

Geneva Public Library Strategic Plan: 2011-2016

Executive Summary

The Community Planning Committee (17 members), in three sessions, agreed that the top priority for the Library for the next five years is to focus its resources on creating, developing and encouraging readers of all ages: pre-school, school age and adult.

History

The Geneva Free Library was chartered as an association library by action of the Board of Regents on June 25, 1905 to serve the city and town of Geneva. In 1990 the library was designated as the Central Library of the Pioneer Library System and its then 41 member libraries in Ontario, Livingston, Wayne and Wyoming counties.

On November 15, 2005, the voters of the Geneva City School District passed a public library referendum to create the Geneva Public Library. On February 14, 2006, the Board of Regents granted an absolute charter as a school district public library to serve all of the residents of the Geneva City School District.

Funding of the Library

As a school district public library, the library receives funding through taxes from taxpayers in the Geneva City School District. Voters cast ballots to elect representatives to serve on the library's governing board, and to vote on the amount of tax to be collected. A seven member board of elected trustees governs the Geneva Public Library under New York State Education Law.

In 2010-11 taxes support approximately 53% of the operating budget. The library also receives Central Library funding (approximately 18% of the operating budget) from New York State as it is the designated Central Library of the Pioneer Library System. Additional funding comes from grants, bequests, gifts, memorials and fundraising.

Who We Serve

The Geneva City School District is one of nine districts in Ontario County. In 2009-10 the school district had 2210 students according to the State Education Department School Report Card released on February 5, 2011. 1004 (47%) were eligible for free lunch and 216 (10%) for reduced lunch. 96 students (4%) were limited English proficient. The student body was 62% white, 21% black and 15% Hispanic or Latino.

In the 2009-10 school year 88% of fourth graders met the basic standard in Grade 4 English Language Arts. At the secondary level in the 2006 cohort (students who entered

9th grade in 2006) 75% met the proficiency standards in English after 4 years of instruction.

The population of the city and town of Geneva is 16,557. The Chamber of Commerce lists Geneva's major employers as Finger Lakes Regional Health System, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva City School District, Guardian Industries, Zotos International and the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station.

Mission

The Geneva Public Library provides reliable information to visitors and residents of all ages in a prompt manner and in all formats and media;

- an atmosphere and programming that offers residents social and intellectual stimulation;
- an extensive collection, as well as access to the collections of other institutions, for individual research, group study and special interests; current books, magazines and other materials that meet the wide-ranging and eclectic demands of the general reader; and
- information about local cultural, architectural, economic, family, and natural history to researchers and residents.

Serving as Pioneer Library System's Central Library, we enhance the collections and services of area libraries for community members in Livingston, Ontario, Wayne and Wyoming Counties

Branding

The library contracted with the Rochester Ad Council in 2008 to develop branding for the library. The brand essence is "connecting people, enriching lives." The brand personality is "vibrant, dedicated, creative, welcoming, helpful, and knowledgeable." The brand promise is "Only the Geneva Public Library provides a welcoming and vibrant setting where people connect with expert guidance and free access to materials, programs and services that enrich lives in our diverse community."

Strategic Planning Process

In 2010, the library board contracted with the Ad Council to complete the Macmillan Matrix (Appendix 1) to examine programs and services in the context of diminishing resources and to identify opportunities for increased collaboration in the community. The completed matrix provided input for the strategic plan.

Using the Public Library Association's planning model, the Geneva Public Library began the process of updating its long range plan in the fall of 2010. The Library Board identified a group of community stakeholders and representatives to serve on a Planning Committee. With the help of an outside facilitator, the group met for the first time in

January 2011 in a 5 hour working session. Together the group envisioned an ideal future of the Geneva community, followed by an analysis of current conditions. They next outlined the needs of the community in order to achieve the vision and then focused on how library services might help by selecting service responses that best fit. Twelve responses were selected.

The facilitator reviewed the 12 service responses with the staff in two meetings during late January. Each response was analyzed in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, to assess the effect of these service priorities on existing services and programs.

The Library Board met twice (Jan. 26 and Feb. 3) to review and respond to a summary of the Planning Committee's selections along with staff reactions. The facilitator collected and shared these comments with the Planning Committee at its second meeting on February 12. In a four hour work session, committee members reviewed and discussed the full descriptions of each service response (as written in PLA's *Strategic Planning for Results, 2008*), the facilitator's report of combined reactions of staff and board, and selected the final service responses in priority order. These were presented to the Library Board at their Feb. 23 meeting for preliminary approval.

The Interim Library Director then met with staff to develop goals and objectives for each service response. Staff used the results of the Macmillan Matrix to help them develop objectives. The facilitator met with the Planning Committee for the final time on March 26, reviewed the goals, discussed and revised the overall draft plan. The draft plan was presented to the Library Board at its meeting on April 27 and adopted on May 18, 2011.

