- Goal 3: Evaluate and adjust library collections to maintain relevancy and ease of accessibility.
- Goal 4: Optimize use, visibility, and aesthetics of outdoor spaces.
    - Objective 1: Engage community partners to maintain existing landscape features.
    - Objective 2: Explore use of outdoor spaces for a community garden or other such enhancement.