

# Polk County Public Library

Long-Range Plan: October 1, 2005--September 30, 2010

**Introduction:** This long-range plan is the Polk County Public Library's first attempt to incorporate outcomes-based evaluation into our goals, and covers the next five years. An outcome is defined as a program participant's changed behavior, skills, knowledge, attitude, or status of life condition related to the program. As the county moves toward a system of outcomes-based budgeting for county departments, the library will use outcomes-based planning and evaluation to identify what we want to do and how we want to do it--in order to show efficiencies, economic impact and the general positive affect of the library's services and programs on individual users' lives. By this method, we will attempt to justify county government support, through adequate funding, of the library program.

Two documents have been used in the creation of this long-range plan:

1. A summary report describing the five service priorities chosen in 1999 by a library board-appointed planning committee as part of the Public Library Association's Planning For Results planning process, which will continue to guide library development over the course of the next five years:

Lifelong Learning  
General Information  
Current Topics and Titles  
Information Literacy  
Basic Literacy

2. A survey of library users and analysis of the survey results published in August, 2005 as part of our LSTA Marketing Grant Project.

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Polk County Public Library is to provide all users of the library with educational, informational, cultural and recreational resources.

We seek:

- To provide opportunity, encouragement and assistance for library users.
- To lead the way to diverse information and technology for personal growth and development for library users.
- To meet the needs and interests of a multicultural community of all ages.
- To develop and provide inviting facilities and a welcoming environment.
- To respond to the need for lifelong learning and general information among library users.

## **GOAL ONE: LEARNING: HELPING PEOPLE GROW**

### Objective 1: Lifelong Learning

**Library users will be encouraged and helped to use the library from early childhood through their senior years, so that self-directed personal growth and development opportunities are available through an organized program of lifelong learning at the library.**

#### *Selected Activities*

- 1 *By 2009/2010, at least 85% of the adults who use the library for personal independent learning will indicate on a survey that the library has adequate information, resources, and assistance to meet their needs.*
  - *Annually, at least 90% of all surveyed program attendees will rate the program attended as meeting or exceeding expectations.*
  - *By 2009/2010 at least 75 % of library users will know where to find information about upcoming library programs, based on a patron survey.*
  - *Each year the library will provide at least one new product such as on-line study guides, etc. to assist with lifelong learning.*

### Objective 2: Learning Resources

**Babies, toddlers, and preschoolers will be provided with emergent literacy and reading programs at the library.**

#### *Selected Activities*

- *By FY 2009-2010, the Summer Reading program will reach at least 30 % of the target population ages 0-5.*
- *By FY 2009-2010, the number of centers and family childcare home businesses that receive*

*deposit children's book collections through Outreach Services and Children's Services will increase by 20 %.*

- *The number of home and center childcare providers served through Children's Services' mentoring programs will increase by 20 % over the next five years.*

### Objective 3: School Partnerships

**Preschool, elementary, middle school, high school and home-schooled students of the Polk County area will be provided by the library with materials that will supplement and complement the curriculum of their schools. The library will partner with K-12 schools.**

#### *Selected Activities*

- *Annually, library staff will attend 100% of monthly media meetings with Polk County Schools.*
- *By 2009/2010, at least 85% of the parents of children who use the library to find something to read, listen to, or view will indicate on a survey that they found something to meet their child's needs.*
- *In order to connect students and teachers with the resources of the public library, Outreach Services and Children's Services staff will reach students and school faculty by FY 2005-06 through presentations about the library's electronic resources, programs about books and reading, tools created to support curriculum and library card campaigns.*
- *Children's Services staff will visit 300 students and school faculty in their schools to promote library resources and programs by the end of FY 2005-06.*
- *The number of Spanish-speaking students in Polk County schools who make use of library general information resources and services will increase by 10 % per year.*
- *The Library will partner with Polk County Middle School to provide programming and resources within one year of its opening.*

### Objective 4: Youth Resources

**Children and youth will find materials, programs and services at the library that will support and satisfy their personal reading interests and educational needs.**

#### *Selected Activities*

- *The library will make monthly contributions to the newsletters of one or more of the following agencies: the Polk County Schools, Polk County Partnership for Children, Friends of the Polk County Library and other community agencies.*
- *The library will annually provide at least one major educational opportunity for homeschoolers.*
- *By FY 2009-2010, the Summer Reading program will reach at least 30 % of the target population*

ages 6-11.