Long Range Planning Committee Members

Ed Blackwell
Deb Brown
Beth Eagleson
Susie Flick
Jane Gerling
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Jason Hagerman
Chuck Schading
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Board Liaison

Rita Reissig

Planning Coordinator

Beth Horn, MLS

Interim Library Director

Linda Nichols, MLS

Facilitator

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Community Needs & Community Vision

Who will Benefit and Result

Everyone

- will enjoy pride and a positive perception and image of Geneva that will encourage growth

- will enjoy a stable tax environment due to cost-effective and efficient local government
- will have access to an extensive, affordable, green public transit system to get to work, school, sports, entertainment, shopping and social services
- will be proud that Geneva High School is recognized as a School of Excellence
- will have pride in a thriving Lakefront that is strongly connected to downtown
- will enjoy bike lanes and pedestrian walkways that are accessible, inviting, well maintained and interconnected (with bike racks everywhere!)
- will have affordable and accessible high quality health care and will achieve low rates of obesity and diabetes; Geneva will be part of the “Healthy People 2020” program
- will value and use the Library and other cultural non-profits
- will value diversity and their shared community; friendly neighbors and neighborhoods
- will value and use parks, open spaces, community gardens

Families

- will have ample opportunities for parental & family involvement in the school system
- will have accessible resources to have healthy children in the home: physical, spiritual, emotional
- will bond thru parents and children reading together

Businesses

- will build on the area’s natural resources (ag, tourism, wineries) to expand the local economy
- will focus on attracting and keeping sustainable, zero waste industries to ensure excellent air, soil and water quality

Working people

- will find employment training and opportunities for all levels: skilled trades, blue collar, white collar, resulting in full employment

Organizations

- will form strong community partnerships with schools and other non-profits with institutions such as HWS, FLCC, Hospital, Ag Station

Children

- will value and have a love of reading
- will start school with reading readiness skills
- will have ample opportunities for artistic & creative development (performing arts, music)
- will have access to improved, supplemental education - mentoring
- will have an excellent city school education
- will feel optimistic about the future
- will enjoy safe streets

Children & Teens

- will not need free lunches as standard of living improves and Geneva’s poverty is reduced

Seniors

- will have affordable high quality adult living facilities for all income levels
- will have volunteer opportunities to use their skills and stay involved
- will have mentorship opportunities
- will use & contribute to the Community Center - vital part of Geneva

Seniors & Adults

- will have a large selection of programs to choose from: lifelong learning, nutrition, health, exercise, computer skills, literacy, ESL/SSL, parenting

Adults in 20s/30s & Newcomers

- will find programs and activities that appeal to their interests

Teens

- will feel optimistic about their future
- will find a strong connection between schools & library, teens involved in library
- will have 100% high school graduation rate
- will have 100% literacy rate
- will have lots of choices for activities & places to go on afternoons & weekends
- will have many post-secondary career/continuing education opportunities - feel confident about future economic status, aware & prepared
- will have access to an active program of family planning, resulting in zero teen pregnancies
- will have access to an active program of life skills/education for life: tolerance, empathy, citizen responsibility, conflict resolution, peer relations, finances, communication skills, parenting costs (such as child support)
- will have access to programs of after school/ homework help
- will be empowered to be effective citizens and parents

Goals and Objectives

In priority order, as recommended by the Community Planning Committee, Feb. 12, 2011.

Goal 1: Children, Teen, Adult and Family Literacy

A. Children from birth to sixth grade will have programs and services to help ensure that they will learn to read, write, listen and foster a life-long love of reading.

Objectives:

- Provide quarterly programs for preschool children to increase literacy and phonics awareness preparation with story times to outside agencies. By 2015 20% more preschoolers will have library cards.
- Continue collaboration with agencies to give a board book, library card information and literacy information to parents through the hospital maternity ward.
- Provide at least 5 bilingual programs by cooperating with local agencies by 2012
- Provide programs to train pre-school caregivers in nurturing early literacy techniques (such as Ready, Set, Read) with a 50% increase by 2015.

- Establish after school programs in cooperation with existing programs like America Reads at Trinity Church and Goodman St. for grade 1-5 Read Aloud.
- Provide quarterly programs targeted at 4-6th graders that emphasize the fun and enjoyment reading can bring.

B. Adults and teens will have the support they need to improve literacy skills in order to meet their personal goals and fulfill their responsibilities as parents, citizens and workers.

Objectives:

- Partner with Literacy Volunteers tutors to provide small group training to enhance teen literacy skills by 2014.
- By 2014 100% of Literacy Volunteer students will have a library card.
- Partner with FLCC and GHS to provide information to individuals interested in attaining a GED by 2015.
- Establish relationships with area high school librarians to share English department reading lists, discuss potential shared programming by 2012.
- Provide collection of high interest/low reading level books of at least 200 books for teens by 2014.
- Circulation of literacy materials will increase 10% annually.
- Circulation of adult non-fiction in targeted subject areas will increase 5% annually.

