



Pend Oreille County
LIBRARY DISTRICT

2019-2024
Strategic Plan

I. Background

The Pend Oreille County Library District is a junior taxing district serving Pend Oreille County, located in the northeast corner of Washington State. Established in the mid-1980s, the District is funded by a property tax levy of approximately 37 cents per thousand dollars of assessed value; the state maximum levy for libraries is 50 cents per thousand dollars of assessed value.

As of the 2010 census, the population of Pend Oreille County was 13,001 and had a median age of 49.8. The Washington State Office of Financial Management projects the county population to fall by approximately 1,000 residents over the next 20 years.

The high school graduation rate of county residents is 89.7% and approximately 18.7% have postsecondary degrees. Median household income is just over \$46,000 annually and the poverty rate is 19.8%; almost 25% of children aged 18 and under live in poverty.

II. Observed Trends

In 2017, the District circulated 8.2 items per capita, down from 8.4 in 2016. This is consistent with trends in libraries nationwide as they move from simple resource providers to community hubs and resource connectors. Foot traffic in our branches has increased, as has the usage of in-house technology (desktop computers and wifi).

We have seen an increase in program attendance across all age groups. Libraries nationwide are striving to get out of their buildings more often and offer more services in interesting locations or population centers. In 2017 the District held more than 140 events in the community with attendance over 2,600. Attendance for programs in the library was 7,625 over the course of 630 events.

III. Community Engagement Process

During 2018, an extensive community engagement process was undertaken with moderate success. Open community meetings were scheduled countywide. Four were scheduled at fire stations south of Newport, two were held at the Newport Library, one at the Calispel Valley Library, three at the Lone Library, two at the Metalines Library, and one at the Metaline City Hall. Prior to the open forum dates, library staff attended city council meetings in Newport, Cusick, Lone, Metaline, and Metaline Falls to announce the dates and purpose of the meetings.

Forums were also conducted in coordination with the Economic Development Council, the Newport Area Chamber of Commerce, the Newport/Priest River Rotary Club, the Pend Oreille County Republican Party, and the Newport Soroptimists. Feedback was likewise gathered at the Pend Oreille County Fair.

The purpose of these meetings was to engage participants in a process of community visioning wherein they elaborated on their community aspirations. The goal was not to gather feedback on library services, but to think about larger community desires. Library staff would then take the feedback to create a plan detailing ways in which the library could contribute to that larger community vision.

IV. Mission, Vision, & Values

Mission:

To connect our communities with opportunities to enrich their lives through empowerment, lifelong learning, and recreation.

Vision:

To collaborate within our communities in order to serve as a catalyst for possibility.

Values:

- Responsible stewardship of public funds
- Creating safe, supportive environments
- Open, equitable access to information and ideas
- Solving problems in innovative, creative ways

V. Strategic Goals & Initiatives

A. Early Childhood Literacy & Kindergarten Readiness

Goal: The Library District will provide pre- and emergent readers with access to appropriate materials, activities, and spaces to support their developing print literacy.

Potential activities:

1. Offer family-focused early literacy events that support children in the way they play, discover, and learn.
2. Perform outreach to area child care centers, in-home daycare providers, and Head Start programs to enhance their literacy collections and provide information to parents.
3. Enhance the summer reading program for ages birth-five.
4. Establish a “1000 Books Before Kindergarten” program before the 2020-21 school year.

Goal: The Library District will provide digital access and content appropriate for children under six.

Potential activities:

1. Establish digital early literacy stations in each branch.

2. Offer pre-loaded children's tablets for use in the library.
3. Establish a yearly programming series with a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) focus.

B. Small Business Support

Goal: The Library District will offer online and in-person resources for the development and expansion of small business.

Potential activities:

1. Provide business focused databases and quarterly classes on how to utilize them.
2. Maintain a cutting edge, up-to-date print collection on business focused topics.
3. Actively explore partnership opportunities with the area Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Council.
4. Offer monthly classes for business owners and entrepreneurs on topics of interest.
5. Explore having a notary on site at all branches.

Goal: The Library District will develop the local workforce for 21st century jobs.

Potential activities:

1. Provide regular classes on utilizing library tools for job searching and testing.
2. Provide opportunities for job seekers to get one-on-one assistance with resume creation and development.
3. Actively explore partnership opportunities with the local community college centers, high schools, and other entities who may also be working toward this goal.

C. Technology Support & Education

Goal: The Library District will expand the reach and diversity of its technology resources.

Potential activities:

1. Pilot the loaning of mobile wireless hotspots.
2. Work with community partners to develop secondary Wi-Fi stations in the communities of Cusick, Lone, Metaline, and Metaline Falls.
3. Implement the borrowing of mobile technology (ex.-tablets).
4. Develop and implement a computer replacement plan beginning in 2020.
5. Explore technology for the hearing and visually impaired.

Goal: The Library District will offer opportunities for the public to learn how to utilize technology.

Potential activities:

1. Branches will provide opportunities for patrons to make appointments with staff for one-on-one assistance.

2. Staff will, as needed, receive database and device training in order to be able to troubleshoot technology and/or teach others.
3. A variety of STEM classes will be offered for children, tweens, and teens.
4. Basic computer and eReader classes will be scheduled quarterly.

D. Infrastructure & Facilities

Goal: The Library District will update and upgrade library facilities in order to incorporate a more modern footprint.

Potential activities:

1. Library administration will find an appropriate piece of land for a new Newport Library by mid-2019.
2. Library administration will explore options for a remodel of the Calispel Valley Library.
3. Library administration will explore options for adding study rooms to the Lone and Metalines Libraries.
4. Explore ways to better serve communities south of Newport.

Goal: The Library District will maintain welcoming, comfortable, safe spaces in all libraries.

Potential activities:

1. Shelving and furniture will be evaluated at each location to ensure patron needs are being met.
2. Cameras will be installed to ensure safety for staff and patrons.

E. Healthy Communities

Goal: The Library District will serve as a recreation cornerstone for people of all ages.

Potential activities:

1. Create diverse programming that entices our communities to come together for fun and/or learning.
2. Provide diverse collections that appeal to a wide variety of readers, listeners, watchers, and players.
3. Perform outreach in unique and unusual places.

Goal: The Library District will work with strategic partners to assist in meeting human needs.

Potential activities:

1. Explore partnership with mental health and/or social work providers to host programs that support healthy minds.

2. Implement an after school, at-risk snack site at each library.
3. Explore partners that are interested in the concept of “little free pantries.”

As our communities change, so should the Library’s goals and initiatives. Yearly check-ins should be performed, ideally at an all staff meeting, to ensure that the goals stay relevant over the course of the five year period. This document may be modified as needed.

VI. Thanks

Our gratitude goes out to those that assisted in the creation of this document.

POCLD Board of Trustees: Lea’ Porter, Chair; Diane Stone, Vice Chair; Steve Dawson, Secretary; Kathie Schutte, Member; Beverly Sarles, Member.

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Approved by the POCLD Board of Trustees xx/xx/xxxx