- *The library will provide an annual promotional event at each county elementary school for the summer reading program as budget allows.*
- *The library will provide a teacher workshop biennially.*
- *The library will present a children's author or illustrator annually as budget allows.*
- *The library will provide at least one activity / program for students 12-18 annually.*
- *The library will continue to provide homework help through librarian assistance, websites, software, and materials.*
- *The library will continue to entice children and teenagers to become life-long learners by continuing the yearly summer reading programs and facilitating young adults being able to post self-written book reviews on the library's homepage.*
- *Youth involved in library programming will accomplish one or more of the items in the following skill set by 2009-2010, with a 10% increase observed by staff conducting an annual sample survey at the end of FY 05-06 and each subsequent year:*
  - 1.) *achieve educational success, contribute to their community*
  - 2.) *feel safe in their environment*
  - 3.) *have meaningful relationships with adults and peers, develop marketable skills*
  - 4.) *develop personal and social skills*

## Objective 5: Senior Resources

**People 55 and older will find books and library programs responsive to their needs.**

### *Selected Activities*

- *By the end of FY 2009-10, a senior webpage will be developed by the library will be used at least 150 times per month.*
- *The % of Polk County Library cardholders aged 55 years and older will increase 10 % in FY 2005-06 and FY 2006-07 and five % per year after that.*
- *Attendance at computer classes and other senior-targeted programs will increase by 20 % in FY 2005-06 and 10 % in each subsequent year.*
- *By FY 2009-10, surveys of users 55+ will show increased awareness of the library as a resource for current information and materials.*
- *The library will offer at least six programs per year targeted specifically at senior adults.*

## Objective 6: Classes & Training

**People of all ages will be helped at the library to seek, find, evaluate and use the information resources that best meet their needs.**

### *Selected Activities*

- *In FY 2005-06, library users will receive more than 100,000 personal information contact encounters with library staff via Children's Services, programs for seniors, library website requests, homework help transactions, individual reference and reader's advisory transactions.*
- *By the end of FY 2005-06, library staff will develop and present at least 5 subject-based training programs. Follow-up materials to all 5 library-presented training sessions will be available through the library's Web pages.*
- *By the end of FY 2006-07, 75 % of staff providing reference and reader's advisory service to the public will complete training in assessing and evaluating learning behaviors and information gathering styles, and understand how they may affect information transactions.*
- *By the end of FY 2005-06, students and faculty in at least two-thirds of the schools having low socio-economic status, as defined by the North Carolina Department of Education, will receive targeted training in learning to use the library's resources.*
- *The library will offer at least one genealogy workshop per year.*
- *Offer at least 5 computer classes annually on varying topics. Of the seniors who have completed a computer class at the library by the end of FY 2009-10, at least 80 % will report that they have improved their information literacy skills.*
- *By the end of FY 2005-06, 100% of the library board of trustees members will participate in at least one orientation, board training workshop, or trustee program at NCLA, PLA, or ALA.*
- *As needed, the library will provide training to library staff members in areas such as sensitivity training, customer service skills, volunteer recruitment, event planning, publicity and marketing, and foreign languages in addition to training in available resources and computer skills.*

## **GOAL TWO: INFORMATION: CHANGING LIVES**

### Objective 1: General Information

**Library users' need for information and answers to questions on a broad array of topics related to work, school, and personal life will be addressed through the library's reference and information services.**

### *Selected Activities*

- *Use of our on-line information resources will grow by 5% annually.*
- *The library will provide up-to-date, accurate print and electronic reference resources, access to on-line information resources, and expert assistance in using all those resources that enable users to succeed at home, at work, at school, and in the community.*
- *Annually at least 80% of surveyed customers will feel assistance met or exceeded their*