C. Residents will find materials to enhance their leisure time and explore topics of personal interest.

Objectives:

- Circulation of adult fiction in all formats (traditional and electronic) will increase 5 % annually.
- Develop online patron and staff reviews of favorite books, audios and movie recommendations by December 2012.
- Create teen blog where teens can post book reviews by December 2011. At least 20 reviews will be posted by the end of 2011.
- Partner with Geneva Reads for annual community read.
- By 2012, develop outreach to local book groups to:
 - share programming ideas
 - donate to kits
 - develop a list of contact persons which can be collected in a binder, kept at the circ desk and updated annually.

Goal 2: Understand how to find, evaluate and use information

A. Geneva Public Library will continue to serve as the Central Library for the Pioneer Library System. As such it will continue to receive state aid to provide services as outlined in state regulations and in concert with PLS.

Objectives:

- Annual surveys of Pioneer member libraries will show 90% satisfaction with GPL reference services (including OWWL2go assistance); 75% satisfaction with GPL non-fiction collection; 75% satisfaction with training sessions.
- By December 2011, analyze cost-effectiveness and local value of Ask Us 24/7.

B. Residents will have safe and welcoming physical spaces to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support networking.

Objectives:

- Purchase computers and software for second language learners by July 2012.
- Continue to provide Wii tournaments and use the Xbox 360 to provide quarterly video game nights for teens by 2012.
- Provide 2 cafe tables in teen room for study and socializing by 2014.
- 60% of the survey responders in 2015 will indicate that they have used the library as a comfortable public or virtual space.
- Number of people attending all library programming will increase by 10% annually.
- Add 3 hours of Sunday service by the end of 2013.

C. Residents will have high speed access to the digital world to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the resources available through the internet.

Objectives:

- Add more public computers for those without internet access by December 2011.
- Have 10/10 bandwidth speed in place by the end of 2011.
- Have a plan to continue activities when the PCC grant ends by the end of 2012.
- Focus on purchases of equipment and software for teens and children beginning in 2012. By 2013 the wait time to use computers will be less than five minutes.
- The number of people using library computers will increase 10% annually.
- The number of people using the library Wi-Fi will increase 20% annually.
- By 2014, 90% of survey responders will give staff excellent ratings for assistance received and courses taken.

D. Residents will have the skills to search for, locate, evaluate and effectively use information.

Objectives:

- Create and implement courses about the online catalog (OPAC) on the website to help patrons navigate online by December 2011. By 2014 70% of users will know how to use the OPAC and online resources.
- Create online resources (for example: YouTube) for patrons to use for online help to use e-books and audio book downloads by December 2011.
- The number of e-books and audio book downloads will increase by 15% by the end of 2012.
- Provide computers with Internet access, audible device and updated software for Children's Room by 2014.
- Provide tutorial demonstrations for children to use for instruction by 2012.

- The number of people attending one-on-one computer training will increase 20% by the end of 2013.
- The number of library card holders will increase by 5% annually.
- Offer a minimum of 3 internet courses per week by 2013.
- At least 100 people will attend courses on information literacy annually. 60% will indicate that they use the library resources to learn how to find, evaluate and use information.
- Provide at least 2 workshops annually on the Foundation Center resources: grant-writing, proposal writing and budgeting.

Goal 3: Cultural Awareness

A. Programs and services will promote appreciation and understanding of personal heritage and the heritage of others in the community.

Objectives:

- Work with local agencies to cosponsor annual heritage festival to learn about and appreciate other cultures by listening to music, seeing artifacts and eating ethnic food by 2012.
- Develop monthly displays in the library to showcase available materials for various cultural celebrations such as Chinese New Year, Black History Month, and Hispanic Heritage Week by 2013.
- Offer teen programs focusing on various cultures including cooking by 2012.
- Provide programs about cultures, holidays and celebrations incorporated into story time and provide information of history and origin of the celebration. Increase participation by 10% annually.
- Purchase additional materials in foreign languages, foreign language instruction and ESL by 2015. Circulation of multi-cultural materials will increase by 15%.
- Use of genealogy and family research/history databases will increase 25% by 2014.

B. New immigrants will have information on citizenship, English Language Learning and other topics that they need to participate in American life.

Objectives:

- Hire a Spanish speaking staff member by 2015
- Provide a weekly vocabulary word with its definition at the desk and on the website.
- Add signage in Spanish by 2012.
- Provide library card registration forms in Spanish by 2012.

Annual Review Process

The Board of Trustees will evaluate the Strategic Plan as part of the annual budget process.

- Establish objectives to be accomplished during the coming fiscal year, recognizing priorities and fiscal constraints.
- Assess progress in accomplishing objectives during the prior fiscal year.

- Maintain a dynamic planning process by adjusting objectives to reflect completed objectives and new projects.