

Oconee County Libraries Athens Regional Library System STRATEGIC PLAN 2013 - 2018

General Introduction

The Oconee County Libraries have a distinguished history of service to the people of Oconee County, as demonstrated by consistent praise and support from the community. Of particular interest to Oconee County citizens is the influence of the Libraries in the lives of young people. According to the last Census, more than 30% of Oconee County's population is under the age of 20. To maintain these high levels of service and satisfaction, to continue to serve the educational interests of Oconee County's young population, and to focus available resources in the most effective way, the Oconee County Library Board of Trustees and the Library administration and staff uses the strategic planning process to identify library service needs for the community and to determine resultant Service Responses, goals, objectives and activities. With the influx and influence of new business and industry, Oconee County continues to grow and change. The official population estimate of the county grew from 32,808 in 2010 to 33,619 in 2012. Library planning is an ongoing process and should be undertaken at least every three to five years. This document is the result of the Oconee County Public Libraries' most recent planning process.

Oconee County Libraries

Oconee County's public libraries are valued by citizens and are becoming busier as the area population increases. Current staffing levels have reached maximum effectiveness. All materials checkouts, especially books loaned and borrowed through the PINES system, continue to rise. The libraries' children's collections and programs are extremely popular and well-received.

Library Facilities

Oconee County library patrons are served by the Oconee County Library in Watkinsville and the Bogart Branch in Bogart. The current Oconee County Library was built in 1975 and was expanded, first in 1987 and again in 1997, to its present size: 17,500 square feet. The Bogart Branch was built in 1997 and is 3,700 square feet in size. A space needs assessment for this facility is appended.

Information Technology

The Oconee County Library in Watkinsville has 34 computers for public access with high speed Internet access, plus 11 staff computers and one computer with scanner to read and print microfilm. The Bogart Library has 10 computers for public access with Internet access, plus 3 staff computers. The combined total in Oconee County Libraries is 59 computers. Both libraries have AWE Early Literacy Stations for young children, and both provide access to an online educational software service for children that is available in house and from home (Tumblebooks). Both libraries have WiFi Internet access (provided 24/7), printers, and photocopiers available to public. Our website provides access to the PINES online consortia catalog, calendars of library activities, guides to Internet resources and databases, readers advisory assistance, access to an online learning program for adults, and social media sites targeted to three age levels of patron interest.

Youth Services

Based on community needs, our libraries make service to youth a high priority, including children's service to ages birth through age 11, and also young adult service to ages 11 – 18. Programs include weekly storytimes at both libraries, infant and toddler storytimes, Read To Rover literacy programs, and programs scheduled for weekends, school breaks, afterschool, evening teen programs, and curriculum-based literary storytelling

programs provided as outreach to county schools, both public and private. Annually the Summer Reading Program is offered to children, teens, and adults. Thousands of children and families participate.

Collections

The Oconee County Libraries provide a wide range of materials in numerous popular formats: print books, books on CD, DVDs, music CDs, e-books and audiobooks in downloadable format, online resources, magazines, local newspapers, Ivy Room genealogy and Georgia collection, Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites passes, Zoo Atlanta passes, Center for the Puppetry Arts passes, EZ Kilowatt meters, Go Fish Education Center passes, and e-devices.

Administration

Oconee County Libraries is part of the Athens Regional Library System. A twelve member Board of Trustees, made up of representatives appointed by the libraries' funding agencies in Oconee County, advises the libraries on planning, finance, local services, and library advocacy. Three representatives from the Oconee County Library Board of Trustees serve as voting members of the Athens Regional Library System Board of Trustees, which maintains ultimate responsibility for Regional Library policies.

Planning Process

The Planning Team considered community input, reviewed the Oconee County Joint Comprehensive Plan (available online at <http://www.oconeecounty.com>), and used SWOT analysis to examine perceived community strengths, weaknesses and concerns. Using the Public Library Association's *Strategic Planning for Results*, the Committee developed a new mission statement for the Libraries and selected four service responses as the focus for Oconee County Libraries during the next five years. All Oconee County Library staff members then worked on teams for developing goals, objectives and activities for each service response.

Planning Team

Brian Hawkins, Oconee County Library Board Chairperson
Janet Stratton, Trustee
Debbie Wagner, Trustee
Robert Wyatt, Trustee
Kathryn Ames, ARLS Director
Jackie Elsner, Oconee County Librarian
Donna Brumby, ARLS Assistant Director for Regional Services

The Oconee County Vision Statement, Board of Commissioners

“Our vision for Oconee County is a diverse community where life takes on a balanced pace with rural, suburban and small town lifestyles, where an excellent education system, high tech economic opportunities, agricultural activities and open space are highly valued. In order to maintain this identity we must proactively plan for a sustainable future of natural resource protection, historic preservation, quality services, a balanced tax base and appropriate infrastructure.”

Library Mission Statement, Oconee County Library Board

The Oconee County Libraries stimulate imagination, foster educational growth and improvement, and provide dynamic access to resources and programs.

