

# **Madison County Public Libraries**

## **2022-2027 Strategic Plan**

### **Mission**

The Madison County Public Libraries are dynamic civic resources that promote free and open access to information, materials, and services to all members of the community to advance knowledge, foster creativity, encourage the exchange of ideas, build community, and enhance the quality of life.

### **Vision**

We will be the welcoming heart of our community where everyone can come to learn, discover, create, and connect.

### **Culture Statements**

1. We are proud of the library's role in our community and how each one of us contributes to it. Every position is important to the work we do here for the community. We draw on each staff person's individual strengths, thinking styles, passions, and experiences.
2. We work collaboratively because we do more and achieve more as a team than as individuals. We listen to ideas and input to make better decisions and share information because communication is essential.
3. We are ethical, honest, direct, and open-minded. We treat each other respectfully, even when we have differences of opinion. We know that is the only way to improve as individuals and work well as a team.
4. We strive for continual improvement in our personal and professional lives. We are always looking for ways to pitch in and make the library better.
5. We stay flexible, mindful, and dedicated whether contributing to innovations or continuing established practices. We set high standards and expect the best from ourselves and each other.
6. We support thoughtful experimentation and creative problem solving. When things don't turn out quite as expected, we learn from the experience. We respect one another and the decisions we make collaboratively, realizing that mistakes, failures, and changes are part of what makes us better.
7. We treat each other and those we serve with compassion, kindness, and empathy. We lift each other up and celebrate our successes together.
8. We are friendly, genuine, helpful, and fun, creating a positive environment that inspires deeper connections with each other and our community. We encourage each other to have work-life balance and enjoy life outside of the library.
9. We believe that diversity in all its forms leads to connections and community that we can only create together. We cultivate a space for good where everyone can be their authentic selves without judgment.

10. We act with integrity to protect intellectual freedom and the right to privacy. As we work with the public, we keep personal opinions to ourselves so that the library remains a neutral and respectful space for many differing views.
11. We are committed to helping community members achieve their own success, recognizing that personal growth may look different for each person.
12. We listen to our community. We are thoughtful, responsive, and ambitious when tackling goals and challenges. We develop and nurture partnerships to build a better community. Each one of us is a library ambassador.

### **Core Roles of the Library**

There are three core roles at the heart of the services and programs that we provide to our community. They are embedded into everything that we do.

#### **Learning**

The Madison County Public Libraries facilitate learning opportunities for everyone in the county, recognizing that personal growth and interest looks different for each person.

#### **Community**

As a gathering place and neutral venue for connection and expression, the Madison County Public Libraries play a part in fostering supportive communities in Madison County.

#### **Social Connection**

The Madison County Public Libraries create opportunities for friends, families, neighbors, and strangers to connect with one another.

### **Operational Priorities**

To operationalize these concepts and the areas of focus outlined below, we will commit to the following standards of service:

1. Excellent customer experiences
2. An empowered and engaged staff that will create a greater impact in an environment of innovation and experimentation
3. Services and partnerships that contribute to an enriched community and greater access to resources and services

### **Strategic Areas of Focus**

The Strategic Areas of Focus that will be prioritized in programming choices and developing services include the following areas:

1. Creativity and the Arts
2. Critical Literacies
3. Cultural Experiences
4. Career & Economic Success
5. Conservation
6. Community Health

## Strategic Plan Goals

**Goal 1:** To have an empowered and engaged staff that will create a greater impact in an environment of innovation and experimentation

**Objective 1:** To engage the staff in participating in the decision-making process of strategic planning and to take ownership over their role in the outcomes of the process.

