DCDL Strategic Plan
2025 - 2027

Introduction

This plan is the culmination of seven months of systematic inquiry, feedback, and analysis from all stakeholders of the Delaware County District Library: our Citizens, Board of Trustees, Community Partners, and Staff Members.

From the opening SOAR Analysis in October 2023 to the Community Survey in March 2024, the Strategic Planning committee has led myriad focus groups and surveys, reviewed hundreds of pages of research and articles, and compiled community and patron data and statistics to identify trends, needs, opportunities, and goals for our Library system for the next three years. We were driven to answer the question of "How do we become the DCDL that our community wants and needs us to be?"

We recognize that Delaware County and the patrons we serve are constantly changing and evolving, and we must be both proactive and responsive to effectively support them and their success. This Strategic Plan is intended to serve as a framework to use in making key decisions, to position the Library as a trusted and relevant resource for every member of our community.

The Strategic Planning Committee included Chair Jayna McDaniel-Browning, Subcommittee Chairs Bridget Dailey, Rachel Rausch, and Traci Higgins, and Committee Members Kadra Ahmed, Cindi Bardash, Carrie Coyne, Alice Mackey, Mark Stevens, and Scott Szuch. We gratefully acknowledge Director Bryan Howard, Deputy Director Molly Meyers-LaBadie, Fiscal Officer Angie Grossenbacher, the Board of Trustees, and the entire staff of DCDL for their support of this important work.

OUR MISSION:
We open doors to imagination, knowledge, connection, and discovery.

OUR VISION:
DCDL is our community's cornerstone for discovery through all stages of life. Here, we learn, grow, and connect.

OUR VALUES:

Lifelong learning: You come to DCDL to ask questions, learn new things, and enjoy unique experiences. We provide a wide range of innovative technologies, materials, services, and programs to unlock your potential and support your quest for discovery at every stage of life.

Community: DCDL builds community by fostering a fun and welcoming environment that encourages all people to explore, gather, learn, create and grow.

Service: DCDL is committed to providing personalized, trusted service to every customer, every time. We're here to help you find the answers, services, and materials you need.

OUR PRIORITIES:

DCDL is **accessible and convenient**. We are committed to meeting our community where they are, and finding ways to deliver the materials and services our patrons want, when they need them.

DCDL **connects our community**. Not only is the library a great place to learn, it's a great place to connect with other people! We want every community member to know that they belong at DCDL.

DCDL is a **dependable steward of the public trust**. We anticipate and are responsive to the evolving needs and expectations of current and future Delaware County residents.

DCDL is **a great place to work**. We attract and retain outstanding staff by providing an environment of collaboration, communication, and transparency. We celebrate successes and deliver exceptional customer experiences.

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where they are, and finding ways to deliver the materials
and services our patrons want, when they need them.

Objective 1: Responsive service.
1. Evaluate days and hours of operation in each branch of DCDL and explore adjustments, particularly Sunday and later hours, based on patron needs.
2. Explore feasibility of adding highly requested options as staff and budget allow.
   a. Notary public services
   b. Increased digital offerings
   c. Free printing
   d. Expanded Maker Studio hours
   e. Library of things
   f. Language learning resources and programs
3. Find ways to use internal data and customer feedback to create programming to suit a broad range of patron interests and needs.

Objective 2: More of what you want, faster.
1. Evaluate current new and high-demand materials placement and explore new options to improve accessibility and convenience.
   a. Power walls
   b. Expanded selection of high-demand materials
2. Explore financial feasibility of options that increase patrons' access to library materials.
   a. Pickup lockers
   b. Extended drive through hours

Objective 3: Bolster award-winning outreach services.
1. Assess ways to increase the reach of Outreach Services to patron groups who most need their services.
   a. Focus on underserved areas
      i. Kilbourne
         1. Explore the feasibility of adding book lockers or a Little Free Library to this area
      ii. Pockets of poverty in Delaware County, such as 2nd Ward in Delaware City
         1. Identify community partners and find ways to help bring library programs, materials, and services, especially during the summer months
   b. Expand literacy support for educators throughout the county.
      iii. Resume deliveries to schools.
      iv. Assess the financial feasibility of adding an Outreach Librarian.
      v. Explore new ways to provide early literacy training to pre-k and elementary school teachers rooted in research-backed methods.

How we measure success:

1. Door counts by branch
    a. Current: xxx
    b. 2025 goal: xxx
    c. 2026 goal: xxx
    d. 2027 goal: xxx
2.. Hold counts by branch
    e. Current: xxx
    f. 2025 goal: xxx
    g. 2026 goal: xxx
    h. 2027 goal: xxx
3. Drive through counts (Orange and Liberty only)
    i. Current: xxx
    j. 2025 goal: xxx
    k. 2026 goal: xxx
    l. 2027 goal: xxx
4. Outreach visits
    m. Current: xxx
    n. 2025 goal: xxx
    o. 2026 goal: xxx
    p. 2027 goal: xxx

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Objective 1: A great place to belong.
1. Evaluate each DCDL branch and explore new ways to allow spaces for both quiet and loud usage.
2. Explore ways to intentionally and strategically add welcoming spaces where patrons can connect, including seating.
3. Appraise family exploration spaces with an eye to enhancements.
4. Ensure that shelving and displays meet or exceed ADA accessibility standards for all DCDL patrons.