*expectations.*

- *The library will continue to provide in-house and telephone reference services, and will offer the NCKnows real-time reference service program through the web page.*
- *The libraries will develop, maintain and promote a website that offers general information on resources, services and programs.*
- *The library's website will be converted to appear seamless with the county's web page by the end of 2005-2006.*
- *Webpages contained on the library's website will be updated on a weekly basis to provide most current information.*
- *The library website will become more interactive, with customers able to renew materials, place holds on materials, register for workshops, and sign up for newsletters via interactive web forms rather than email by 2009-2010.*
- *Annually at least 80% of surveyed customers will feel the web page met or exceeded their expectations.*
- *Library collections will be weeded annually to ensure current, accurate information.*
- *By FY 2007--08, the library will have developed a workshop for patrons that will focus on how to use the library and its resources to fulfill the users' informational needs or wants. This workshop will be given three times and then will need to be evaluated for patron interest and demand, and usefulness.*
- *Library users seeking general information at the library will achieve one or more of the items on the following skill set list, with a 10% increase observed by staff conducting an annual sample survey at the end of FY 05-06 and each subsequent year:*
  - 1) *Read for pleasure*
  - 2) *Obtained a specific fact/document*
  - 3) *Learned about a skill/hobby/personal interest*
  - 4) *Identified or contacted an organization*
  - 5) *Found information for school/work/community group*
  - 6) *Shared cultural experience/exchanged info with others*
  - 7) *Learned more about a legal/social/political issue*
  - 8) *Met new people with whom I share common interests*

## **Objective 2: Quality Materials, Programs, Resources**

**Children and adults will be provided with an abundance of current and popular materials and programs at the library that will stimulate thinking, satisfy curiosity, solve problems and provide leisure time enjoyment.**

### *Selected Activities*

- *The circulation of books for children and young adults will increase 10 % by the end of FY 2005-06.*
- *Each year through FY 2009-10, at least 100 children and teens will attend a library-sponsored book discussion or author/illustrator program.*

- *The library will strive for annual materials budget increases to keep up with escalating costs and to provide essential growth in materials such as books and audiovisual.*
- *One section of the non-fiction collection will be targeted each year for complete inventory and updating of materials as budget allows.*
- *The library will continue to present book discussion series each year and secure humanities grants for the book discussion programs.*
- *New programming will be offered each year in a specific area of learning.*
- *The number of Spanish or bilingual programs for children and their families will increase 5 % per year.*
- *Attendance at programs for children and teens will increase 15 % by the end of FY 2005-06.*
- *Year-round, family-centered programming will increase by 20 % annually beginning in FY 2005-06.*
- *Programming for adults will increase 20 % by the end of FY 2005-06.*
- *The library will continue library coordinating the archiving and use of the Olde Tyme radio program collection and other special collections, as well as digital archives, in FY 2005-06 and each subsequent year.*
- *Reference and support staff will receive training on customer service to families by FY 2006-07.*

### Objective 3: Business and Economic Sustainability

**Small businesses (fewer than five employees) will know about and effectively use the resources and services of the library.**

#### *Selected Activities*

- *The total number of small business-related questions received by the reference desk or online will increase by 10 % per year, beginning in FY 2005-06.*
- *One hundred % of users of Mountain Microenterprise business counseling services in Polk County will receive information on library resources and their usefulness, beginning in FY 2005-06.*
- *Two programs and presentations on business-related subjects will be offered each year to library users and staff.*
- *Eighty-five % of small business users and attendees at library programs targeted to small business people will report that these services met their needs for quick, reliable information.*
- *During FY 2005--06, a business reference webpage will be added to the library's website , and will be used 30 times per month, and this usage level will grow by five % during the next two years.*
- *Library users who speak Spanish as their first language will find 25 % more materials on jobs and careers by the end of FY 2007-08.*
- *Small businesses (fewer than five employees) will know about and effectively use the resources of the library to accomplish one or more of the items on the following skill set, with a 10% increase observed by staff conducting an annual sample survey at the end of FY 05-06 and each subsequent year:*

