

Inform * Enrich * Empower

RICHMOND PUBLIC LIBRARY

**STRATEGIC PLAN
RICHMOND PUBLIC
LIBRARY - SUMMARY**

**SYSTEM-WIDE
UPDATES**

2016-2021

Libraries helping to build a better Richmond



**RICHMOND PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Approved – June 23, 2021

Goal 1: Children will enter school ready to learn, and will have resources to help them succeed academically.

System-wide Update: RPL embraces all opportunities to support the goals and objectives of educating youth in Richmond. It is a multifaceted and evolving relationship that is supportive of the RPL mission to inform, enrich and empower.

Status: *Ongoing*

Strategy 1: Strengthen partnership with Richmond Public Schools.

System-wide Update: The Youth Services Leadership Team meets with Judy Deichman, Head of RPS Library Services, on a monthly basis. We will be partnering for the 2021 Summer Reading Program. RPL staff have supported the Lit Limo, which is a vehicle that delivers books and learning kits to youth throughout the City.

Status: *Ongoing*

- a. Branch libraries will develop relationships and collaborations with neighborhood schools' principals and media specialists.

System-wide Update: Youth Services staff at all locations connect RPS and learning institutions in the neighborhoods the locations serves.

Status: *Ongoing*

- b. Collaborate with Communities in Schools to establish a link to each elementary school in Richmond Public Schools.

System-wide Update: Relationships with CIS will need to be re-established once schools re-open. All school buildings are closed or restricted access during the pandemic of 2020-2021.

Status: *Stalled*

- c. Develop a targeted program for all second grade students to get library cards as they transition to third grade (when learning to read transitions to reading to learn).

System-wide Update: Electronic Library Card now available to all. All library card accounts are fine free. RPS does not have a student identification card that could facilitate a combined library/student ID card as many other schools systems allow.

Status: *Ongoing*

- d. Revive School Board member attendance at Richmond Public Library Board meetings.

System-wide Update: Update June 2021: LBOT members reached out and have made contact with a school board representative to begin attending via ZOOM and/or in person.

Status: *Stopped*

Strategy 2: Capitalize on the success of existing programs for children offered by Richmond Public Library.

System-wide Update: Transitioned to holding programs virtually during the pandemic. Weekly STEAM videos, monthly Lego programs, monthly teen programs, virtual teen space on Discord, weekly storytime lives for family.

Status: *Ongoing*

- a. Early literacy story times – Continue to build research-based content and assess the outcomes of these programs.

System-wide Update: Moved early literacy storytimes to virtual platforms. Continue to implement the ECRR2.

Status: *Ongoing*

- b. Deepen opportunities for expanded programs for children of all ages to include STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math), parent workshops, and other targeted learning opportunities.

System-wide Update: All programs have been virtual over the past year, but have continued to focus on STEM and other skills to include STEAM Culture Kits, Budgeting for Teens, news literacy, crafty hour kits, volunTEEN opportunities.

Status: *Ongoing*

- c. Summer Challenge – Evaluate and enhance the Summer Challenge, a component of the Library's role in reducing summer learning loss.

System-wide Update: 2010 RPL provided SRP to the community. 1,647 participants in 2019 and 1,334 in 2020.

Status: *Ongoing*

Strategy 3: Strengthen Partnership with the City's Office of Community Wealth Building.

System-wide Update: RPL and OCWB coordinate efforts whenever possible in programs and resources for unemployed, under employed, families and early literacy.

Status: *Ongoing*

- a. The Richmond Public Library Director will serve on the City's Early Childhood Cabinet, the new policy and planning Cabinet under the Office of Community Wealth Building. The Early Childhood Cabinet will determine specific outcomes and services to be provided by the Library related to Early Childhood outcomes for Richmond City.

System-wide Update: Library Director serves on these committees.

Status: *Ongoing*

- b. Expand RVA Reads to reach the majority of children ages four-five the years old in Richmond City. RVA Reads will reach all classes in Richmond Public Schools preschool centers by developing strategies to reach all classes that are housed in individual schools.

System-wide Update: RVA Reads has returned to RPL. Active in all RPS Head Starts and many childcare centers are providing books and resources to support early childhood literacy. Monthly during the school year, story times are delivered via volunteers with books to take home.

Status: *Ongoing*

- c. Provide parenting education and early literacy skill classes in partnership with the Office of Community Wealth Building's Kellogg Foundation grant.

System-wide Update: Program at Gilpin and Creighton Court have wound down after the funding stopped. RPL parent resource educator retired summer 2016 and the position became unfunded.

Status: *Stopped*

- d. Assess the results of summer interventions and determine the feasibility of continuing these programs in cooperation with the Office of Community Wealth Building.

System-wide Update: Data is complete and available in Kellogg Foundation Report. No current summer intervention program with OCWB. OCWB focus is on employment. Copies of the report may be obtained by contacting the Library Director.

Status: *Completed*

Goal 2: Residents will have access to technology needed for school, work, and life.