### Actions:

- All staff will participate in a workshop on defining and establishing our staff culture. This will include a discussion on where issues exist where we are not reflecting the culture we want to promote. (March 2021)
- All staff will work together to define our mission (who we are) and our vision (who we want to be going into the future). These will be developed collaboratively and be the starting point for our strategic planning process. (June 2021)
- All staff will meet in small collaborative groups and then as a larger group to share and discuss areas of priority in terms of our services and programs (September 2021)
- All staff will contribute potential community partner names and contact information for in-person community stakeholder sessions (September 2022)
- Encourage staff to join and become involved with community organizations to help library develop a better understanding of the community landscape and true needs within the county (September 2022 and December 2022)
- Continue to meet and discuss with staff the expectations that have been developed, the desired outcomes, and address any challenges that arise (2023-ongoing)

**Objective 2:** To build capacity within the staff to feel engaged and empowered to offer new programs and services and the excellent customer experiences that are our goal.

### Actions:

- Develop a new Professional Development Plan document with updated training goals based of specific staff positions and goals of improved customer service (March 2021)
- Update job descriptions to reflect current expectations and proficiencies for each position (June 2021)
- Institute a formal schedule for performance review of all staff to facilitate individualized professional development and personal growth on individually set goals (began June 2021)
- Initial staff training and discussion on the concept of service design and shifting from a transactional relationship with our patrons to a more human-centered approach (September 2021)
- Coordinate individual professional development based on specific employee needs toward goal of developing excellent customer experiences (began June 2021)
- Provide EDI training through mini-sessions at each quarterly staff meeting to all staff on an ongoing basis (June 2022-July 2023)
- Provide group staff training on service design and shifting to practice of looking outward to our community versus focusing solely on internal processes and procedures (January 2023)
- Provide staff training to support providing services and programs to support needs identified in community surveys and stakeholder input sessions (2023)

**Objective 3:** To consider and evaluate the customer experience at the library branches in order to continually move toward an excellent customer experience

**Actions:**

- Provide staff training on the impact of the “customer journey” and ways to observe and identify touchpoints that create positive and negative experiences (began 2024-)
- Perform observations and entrance and exit interviews at all three branches on randomized days to identify bright spots in the experience and “hot spots” or gaps that may need to be addressed. (began 2024-)

**Goal 2:** To develop services and partnerships that contribute to an enriched community and greater access to resources and services

**Objective 1:** To initiate a community needs assessment that will better inform future decisions about future programs and services

**Actions:**

- Develop a survey of community needs and distribute it digitally and on paper in as many of the library channels as possible (September-October 2022)
- Administer the community needs assessment survey over a period of two months (October 2022)
- Disaggregate the data and responses by the library leadership team (December 2022-January 2023)
- Communicate responses and initial next steps to staff (March 2023)

**Objective 2:** To facilitate community stakeholder input sessions to determine needs and aspirations for the county that can be addressed or supported by the library

**Actions:**

- Coordinate small group lunch meetings with area community partners and service providers to gain firsthand knowledge of the needs they serve in the community, their services, their own needs and limitations, and ways in which the library could support these needs or the organization. (November 2022-March 2023)
- Disaggregate the data and responses by the library leadership team (December 2022-February 2023)
- Communicate responses and initial next steps to staff (March 2023)

**Objective 3:** To refine existing and develop new services and programs in response to community input (began 2023-)

**Actions:**

- Communicate existing services to new patrons upon sign-up.
- Promote existing services on a regular basis to remind current patrons of the variety of services and programs.
- Consult community survey to drive new programming decisions.
- Create an opportunity for seeking regular input and suggestions from patrons and staff.
- Consistently add to e-book inventory
- Complete diversity audit of collection

**Objective 4:** To develop an outreach plan that focuses on underserved areas and populations (2024-2025)

- Utilize Gale Analytics to identify areas of the county that are under-served by the libraries.
- Identify organizations that can help the libraries bridge this divide and make connections.
- Hold a series of working lunches to connect with and provide opportunities for brainstorming ways to support and expand the reach of community groups, especially those serving underserved populations.
- Use book display space in all three branches to support services of organizations that support said populations and groups.
- Create more opportunities for networking with organizations.
- Create opportunities for organizations and support services to hold information nights/fairs at the library.