- 1) *Explored/started/developed a business*
  - 2) *Dealt with a personnel issue*
  - 3) *Closed a business*
  - 4) *Explored job/career or determined education/training*
  - 5) *Developed job-related skills*
  - 6) *Learned how to advance in job/career*
  - 7) *Made career changes or relocated*
  - 8) *Made better investment/retirement decisions.*
- *The library will provide current resources for customers seeking career and business opportunities.*
  - *At least 10 new items will be added to the college and career collection annually.*
  - *Use of online resources for business and career opportunities will increase 5% annually.*
  - *The library will partner with e-Polk, Polk County EDC, ICC, Polk County Chamber of Commerce, Isothermal Regional Planning Commission, Foothills Connect (regional business technology center), Advantage West, ERC, e-NC Authority and other groups to focus attention on the library's many resources for the business community.*
  - *The library will market its business reference and career resources through signage and press releases, when new materials or services are added and by offering related programs -computer and topical – two times a year.*
  - *Continue to coordinate business reference resource and partnership press releases to inform public of the library's support of the business community.*
  - *The library will develop a mechanism (focus group, etc.) to obtain input from the business community on needed resources by FY 2009-2010.*

## **GOAL THREE: LITERACY: AWARENESS FOR ALL**

### **Objective 1: Information Literacy**

**Library users' need for skills related to finding, evaluating, and using information effectively will be addressed by the library.**

#### *Selected Activities*

- *Library users will be provided with services and resources to develop information literacy in the community, including one or more items from the following skill set, with a 10% increase observed by staff conducting an annual sample survey at the end of FY 05-06 and each subsequent year:*
  - 1) *learned how to use the library catalogue.*
  - 2) *learned how to ask a librarian for help.*
  - 3) *learned how to use a computer.*
  - 4) *learned how to use standard software products.*
  - 5) *learned how to use email/emailing lists/chat rooms.*
  - 6) *learned how to evaluate the quality of information on the web.*
  - 7) *learned how to create a website.*
  - 8) *learned how to use the library catalogue.*

9) learned how to search the World Wide Web.

10) learned how to use databases.

11) learned how to use reference books.

12) learned how to use the library and its resources because a librarian helped me.

- *Computer classes will be offered in both library locations a minimum of 5 times per year.*
- *Annually at least 85% of the surveyed adults who have attended information literacy classes will indicate on a survey that the library has helped them develop the skills needed to find, evaluate, and use information effectively.*
- *The number of adult information literacy programs sponsored by the library will increase by 5 % over the next five years.*
- *At least 5 children's information literacy programs sponsored by the library will be held each year.*
- *Library will continue to provide computers for self-instruction as well as for typing reports, resumes or assignments.*
- *The library staff will continue to purchase materials in various formats on a monthly basis to enable adults and children to learn and use computer resources on their own.*
- *The library staff will continue to provide one-on-one assistance in the use of the library's computer hardware and software daily.*
- *The library will investigate the possibility of establishing a volunteer corps of teenagers to provide computer assistance at night and on weekends.*
- *Continue to provide and market computer and Internet search classes at both libraries, monthly*
- *The library will develop and market classes to diverse demographic groups annually.*
- *The library will market informational/instructional tours of the library to schools, seniors, etc. annually, using the library's Marketing/Communication Plan and Library Advocacy Now! materials from ALA to guide the library's marketing efforts.*
- *The library will offer a basic class on "How to Utilize YOUR Library" by FY 07-08.*
- *The library will create a list of the services and amazing facts about the library, and then use it as a marketing tool to make people more aware of what we do, by FY 07-08.*
- *The library will offer instructional classes in Genealogy know-how, and instructional classes to cover the electronic resources we have in the areas of genealogy / local history annually.*
- *The library will acquire a self-check system and train patrons how to use it by FY 2008-09.*
- *The library will establish on-line information literacy webpage. This could eventually be expanded to provide tutoring/training in an interactive manner.*
- *The library will develop a "pathfinder" project, which will aim to encourage readers to find information in their own areas of interest. The library will create FAQs, Pathfinders, etc in both print/electronic forms for public use quarterly in FY 05-06 and each subsequent year.*
- *The library will continue to expand its web page content in areas such as NCLive tutorials, website suggestions, etc. in FY 2005-06 and in each subsequent year.*

## Objective 2: Basic Literacy

**Community members, including literacy students and their teachers, seeking to address the need to read and to perform other essential daily tasks will find resources and facilities at the library to assist them.**

