LITERACY ● ENRICHMENT ● CONNECTION

MISSION

Mid-Columbia Libraries **empowers people**, **supports learning**, and **strengthens community** through literacy, enrichment, and connection.

VALUES

We believe:

- in our customers' right to privacy
- in open, equitable access to information

We embrace:

- diversity of people, ideas, and content
- innovation, optimism, creativity, and resourcefulness

We collaborate:

- with each other to achieve common goals
- with our community to meet their needs

We praise:

- staff openly and often for their hard work
- our community and partners for their ongoing support

QUALITY STANDARDS

- **Courtesy**
- **Expertise**
- **Inclusion**
- **Efficiency**

STRATEGIC FOCUS: LITERACY

Vision: All children in the Mid-Columbia region enjoy reading and read at or above current grade level.

Early Literacy: Children will have the resources, programs, and services designed to ensure they enter school ready to learn to read, write, and listen.

Children, Teen, And Family Literacy: Students and their families will have the resources, programs, and services to support their literacy skills in order to succeed in school and life.

The Need:

According to the 2022 Regional Community Needs Assessment, our service population believes readying children to enter school and improving reading skills for students is extremely important in Benton, Franklin, and Adams Counties.

- 65% of respondents ranked "Improving reading skills for kids and teens" as extremely important.
- 60% of respondents ranked "Early Literacy" services as extremely important.
- 57% of respondents ranked "Resources for Parents and Caregivers to Prepare Children for School" as extremely important.
- 55% of respondents ranked "Preparing Children Ages 0-5 for Kindergarten Readiness" as extremely important.

According to the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's 2022 state assessment of enrolled students within our service population:
- 61% of kindergarteners **are not ready** for Kindergarten
- 61% of students, Grades 3 through 12, **do not meet** State English Language Arts (ELA) standards

Our Commitment:
1. We will contribute to educational achievement by supporting student learning through stronger relationships with areas schools and ensuring the Library's programs, events, and outreach support Washington State K-12 ELA Learning Standards.
2. We will expand and strengthen the Library's role in supporting early literacy and school readiness by implementing programs, events, and outreach which align with Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines.
3. We will increase investments in collections and materials which support students' early literacy, school readiness, and ELA skills and fluency.
4. We will increase the amount and frequency of programs, events, and outreach which support students' early literacy, school readiness, and ELA skills and fluency.

Measuring Success in the Mid-Columbia region:

1. Each year, at least 18,000 children, ages birth through eleven, will participate in library-sponsored literacy programs and events at library locations.
2. Each year, at least 15,000 children, ages six through eleven, will interact with library staff at a literacy program, presentation, or informational table at non-library locations.
3. Each year, at least 2,500 children, ages birth through five, will attend early literacy programs or presentations at non-library locations.
4. Checkouts of children's materials will increase at least 10% each year.
5. Checkouts of young adult materials will increase at least 10% each year.
6. By 2027, 90% of parents, caregivers, and educational providers surveyed will agree and/or strongly agree their library plays an important role in:
   o Helping their child(ren) enter school ready to learn
   o Helping their student(s) read more, enjoy reading, and be more confident in their reading
   o Supporting the learning and development their student(s)
   o Providing excellent resources for students and their families

STRATEGIC FOCUS: ENRICHMENT

Vision: All community members enjoy easy, dependable access to library content and resources to stimulate their imaginations and satisfy their curiosity.

Reading, Viewing, and Listening for Pleasure: Community members who want content to enhance their leisure time will find what they want, when and where they want it, and will have the help they need to make choices from among the options.

Lifelong Learning: Community members will have the desired resources to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives.

The Need:
According to the 2022 Regional Community Needs Assessment, our region overwhelmingly values access to library materials for personal enjoyment:

▪ 79% of respondents ranked "Reading Books for Enjoyment" as their primary reason to use their library.
▪ 58% of respondents ranked "Access to Physical Materials (Books, Audiobooks, DVDS, and Magazines)" as extremely important.
▪ 53% of respondents ranked "Access to Digital Materials (eBooks, Audiobooks, Streaming Video and Digital Magazines)" as extremely important.

According to Chow and Tian's 2021 study *Public Libraries Positively Impact Quality of Life: A Big Data Study*, "…The higher a county's per capita print circulation and per capita library visits are, the higher

that county's quality of life will be across the six measures used. This supports what we already expected: good things happen when a community supports and uses its library."

Our Commitment:
1. We will support the public's interests in reading, viewing, and listening for enjoyment by continuing to invest in popular, high-demand, and high-interest authors, titles, and subjects.
2. We will strengthen the library's infrastructure, including points of service and delivery, to improve access to and ease of use for physical materials.
3. We will increase the amount and frequency of off-site events and outreach to strengthen the library's community engagement across the region.
4. We will increase the amount and frequency of in-branch programs, events, and exhibits to support our community's learning and recreational needs.

Measuring Success in the Mid-Columbia region:
1. By 2027, households with active library accounts will grow by 30%.
2. Checkouts of adult collection materials will increase at least 10% each year.
3. Each year, at least 5,000 teens and adults will participate in a library-sponsored program, event, exhibit, or festival at library locations.
4. Each year, at least 10,000 teens and adults will interact with library staff at a program, event, exhibit, or festival at non-library locations.
5. By 2027, 90% of community members surveyed will agree and/or strongly agree their library plays an important role in:
   o Enhancing reading, viewing, and listening for pleasure
   o Enhancing lifelong learning
   o Providing books and content they want in an accessible and timely manner

STRATEGIC FOCUS: CONNECTION

Vision: All community members are connected to local community resources and the greater digital world in ways that meet their needs.