2013 Oconee County Library Board of Trustees

- Susan Brodrick, vice-chairman
- Phillip Brown
- Adam Cain
- Deann Craft
- Scott Gordon
- Kasey Gray-Moore
- Patricia Hallow
- Brian Hawkins, chairman
- Kelly Holt, secretary
- Penny Mills
- Debbie Wagner
- Robert Wyatt

Oconee County Libraries

- **Oconee County Library**
1080 Experiment Station Road
Watkinsville, GA 30677
<http://www.athenslibrary.org/oconee>
- **Bogart Branch Library**
200 South Burson Avenue
Bogart, GA 30622
<http://www.athenslibrary.org/bogart>

**Oconee County Libraries
Athens Regional Library System
STRATEGIC PLAN 2013 - 2018**

Focus Area: Create Young Readers: Early Literacy					
Goal 1: Children from birth to age five will have programs and services designed to ensure that they will enter school ready to learn to read, write and listen.					
	Objectives	Possible Strategies	Performance Measures	Who Leads	By When
1.1	By June 30, 2015, and each year thereafter, 75% of parents of children entering kindergarten will say that library programs and services made a difference in their child's school readiness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue strong programming and materials collection for this age group, incorporating statewide curriculum and GPLS guidelines • Focus on extending services to those families who are most at-risk; strengthen existing partnerships/develop new partnerships for serving this group as appropriate • Train parents and child care providers in early literacy skills • Experiment with evening and weekend programs to make them more accessible to working parents • Provide themed kits with collection of books and other materials for parents and caregivers to use with their children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of programs • program attendance • Survey of participants • # of checkout of materials for this age group and for their caregivers 	County Librarian; Children's Specialist; Bogart Supervisor	
1.2	By June 30, 2016, 500 people will use the library's online resources designed to help them support preschool children in age-appropriate learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with other ARLS children's departments to develop online storytimes (model: Calgary Public Library's Storytime Anytime) • Adapt (or get permission to use) the Calgary Public Library videos that educate parents in using activities in the domains of early learning • Continue to provide and promote libraries' online resources for preschoolers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of resources produced • # of uses of each resource • survey online users to determine their satisfaction, incorporate recommendations 	County Librarian; Children's Specialist; Bogart Supervisor	

1.3	By June 30, 2016, 2000 children will have been served with programming provided off-site by the library.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach to low-income daycares, Head Start, etc. • Ensure that services are not just concentrated in the library buildings; take them 'on the road' to other sites such as low-income daycares, DFACS, Early Head Start • PR to county agencies who serve families in need • Explore the use of skilled volunteers/interns to promote libraries' programming and services for preschoolers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance counts at off-site events • # of volunteers involved in off-site/outreach programming 	County Librarian; Children's Specialist; Bogart Supervisor	
1.4	Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess needs for additional or upgraded facilities • Assess electrical and furnishing needs in both facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor traditional metrics to help identify areas of need (library use, population trends, etc.) • Feasibility study scheduled or conducted for potential sites or site upgrades 	Library Director & Assistant Director; County Librarian	
<p>Potential Partners for Focus Area #1: Georgia Club Foundation; Oconee Farmers Market; ACTS Food Bank; DFACS; Head Start; Gainesville State College; UGA; Oconee School District; day-care providers; pediatricians; Friends of the Library groups</p>					

Focus Area: Stimulate Imagination: Reading, Viewing and Listening for Pleasure

Goal 2: Residents will have materials and programs that excite their imaginations and provide pleasurable reading, viewing and listening experiences.

	Objectives	Possible Strategies	Performance Measures	Who Leads	By When
2.1	During each year of the plan, circulation of materials from the Oconee County Libraries will increase 3%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased access to e-resources and e-devices Online reading club Coordinate deposit collections at local gathering places (such as Oconee Senior Center and Family Life Enrichment Center) One Genre/One Community Book Event Train all public services staff to provide reader's advisory service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulation statistics 	County Librarian; ARLS Assistant Director	
2.2	By June 30, 2015, and each year thereafter, 13,000 people will attend educational, civic, and cultural events held at the Oconee County Libraries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with elected officials and community organizations to hold their events in the library's neutral space Ensure that programs and events are accessible (time of day, online) Explore need for full-time Adult Services Specialist position Ensure programs and events reflect the community's diverse interests Gaming tournaments Develop partnerships with community organizations to provide lifelong learning opportunities and programs for children, teens and adults Author events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of events Attendance # of partners 	County Librarian; Adult Specialist; Bogart Supervisor	

2.3	During each year of the plan, the number of registered borrowers with active library cards will increase by 500.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take handhelds to events and register people for PINES cards offsite • Offer an incentive to people who use their cards within a specified period, partnering with local businesses • Prepare and distribute small flyer listing benefits of library card to those who register offsite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of new registrants 	County Librarian; Assistant Branch Manager; Bogart Supervisor	
2.4	During each year of the plan, the number of patrons accessing the library's social media sources will increase by 2%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media • Local newspaper column 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of Facebook friends and posts 	County Librarian; Bogart Supervisor; Children's, Teen & Adult Specialists	
<p>Potential Partners for Focus Area #2: Friends of the Bogart Library; Oconee Library Friends; <i>Oconee Enterprise</i>; <i>Oconee Magazine</i>; <i>Oconee Leader</i>; <i>Southern Distinction</i>; Senior Center; local book and music stores; other libraries (sister libraries); Family Life Enrichment Center; Chamber of Commerce; authors; book clubs; comic book and gaming stores; theatre groups; school clubs</p>					

Focus Area: Connect to the Online World: Public Internet Access

Goal 3: Residents will have high-speed access to the digital world, with no unnecessary restrictions or fees, to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources and services available through the Internet.

