



DEFIANCE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

2026 – 2028 STRATEGIC PLAN

Mission Statement:

The Defiance Public Library System welcomes all and provides accessible books and other resources to its users. The Library System brings people together to learn about the past, present, and future.

Vision: To welcome all, open doors to learning, and build community.

Tagline: Read, Connect, Grow

SERVICE-AREA PRIORITIES

OPTIMIZE LIBRARY ASSETS

1. *Increase the use of digital and physical items*

- a. Train staff to use library databases and other digital resources when conducting a reference interview, including promotional material or instructional sheets.
- b. Create intentional, eye-catching displays featuring current events and upcoming programs.
- c. Practice consistent maintenance of collections so that they are up-to-date and relevant.
- d. Expand popular collections such as the Library of Things, children's graphic novels, etc.

2. *Make data-driven and feedback-based decisions*

- a. Evaluate and improve how the library collects post-event feedback from program attendees and how that data is used.
- b. Continue to collect monthly and annual statistics.

- c. Analyze the library data collected before making decisions about services, programming, and materials.
 - d. Continue to collect and review staff input when making managerial decisions.
3. ***Provide professional development and other opportunities to staff***
- a. Offer and occasionally require staff to participate in training related to their position.
 - b. Assign tasks optimizing staff interests/skills within the parameters of the CBA.
 - c. Create staff committees for professional development and to involve staff in providing proposed solutions to staff-raised issues.
4. ***Address space issues in the main library and branches***
- a. Create a plan for each building that would optimize current space.
 - b. Complete design and construction of library annex and renovation at DPL.
 - c. Evaluate branch space efficiency.

CREATE A WELCOMING SPACE

1. ***Cultivate a welcoming atmosphere***
- a. Staff greet people when they enter the room and/or approach staff for assistance.
 - b. Foster a sense of community among DPLS employees.
 - c. Ensure each building's public and staff spaces are attractive and comfortable.
2. ***Library spaces are clean, functional, and accessible for all***
- a. Analyze all library spaces to ensure they are used efficiently and are comfortable for both library staff and library users.
 - b. Evaluate cleaning services to ensure that they are doing their job.
 - c. Avoid visual and physical clutter in public spaces.
 - d. Review each building for accessibility issues.
3. ***Staff are friendly, approachable, and eager to connect the public with the information and resources they need***

- a. Train/coach staff on the skills needed in their position so that they are comfortable and confident while carrying out their jobs.
- b. Offer and occasionally require staff to attend training related to their position.
- c. Within the parameters of DPLS policy, job descriptions, and the Collective Bargaining Agreement, give staff opportunities to work on projects and tasks in which they are interested.

ENGAGE OUR COMMUNITIES

1. *DPLS libraries become valued sources of objective information*

- a. Ongoing training of staff who handle youth, teen, and adult reference questions on new information sources and new reference skills.
- b. Ensure the nonfiction collections have something for everyone, focusing on materials that are recommended by or have positive reviews from established, respected authorities within the library or topic field.
- c. Publicize professional services such as assistance in locating accurate information, assistance in researching topics, support when researching family histories, and more.

2. *Forge new community partnerships and invigorate old relationships*

- a. Continue to foster a closer relationship/partnership with Defiance College and other local education institutions.
- b. Partner with local government, schools, nonprofits, and businesses to provide programs or services to the community.
- c. Build respect for the library and promote an understanding of how the library benefits the community.

3. *Provide programming that is relevant to the community*

- a. Notice gaps in community services and work to fill them through programming and partnerships.
- b. Learn about community interests and offer programming around them.
- c. Collect patron feedback after programs, and track data on programs so staff can create future programming that appeals to the community.