Community Resources and Services: Community members will have a central source for information about the wide variety of programs, services, and activities provided by our communities' agencies and organizations.

Public Internet Access: Community members will have high-speed, reliable access to the digital world to ensure everyone can benefit from the ever-growing resources and services available through the Internet.

The Need:

Our region believes improving access to basic needs, such as healthcare and housing, is extremely important in Benton, Franklin, and Adams Counties. According to the 2022 Regional Community Needs Assessment:

- 66% of respondents ranked "Access to Timely Mental and Behavioral Healthcare" as extremely important.
- 66% of respondents ranked "Safe Public Spaces and Recreational Areas" as extremely important.
- 61% of respondents ranked "Access to Timely, Quality Healthcare" as extremely important.
- 57% of respondents ranked "Access to Affordable Housing" as extremely important.
- 55% of respondents ranked "Access to Quality Childcare" as extremely important.

In the most recent findings from Pew Research Center:

- 23% of adults in America say they do not have a broadband connection at home, ranging from 21% of households in suburban communities to 28% of households in rural communities.
- 35% adults in America of Hispanic descent reported not having a broadband connection at home.

Our Commitment:

1. We will contribute to improving access and awareness of providers supporting community needs through stronger relationships with public agencies and non-profits.
2. We will expand and strengthen the Library's support of access and awareness of community resources, through promotion and resource sharing, both in branches and off-site. We will support the needs of residents seeking information and resources to meet their needs through referrals and connecting residents to public and non-profit service providers.
3. We will contribute to improving internet connectivity across our region by actively participating and partnering with public efforts to expand broadband.

Measuring Success in the Mid-Columbia region:

1. By 2027, Mid-Columbia Libraries will actively develop at least 75 partnerships to connect the public with the individuals, organizations, and resources to better support and meet identified community needs.
2. By 2027, Mid-Columbia Libraries will host or participate in at least 200 partner events and/or programs annually to connect the public with the individuals, organizations, and resources to better support and meet identified community needs.
3. By 2027, 90% of community members and partners surveyed will agree and/or strongly agree their library plays an important role in:
     - Connecting individuals with services that meet their needs
     - Helping them feel connected to their community
     - Highlighting diverse community services
     - Providing quality public internet access and WiFi connectivity

ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETENCIES

Communication

a. Mid-Columbia Libraries will develop processes and tools for effective internal communication to bridge communication gaps and create solution pathways.
b. Mid-Columbia Libraries will create criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of marketing and public relations activities and their focus on the priorities of the strategic plan.
c. Mid-Columbia Libraries will produce content about its services and policies in languages used by community members.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

a. Mid-Columbia Libraries will prioritize diversity and inclusion in the implementation of the library strategic plan.
b. Mid-Columbia Libraries will identify, develop, and implement initiatives, services, and business practices to create a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization.
c. Mid-Columbia Libraries will create an equity and social justice statement.

Finance

a. Mid-Columbia Libraries will establish a process for the allocation and reallocation of library funds in accordance with the operational and capital priorities of the strategic plan.

Fundraising

a. Mid-Columbia Libraries will create a fundraising plan directed toward the priorities of the strategic plan.

Organizational Structure

a. Mid-Columbia Libraries will develop organizational, team, and committee structures and will define roles and responsibilities to support the delivery of services envisioned by new strategic goals, objectives, and priorities.
b. Mid-Columbia Libraries will develop a matrix for empowered decision making by all staff.

Measurement and Evaluation

a. Mid-Columbia Libraries will develop a comprehensive list of data elements collected by staff and how those data elements are used, measured, and evaluated.
b. Mid-Columbia Libraries will develop a plan to collect all the data needed to evaluate and report regularly on progress on the objectives identified in the strategic plan.

Partnerships

a. Mid-Columbia Libraries will develop and maintain a comprehensive, strategically focused, and accurate list of all organizations and agencies with which it has formal and informal partnerships.
b. Mid-Columbia Libraries will create a clear process to determine whether or not to partner with an organization or agency and in the evaluation of assessing existing partnerships.
c. Mid-Columbia Libraries will forge relationships with and seek the participation of marginalized and underrepresented communities.

Policies

a. Mid-Columbia Libraries will evaluate library policies, procedures, and guidelines for adjustments and edits to support DEI efforts and the new goals and objectives of the strategic plan.
b. Mid-Columbia Libraries will develop a regular policy review process and timeline.

Training and Staff Development

a. Mid-Columbia Libraries will create a training structure and plan to support the training and development of staff in the strategic focus areas of Literacy, Enrichment, and Connection and their corresponding activities.
b. Mid-Columbia Libraries will develop initiatives to support relationship building and the Healthy Workplace Policy.
c. Mid-Columbia Libraries will develop a comprehensive continuing education plan to address the needs of all staff in all classifications.
d. Mid-Columbia Libraries will develop definitions, examples, and trainings on the external and internal expressions of the Quality Standards and Core Values of Librarianship.
e. Mid-Columbia Libraries will require Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training for MCL staff, administrators, Board of Trustees, and Friends of the Library volunteers.
f. Mid-Columbia Libraries will develop information about service priorities and the library's strategic plan and incorporate these into its new employee orientation.