System-wide Update: RPL continues to expand upon this goal. Workstations, printers, fax access, scan to portable storage and other forms of technology are available in all library locations. During the pandemic, RPL was able to evolve and expand upon technology to deliver library resources remotely. This will continue.

Status: *Ongoing*

Strategy 1: Establish a staff position focused on technology coordination including management of library computers, staff training, and social media outreach.

System-wide Update: RPL determined that a single staff person was not sufficient to manage the implementation and access to technology in the System. A team effort has evolved. Library Information Technology department, Website Team, Young Adult and Adult Services are a team that is focused on providing technology coordination and programs, and adding an education television studio and channel.

Status: *Ongoing*

Strategy 2: Review and enhance computer training and technology skills for both staff and patrons.

System-wide Update: IEE is transitioning to a more formal professional development model. During the pandemic the library tasked a team of librarians to develop training, resources and electronic education via Niche Academy (an online learning platform). This continues for staff to build library and technology knowledge base. The 2019 Training point system implemented at the Main Library for staff was beyond our capacity to effectively implement. The pandemic made it further difficult to coordinate and execute. Therefore, we have started a new system of training that seemed effective when the library was completely closed for the COVID19 pandemic.

Status: *Ongoing*

- a. Develop standard technology expectation for library staff and provide training to improve internal knowledge base.

System-wide Update: RPL is offering trainings via electronic platforms such as Zoom, Niche Academy, and Slack.

Status: *Ongoing*

- b. Determine priorities for improvements in equipment and services.

System-wide Update: Library IT has replaced computer workstations on a schedule of two locations per year. In this way patron workstations are replaced before end of usable life in 5 years. Technology replacement is supported by funding from USAC and the E-rate program. In 2021, RPL was able to replace routers, switches, and power supplies system-wide. E-rate covered 90% of this certified need. In 2021 the ARPA will offer further funding opportunities to expand broadband and technology outreach to Richmond.

Status: *Ongoing*

Strategy 3: Update the Integrated Library System to meet customer expectations for a user-friendly interface with the library's catalogue.

System-wide Update: January 2021 RPL completed the installation of the SIRSI ILS, SAAS environment and upgraded search interface. This provided an improved search interface on computers and mobile devices.

Status: *Ongoing*

Strategy 4: Redesign the library's website to provide easy access to information about the library and library services, usable on multiple devices.

System-wide Update: November 15, 2018, completely redesigned Library website launched. Compatible with all devices and many expanded services. In 2020, RPL migrated the ILS to an SAAS and upgraded the search interface to improve the RVALibrary.org. During the pandemic it became our 10th Branch in which we are able to directly communicate with users, distribute electronic resources, and enact virtual programs.

Status: *Ongoing*

Strategy 5: Collaborate with community partners to expand classes for the public in technology skills.

System-wide Update: Ongoing with partners like Coder Dojo, Code VA, AARP, and Senior Connection for computer training and assistance.

Status: *Ongoing*

Goal 3: Residents will have access in their communities to resources and information for lifelong learning in our community.

System-wide Update: Ongoing.

Status: *Ongoing*

Strategy 1: Consider establishment of a staff position dedicated to developing and managing partnerships to better serve customers and engage the community.

System-wide Update: Outreach Librarian resigned and took position in OCWB. Serves as information liaison for the Human Services portfolio. All LCSMs are taking a more active role in promoting the System. Especially the Main Library LCSM.

Status: *Stalled*

Strategy 2: Each branch library will develop a neighborhood-specific community action plan to address unique needs/interests of their customers.

System-wide Update: All Library locations have action plans or are developing plans. All are curating their resources and services to the communities they serve.

Status: *Ongoing*

Strategy 3: Communicate effectively what the library offers as a center of learning.

System-wide Update: New website, social media, development of a mascot, national library week, and other media activities have improved the overall communication strategy of the library to the community. Advertised in Style Weekly, and the quarterly Parks and Recreation Guide promotes library programs.

Status: *Ongoing*

- a. Develop a communications plan including resources needed and timeline for implementation.

System-wide Update: Communication Plan developed in 2016. RPL continues to implement tactics and strategies from the plan. Library Aware, a promotional communication platform, implemented allows librarians to effectively create and develop communication and program.

Status: *Ongoing*

- b. Develop new ways to connect to families and students (social media; presence at local events) to ensure opportunities for community input and engagement.

System-wide Update: During the pandemic RPL leveraged all electronic resources for communication and delivery of program and resources. Zoom allowed virtual events and programs. Electronic resources available through the website allowed RPL to reach users who were confined to their homes. Even Read-Up Richmond and a partnership with VCU Common book to promote community reading happened virtually.

Status: *Ongoing*

Strategy 4: Evaluate methods to provide workforce development support to meet community needs.

System-wide Update: Ongoing at every location access to the Internet and staff to assist patrons with tasks of communicating with prospective employers and employment tools. Strong partnership with OCWB to provide one-on-one job help.