### *Selected Activities*

- *Literacy program participants using library facilities and resources will complete one or more items from the skill set listed below, with a 10% increase observed by staff conducting an annual sample survey at the end of FY 05-06 and each subsequent year:*
  - 1) *Improved reading/writing/math.*
  - 2) *Prepared for GED.*
  - 3) *Passed the GED.*
  - 4) *Prepared for the naturalization exam.*
  - 5) *Became a citizen.*
  - 6) *Read to a child or helped w/ book.*
  - 7) *Helped a child with homework.*
  - 8) *Applied for a job.*
  - 9) *Got a job/better job/raise in pay.*
  - 10) *Managing personal finances better.*
  - 11) *Learned about bus/car/education/jobs/money.*
  - 12) *Participated in a community activity.*
  - 13) *Wrote a letter/postcard/email.*
- *The library will provide access to literacy council tutors by compiling a list of available tutors by 2005-06.*

## Objective 3: Cultural Literacy:

**Library users from diverse cultures and subcultures will engage in program opportunities relating to American ethnicity, social equity and global awareness at the library.**

### *Selected Activities.*

- *The library will partner with the Polk County Cultural Council, Friendship Council, regional museums and other arts, humanities, diversity and global awareness organizations in an effort to bring free multicultural experiences to the public at the library and other community cultural spaces.*
- *The library will focus on creating activities and educational opportunities related to such things as issues of disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and global awareness.*
- *The library will develop programs that recognize, appreciate, respect, understand, and value our differences, and acknowledge that support of all groups in our community is fundamental to the transformative process needed to continue to move our community toward a truly inclusive and diverse environment.*
- *The library will give weight to examining concerns and issues advanced by advocates of underrepresented groups in cultural program planning. The library will continue to sponsor or*

*co-sponsor Black History Month, Women's History Month, an annual Cinco de Mayo Festival and other multicultural programming.*

- *The library will assist those library users exploring their personal and regional historical past by providing an adequate collection and assistance with resources containing genealogy, local and state history, and special collections information.*
- *Users of the library's genealogy, local and state history, and special collections area will accomplish one or more of the items in the following skill set, with a 10% increase observed by staff conducting an annual sample survey at the end of FY 05-06 and each subsequent year:*
  - 1) *Learned how to use genealogical databases*
  - 2) *Made progress researching family history*
  - 3) *Met/reunited with a family member or friend*
  - 4) *Learned about family medical history*
  - 5) *Learned about cultural heritage*
  - 6) *Shared data with others in person/print/online*
  - 7) *Published family history*
  - 8) *Identified new source of information to search*
  - 9) *Met others interested in local history or genealogy*
  - 10) *Did research for a school project*
  - 11) *Worked on historic preservation/renovation/real estate*
  - 12) *Learned about community/local history*
  - 13) *Obtained a document or record*

#### **Objective 4: Audio, Visual and Media Literacy:**

**Library users will engage in public forums and dialogue by viewing, hearing and discussing current issues prominent in the media, in programs at the library and in family discussions in the home, supported by library audiovisual materials and computer technology. Library users will also gain the ability to construct and present visual and written statements and engage actively in design and evaluation of their own web pages.**

##### *Selected Activities*

*The library will engage visual and media literacy educators to provide training at the library that utilizes the audiovisual collection, by FY 2009-10.*

- 1 *Annual film discussion series will be developed at the library to stimulate public discourse on current events and national issues depicted in the media, through FY 2009-10.*
- *Free discussion materials provided by public television and radio networks to support their programming, and that of other media organizations or sponsors offering educational or cultural programming will be publicized and promoted at the library.*
  - *An audiovisual handout will be developed enabling customers to “troubleshoot” problems they may have in using our AV materials at home.*
  - *Training in the development of personal web pages as a form of visual expression will be offered by the library by FY 2009-10.*
  - *Grant opportunities to support visual and media literacy programming at the library will be sought by FY 2009-10.*

## **GOAL FOUR: ACCESS AND EQUITY: SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE**

### **Objective 1: Adequate and Efficient Use of Space and Resources:**

**Library users will have a 21st century library facility in which to access resources.**

#### *Selected Activities*

- *The library will strive to provide cutting-edge technology annually as budget allows.*
- *By 2006/2007 plans will be in place to construct a child friendly, special story time programming area..*
- *The library will work toward the possibility of digitizing the vertical file materials, and making these resources available electronically*

### **Objective 2: Library Outreach:**

**Children and adults who do not have access to the library will have access to information and resources to meet their lifelong learning needs by means of a dependable and consistent outreach program.**