	Objectives	Possible Strategies	Performance Measures	Who Leads	By When
3.1	Each year of the plan, 60% of public surveyed will state they have sufficient access to public library equipment and network infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase bandwidth • Scanner at Bogart • E-devices available for check-out • E-reader terminal • Camera card reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of people who use library-provided computers to access the Internet • # of people to use the wireless connectivity provided by the library • # of checkout of e-devices • E-device satisfaction survey • % of time public access computers are in use 	County Librarian; Computer Specialist	
3.2	By June 30, 2015, and each year afterward, 100 people will participate in library-provided computer and other electronic resources training sessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey public re computer needs • Public computer use training, especially more training sessions offered at Bogart Branch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of people who participate in public computer use training sessions • Survey • # of patrons who report that they learned at least two new skills in basic computer classes 	County Librarian; Computer Specialist; Adult Specialist	
3.3	By June 30, 2015, 90% of staff will say they have access to the training they need to do their jobs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff training (computer hardware and software; e-materials and e-devices), including time for virtual training sessions and events • Formalized staff development plans incorporating needs assessment, minimum standards and proposed training schedules • Develop learning philosophy that articulates both organizational and staff responsibilities for continuous learning and teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey staff • # of activities provided • # of staff participating 	County Librarian; Assistant Branch Manager; Assistant Director	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team approach to staff development 			
3.4	By June 30, 2015, 20 people will have participated in off-site computer and/or electronic resource training sessions offered by the library.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use mobile lab to take computer access and training into centers of population in Oconee County that are not close to a library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of participants • Satisfaction survey 	County Librarian; Computer Specialist; Assistant Director	
Potential Partners for Focus Area #3: University students; Goodwill; local businesses; Chamber of Commerce					

Focus Area: Understand How to Find, Evaluate and Use Information and Succeed in Education

Goal 4: Residents, especially students, will know when they need information to resolve an issue, answer a question or succeed in school and will have the skills to search for, locate, evaluate and effectively use information to meet their needs.

	Objectives	Possible Strategies	Performance Measures	Who Leads	By When
4.1	During each year of the plan, 75% residents surveyed will say that the library’s learning resources for parents, teachers, and students of all ages contributed to meeting personal educational goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public computer resource training (job search; GALILEO; genealogy resources; software) • Provide information literacy classes such as learning how to use databases, search the Internet, and to find, evaluate, and use subject- related information in areas such as health, travel, personal finance, and retirement • Establish a system for booking appointments for research assistance, one-on-one internet training, and one-on-one database training with library staff • Offer “Homeschool @ Your Library Orientation” sessions for homeschool educators • Increase summer reading participation for all ages (online registration, programs, off-site programs, etc.) • Strengthen elementary school partnerships—create online curriculum-based pathfinders, staff participation in a school-based literacy group • Assess library program offerings for school-aged children and make adjustments in time and content to meet community needs • Develop and maintain a homework help webpage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys • Class attendance (noting trends) • # of logins/accesses of GALILEO and libraries’ webpages • # of people who indicate on a survey that they use the library to help them with homework • Non-fiction circulation statistics 	County Librarian; Bogart Supervisor; Children’s & Teen Specialists	
4.2	By June 30, 2015, 75% of those surveyed will say the library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase and promote study skills materials • Focus acquisitions on curriculum-related materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of educational materials checked out 	County Librarian;	

	provided access to educational materials and resources valuable for educational achievement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate and update libraries' book collections, particularly those focused on homework support, to ensure access to useful educational resources Provide space for homework help/tutoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of times study rooms are used for homework/tutoring 	Assistant Director; Children's & Teen Specialists	
4.3	During each year of the plan, 50 people will say they have heard that the library provides specific targeted services (such as downloadable books and audio, online resources, assistance to job-seekers, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing and promotion of online resources via traditional and social media channels Increase public awareness of the library as the first resource for information Build awareness of library services throughout the county Make presentations about the library in local schools and to local organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey question on customer survey Periodic single questions on library website/media partner's website; add to a login screen in library # of outside presentations made 	County Librarian; Assistant Branch Manager; Bogart Supervisor	
Potential Partners for Focus Area #4: Oconee County Schools; homeschooling parents and organizations; parent-teacher organizations; public and private school media specialists;					