Objective 2: Embedded in the community.
1. Evaluate partner-led programs offered at the Library with an eye to increasing and defining successful programming.
2. Pursue ways to increase DCDL's in-person presence at educational and senior-focused events.
3. Create and maintain a directory of partners (staff-facing) and local services (patron-facing).

Objective 3: Our community knows what's available at DCDL.
1. Assess the feasibility of implementing a cohesive promotional calendar to facilitate the promotion of programs and events.
2. Ensure that every staff member is empowered with up-to-date knowledge and information to be an effective marketer of the Library's services.
3. Explore the financial feasibility of a direct mail campaign to new move-in households in our service area.

How we measure success:

1. Patron interaction counts
   a. Current: xxx
   b. 2025 goal: xxx
   c. 2026 goal: xxx
   d. 2027 goal: xxx
2. Partner-led program counts
   e. Current: xxx
   f. 2025 goal: xxx
   g. 2026 goal: xxx
   h. 2027 goal: xxx
3. Participation in school and community events
   i. Current: xxx
   j. 2025 goal: xxx
   k. 2026 goal: xxx
   l. 2027 goal: xxx
4. New card sign-ups
   m. Current: xxx
   n. 2025 goal: xxx
   o. 2026 goal: xxx
   p. 2027 goal: xxx
5. Emails sent/open rate
   q. Current: xxx
   r. 2025 goal: xxx
   s. 2026 goal: xxx
   t. 2027 goal: xxx
6. Website visits
   u. Current: xxx
   v. 2025 goal: xxx
   w. 2026 goal: xxx
   x. 2027 goal: xxx

DCDL is a **dependable steward of the public trust**. We anticipate and are responsive to the evolving needs and expectations of current and future Delaware County residents.

Objective 1: Stewardship
1. Explore options to increase and stabilize library funding.
2. Evaluate options for streaming or recording Board of Trustee meetings to keep our community informed.
3. Continually seek out non-traditional revenue streams and grant opportunities to support the service and information needs of our growing county, including exploring the creation of a Delaware County Library Foundation.

Objective 2: Understanding our community
1. Employ planned, periodic data gathering to create an accurate profile of our residents and their needs.
   a. Explore ways to use our partnerships with the county and school districts to regularly update data, including but not limited to population projections, school enrollment, income levels, growth areas, and demographics.
2. Conduct an annual community feedback survey.
3. Evaluate methods to review attendance numbers and patron feedback to offer high-interest programs at convenient dates and times for our customers.

Objective 3: Apply data-driven decision making
1. Explore and develop strategic lenses to apply when evaluating the addition or continuation of programs and services.
2. Investigate how local data might be used to understand our programs, materials, and services.
3. Develop a plan for periodic evaluations of materials, services, and partnerships for efficacy and impact.

How we measure success:

1. Annual community survey results
2. Program attendance counts
   a. Current: xxx
   b. 2025 goal: xxx
   c. 2026 goal: xxx
   d. 2027 goal: xxx
3. Circulation counts (physical and digital)
   e. Current: xxx
   f. 2025 goal: xxx
   g. 2026 goal: xxx
   h. 2027 goal: xxx
4. Grants applied for and funding received
   i. Current: xxx
   j. 2025 goal: xxx
   k. 2026 goal: xxx
   l. 2027 goal: xxx

DCDL is **a great place to work**.
We attract and retain outstanding staff by providing an
environment of collaboration, communication,
and transparency. We celebrate successes and deliver
exceptional customer experiences.

Objective 1: Building our capacity.
1. Evaluate staffing levels and responsibilities; adjust as needed.
2. Investigate the implementation of standardized training and expectations.
3. Strive to hire and retain a staff that reflects our community.

Objective 2: Nurturing our talent.
1. Create a staff professional development plan.
2. Develop and implement a mechanism to receive and respond to staff feedback.
3. Evaluate the possibility of implementing flexible scheduling and limited work from home.
4. Explore the fiscal and operational feasibility of these staff-identified benefits:
    a. Increased presence at conferences/workshops
    b. Tuition reimbursement
    c. Part time benefits (paid vacation time, holidays)
    d. Part-time off-desk hours to be used for continuing education

Objective 3: Strengthening our connections.
1. Investigate methods to improve system-wide communications, including but not limited to developing an internal communications plan.
2. Increase cross-branch departmental cooperation and awareness with regular, purposeful meeting/collaboration times.
3. Continue regularly scheduled administrative staff visits to all DCDL branches.

How we measure success:

1. Employee retention rates
   a. Current: xxx
   b. 2025 goal: xxx
   c. 2026 goal: xxx
   d. 2027 goal: xxx
2. Internal promotion rates
   e. Current: xxx
   f. 2025 goal: xxx
   g. 2026 goal: xxx
   h. 2027 goal: xxx
3. Ratio of employees to door count
   i. Current: xxx
   j. 2025 goal: xxx
   k. 2026 goal: xxx
   l. 2027 goal: xxx
4. Annual staff survey