Status: *Ongoing*

Strategy 5: Continue and expand Sunday afternoon library access.

System-wide Update: FY20, The COVID19 pandemic reduced the library budget by 9% in operations and personnel. A hiring freeze was activated. Sundays and late evening hours were cut due to lack of resources and manpower. As resources are restored, RPL will restore the hours that were reduced.

Status: *Stopped*

Goal 4: Richmond Public Library's structure and operations will be improved to increase efficiency and effectiveness.

System-wide Update: Ongoing

Status: Ongoing

Governance:

Strategy 1: Ensure the Library Board members, Library Foundation, Friends, and other support groups are trained in the full scope of their responsibilities and duties and how they interconnect.

System-wide Update: Developed a LBOT and Foundation member manuals that contain contact, location, City, policy and procedure, minutes, FOIA, advocacy, laws and general library information. It is available in paper and will be in electronic format.

Status: *Ongoing*

- a. The Library Board will review its own policies and procedures, to ensure clear understanding of expectations for the Library Director and Board accountability.

System-wide Update: Ongoing

Status: *Ongoing*

- b. The Library Board will review the alignment of responsibilities of the Foundation, Friends, and other related support groups.

System-wide Update: March of 2017 LBOT, Friends of the Library, and the RPL Foundation held a retreat that focused on strategy and alignment. A fall advance is planned for September 2021.

Status: *Ongoing*

- c. Create talking points about library activities for Board members to provide a consistent RPL message.

System-wide Update: Foundation Executive Director and Communications Team has developed an elevator speech trifold. Infographics are developed to summarize and demonstrate key statistics and actions during the year.

Status: *Ongoing*

- d. Each body should ensure that orientation is provided to new members.

System-wide Update: Complete / Ongoing

Status: *Ongoing*

- e. Research and evaluate the best structure for branch-specific advisory councils that reflect neighborhood leadership (civic organizations, schools, business associations), and establish these at each library.

System-wide Update: Limited success developing advisory councils at the Branch level. The LCSM is the primary point of contact and outreach through all channels in-person and electronically (social media channels NextDoor) and newsletters is successful. Formal group organization in monthly advisory council meetings has not provide sustainable.

Status: *Stalled*

- f. Develop a succession plan for membership for the Library Board, Library Foundation, and Friends of the Library.

System-wide Update: LBOT Governance Committee is focused on this strategy and reports on it monthly/quarterly as well as when there are vacancies.

Status: *Ongoing*

Staff:

Strategy 1: Complete development of the Library's READ (Respect, Engage, Anticipate, Deliver) Customer Service model.

System-wide Update: READ is a model that is used as well as other forms of professional development. Slack, leadership development, Niche Academy, COR, VLA membership for all staff members, conferences post COVID.

Status: *Ongoing*

Strategy 2: Develop an improved new employee orientation for all staff, and implement a regular schedule for this orientation.

System-wide Update: Administration is developing a Library specific onboarding for all new hires. Introduction and training for new employees is monthly. Cross-training is being implemented to allow staff to work at other locations to experience other library workflows and build networks with staff and the community.

Status: *Ongoing*

Strategy 3: Prioritize staff training to improve communications; customer service; technology and digital literacy; early literacy; and unified team approach to library operations.

System-wide Update: The City and the Library have announced they are a learning culture. IEE continues as well as conference attendance supported, team building is being supported across the system. Zoom and Slack have improved communication across the system.

Status: *Ongoing*

Strategy 4: Develop program-specific positions and structure to improve overall services and system-wide planning and supervision, to include children's services; adult services; technology; marketing and communications.

System-wide Update: Developed a program plan for 2019 for adult, juvenile, and teen system-wide. Meeting minutes and agendas are being communicated through staff leadership. Slack has become the primary platform in which all staff may communicate and share information, images, video, and discuss topics that are important to the day-to-day operations of the library.

Status: *Ongoing*

Goal 5: Library buildings will be designed and constructed to provide inviting and appropriate spaces to meet the future needs of Richmond's residents.

System-wide Update: Ongoing
Status: Ongoing

Strategy 1: Complete the renovation of all existing library buildings.

System-wide Update: In 2017 all branch libraries were renovated. May 2021 master planning for the Main Library began.
Status: Ongoing

Strategy 2: Develop and fund exterior repairs for the Main Library and for proposed changes to the Main Library to include teen space, training space, “makerspace” options, and any other future space needs.

System-wide Update: CIP 500231 and CIP 500273 funded to achieve this goal. Master Plan RFP is in process.
Status: Ongoing

Strategy 3: Participate in the City of Richmond Master Plan revision to incorporate library improvements into the City's Master Plan and obtain data relevant to determining priorities for Phase Two of the RPL Facility Master Plan for building expansion.

System-wide Update: The Main Library Master Plan will inform the FY23-FY28 COR CIP.
Status: Ongoing

Strategy 4: Evaluate the need for a complete master plan for the Main Library.

System-wide Update: The Main Library Master Plan is underway, May 2021.
Status: Ongoing