#### *Selected Activities*

- *During each year of the five-year plan, at least 50 % of the children served by the preschool outreach program will be considered at risk children. This will be based on childcare subsidy data provided by the Polk County Partnership for Children..*
- *By 2009/2010 at least 30% of elder care facilities in Polk County will be enrolled in some type of adult outreach library program.*
- *By 2009/2010 physician-certified homebound members of the community will have access to library materials delivered to their homes.*

### **Objective 3: Languages**

**Current materials will be available Polk County residents, especially Latinos, in the languages they read, speak or understand.**

#### *Selected Activities*

- *The library will provide information about its programs and services in two languages by the end of FY 2009-10.*
- *A Spanish Collection Committee will be established by the end of FY 2006-07. A collection development plan for library collections in languages other than English will be developed and implemented by the end of FY 2006-07.*

- *The main library in Columbus will be designated as the primary location for Spanish-language materials and services by the end of FY 2005-06. The Saluda Public Library branch will utilize components of collection and service strategies developed for the main library.*
- *Library general information resources (books and other materials in all formats, selected reference sites, library informational publications) available in Spanish will increase by 15 % by FY 2005-06.*
- *Circulation of Spanish language materials will increase by five % each year, based on FY 2004-05 usage.*
- *Information queries in Spanish received by telephone, electronically and in person will increase by 5 % annually, based on FY 2004-05 usage.*

## Objective 4: Remote Access

**Library customers will have access to information resources and services without visiting a library building.**

### *Selected Activities*

- *Small business remote use of Polk County Library information resources and services will increase by 10 % per year, beginning in FY 2005-06.*
- *By the end of FY 2009-2010, at least 75 % of the library's electronic resources will be available to remote users from home, school, work, community centers and career centers.*
- *The number of unique Polk County remote (e.g., dial-up, Web, telephone, and mail) users will increase annually by 10 %.*
- *By the end of FY 2005-06, 60 % of remote users responding to a satisfaction survey will be satisfied with the timeliness, convenience and relevance of selected information services.*

## Objective 5: Valuing of the Library

**Library users and community stakeholders will recognize the library as a unique community asset and a personally valuable resource.**

### *Selected Activities*

- *The library will continue to develop partnerships for programming, particularly with schools/colleges and other community organizations – presenting at least ten partnership programs each year.*
- *Library staff will do radio, television and print media interviews promoting programs and services.*
- *The library will participate in the Polk County Resource Council and other community partnerships to communicate the availability of library resources, programs and services.*
- *A professional marketing consultant will design a comprehensive, consistent library image for print materials, website, and signage, which will be used in FY 2005-06 and each subsequent year.*
- *The library will serve as a commons for library users to achieve one or more items in the following skill set, with a 10% increase observed by staff conducting an annual sample survey at the end of FY 05-06 and each subsequent year:*
  - 1.) *Met friend/co-worker*
  - 2.) *Made a new friend*
  - 3.) *Learned about new books, videos, or music*
  - 4.) *Completed or made progress on school work*
  - 5.) *Learned about or was referred to another community organization*
  - 6.) *Quiet place to think, read, write, or study*
  - 7.) *Took a break at library café or coffee shop*
  - 8.) *Enjoyed a lecture, concert, film, or other public event*
  - 9.) *Attended or participated in a public meeting*
  - 10.) *Visited library-sponsored chat room on the Web*
- *Every library plan or other document produced by the library in the next five years will conclude with a statement of the ethical impact of government provisioning of optimal library services for community development and the value of the public library to the community.*

### **Ethical Impact Statement:**

Libraries build sustainable communities. Community development is enhanced by optimal library and information services.

Without the formal and informal lifelong learning and literacy opportunities provided by libraries, other root-cause social problems and issues will not be addressed sufficiently.

As a result, the entire community will experience a poorer quality of life and there will be less economic development for the community. There will also be fewer opportunities

for personal development provided to members of the community.

An excellent library, on the other hand, is a doorway to and a mirror of community and personal success.

The quality of a community's library services is one of the very first items many businesses and families look at when deciding which community of the many under consideration will be their choice for relocating and living.

Excellent libraries make excellent economic sense.

Excellent libraries mean excellent local government.

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