



Portage District
LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2026



Why

Portage District Library is a hub of learning and social connection, with constantly evolving collections, programs, and services. To align its resources with the emerging priorities of the community, Portage District Library has undergone a comprehensive strategic planning process with feedback from the community and stakeholders. By implementing a new strategic plan, Portage District Library will be able to focus efforts on its new strategic directions: Strengthening the Community; Extraordinary Experiences; and Investing in the Future.

How

Portage District Library initiated a strategic planning process starting in the Summer of 2022. Amanda E. Standerfer from Fast Forward Libraries LLC was engaged to facilitate the planning process in three phases: Learn, Dream, Do. The Learn phase entailed forming a Planning Team to guide the process, holding staff and Board feedback sessions, conducting a community survey, and leading stakeholder focus groups and interviews. In the Dream phase, the Planning Team discussed possible future pathways for the library and developed strategic directions and goals for the coming four years. This strategic plan will guide Portage District Library through the Do phase, as the library executes its vision for the future.



Vision

*Inspiring, Enriching, and
Empowering Our Community*

Mission

*We transform lives by cultivating
connection, discovery, creativity,
and personal growth.*



Ends Statements

Optimize access to resources for information, education, and entertainment.

Be a safe, welcoming, inclusive destination for families, groups, and individuals.

Be a leader in strengthening our community.

Be a community hub to experience and explore diverse arts and culture.

Core Values

- Accountability
- Confidentiality and Privacy
- Customer Service
- Safety
- Partnerships
- Education and Lifelong Learning
- Equitable Access
- Excellence
- Inclusivity
- Innovation
- Intellectual Freedom
- Play and Inspiration
- Respect and Kindness
- Community Building



Strengthening the Community

We facilitate community members learning, creating, and bridging divides.

GOAL 1: Enrich the lives of community members by providing innovative and ample outlets for expressing creativity.

Activities:

- 1.1.1 Invest in cutting edge technology in the Makerspace, Creation Station, and Library of Things service areas to provide learning opportunities for patrons.
- 1.1.2 Create opportunities for patrons' creative work to be displayed and highlighted at the library.

GOAL 2: Build and expand vibrant partner plans with organizations working towards aligned goals.

Activities:

- 1.2.1 Partner with community organizations to host programming.
- 1.2.2 Consult with existing and potential community partners about effective ways to meet community needs.

GOAL 3: Implement targeted community engagement campaigns and create routine feedback opportunities for patrons.

Activities:

- 1.3.1 Prioritize directions for outreach including staff connections and community interest.
- 1.3.2 Create a robust feedback system to allow data from multiple sources to be analyzed and shared with the staff and community.



Extraordinary Experiences

We provide exceptional services that lead to delightful and meaningful interactions.

Goal 1: Position the library in unexpected ways in the community.

Activities:

- 2.1.1 For outreach to underserved populations, prioritize access to regular remote circulation of materials and personal connections with Library staff.
- 2.1.2 Prioritize offsite outreach opportunities that target those who have barriers to in-building services.

Goal 2: Equip staff to provide caring, responsive service to support the information and life-stage needs of community members.

Activities:

- 2.2.1 Develop and execute training to educate staff on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) principles, ensuring their effective implementation throughout the organization.
- 2.2.2 Conduct staff trainings to enhance their skills in providing empathetic support and social emotional assistance to patrons.

Goal 3: Celebrate and strengthen the community's social fabric by incorporating relationship building opportunities in library programs and throughout the building.

Activities:

- 2.3.1 Host more programs that foster interaction and community.
- 2.3.2 Investigate framework that helps people share differing viewpoints in a safe space.



Investing in the Future

We help the community evolve and grow.

Goal 1: Maintain high-quality staff by investing in hiring, orientation, and retention practices that are equitable and inclusive.

Activities:

- 3.1.1 Review staff wages and adjust based on the results of the compensation study.
- 3.1.2 Create a standardized orientation and cross training.
- 3.1.3 Implement robust internal communication procedures.
- 3.1.4 Create a performance evaluation system that encourages open communication and clear expectations.

Goal 2: Provide technology access and learning opportunities for community members so they are confident navigating an evolving digital world.

Activities:

- 3.2.1 Offer a robust, cutting-edge catalog for patrons to access our full collections including Library of Things, e-Resources, and databases.
- 3.2.2 Create promotional campaigns to highlight the library's services.
- 3.2.3 Implement staff training focused on empowering individuals with the necessary technology skills to support and assist patrons in navigating and maximizing their use of various technologies.
- 3.2.4 Invest in more device offerings.

Goal 3: Find ways to be welcoming and inclusive through collections, programs, displays, messaging, and facilities.

Activities:

- 3.3.1 Create successful collection display practices.
- 3.3.2 Improve access to and visibility of collections/services that meet local needs and interests. Prioritize currency, responsiveness, local information, and ties to library and local events.
- 3.3.3 Prioritize accommodating people with disabilities when designing or selecting offerings.



Next Steps

Implementation and Evaluation

Since the Strategic Plan 2023-2026 was adopted by the Portage District Library Board of Trustees at the Board Meeting on December 12, 2022, the staff has developed an activity plan to guide implementation. Implementation is a continual process throughout the 4-year plan. The timing of certain activities will be determined by priority and influenced by various factors, such as funding and other resource allocation. Review and adjustment of the activity plan will happen on a regular basis.

Evaluation of the plan will be ongoing once the plan implementation is approved. The status of the plan and its implementation will be reported quarterly to Trustees and stakeholders at Board meetings. The Board can expect a Third Quarter Update (July, August, September 2023) at the October 23, 2023 Library Board Meeting.

