

'24-26 Strategic Plan



Information Ideas Excitement!

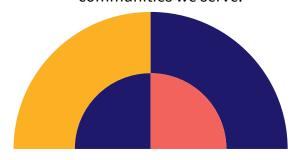
Overview

Our Approach

At Kent District Library (KDL), strategic planning is not just a static document; it's a compass guiding our organization's path while keeping us agile and responsive year after year. It defines who we are, where we aspire to go, and how we intend to get there.

Our strategic plan illuminates our unwavering commitment to our purpose, "We exist to further all people," and paints a vivid picture of our future through a visionary lens, capturing what KDL aspires to focus on in the next 3 years.

This guide not only articulates our **core values, purpose** and **vision** but also charts
our **3-year overarching goals**, paving the
way for concrete & achievable **annual initiatives** that bring us closer to realizing
our overarching vision. As we embrace this
strategic plan, it becomes a dynamic
framework that provides clear and agreed
upon focal points for the next 3 years while
allowing us the flexibility to adapt and
innovate, allocate resources judiciously, and
pursue a future where KDL continues to
flourish, inspire, and empower the
communities we serve.



How do we determine our focal points?

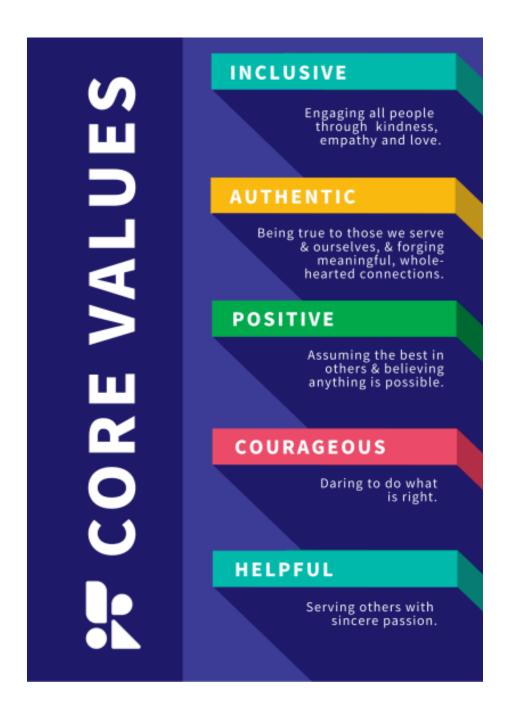
- Surveying & actively listening to patrons and partners
- Monitoring & analyzing our key performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Inter and intra-industry trend research
- SWOT Analyses
- Projects proposed by staff, managers and leadership team - great ideas come from all over the organization!

How do we engage staff?

Engaging our dedicated staff in the strategic planning process is a fundamental cornerstone of KDL's approach. We firmly believe that our employees, with their passion and commitment, are the driving force behind our success. To cascade the strategic plan down to all levels of the organization, we employ a collaborative, and inclusive approach that ensures every staff member is not only informed but also actively participates in bringing our vision to life. Our strategic plan is designed to be more than just a high-level document; it's a blueprint that empowers each team member to see their role in achieving our collective goals.

Who We Are

Kent District Library (KDL) is more than just a 5-star library system; we are a dynamic community catalyst committed to serving the diverse and unique needs of the communitites our 20 branches and bookmobile serve. Our strength lies in our ability to embrace the individuality of each community: we listen, adapt, and innovate, ensuring that our systemwide planning efforts are tailored to meet the distinctive aspirations, preferences, and challenges of our patrons.



Core Values

Values reflect who we are and what we stand for.
Core values are the characteristics we must exhibit to achieve our collective strategic goals.

Purpose

We exist to further **all** people.

Vision

KDL will be an indispensable community resource for enriching lives through access to personal discovery for all.

Pillars + Goals

Pillars are our easy-to-remember focal point or "buckets" that encompass our 3-year goals. Our 3-year goals bring us closer to fulfilling our purpose and give the organization focus and direction in a world of many competing ideas and limited resources.

Strengthening Community

Celebrate distinctive communities by prioritizing meaningful partnerships and patron relationships, finding commonalties with our neighbors, and intentionally connecting resources.

Technology

Proactively explore evolutions in the ever-changing technological landscape to optimize resources, enhance services, and embrace education on adoption.

Core Programming

Strategically focus efforts on defining and providing exciting, valuable core programming that gives people access to experience and invites further exploration of KDL's services and spaces.



How do we achieve our overarching 3-year goals? By creating 1-3 concrete annual initiatives for each overarching goal and by setting our project teams and leaders up for success with clear project parameters like team, timeline, scope, budget, success metrics, and progress reporting. We strategically divvy up workload and leadership opportunities, and focus on support and follow through. We deliver on our commitments to our communities.

Strengthening Community

Evaluate community partnerships by accessing data to establish reciprocity and shared goals, develop a partnership intake process and prioritize relationships and partnerships at the branch and system levels to reveal where there may be gaps or overlaps. Create "Who Is My Community" sheet & map for each branch so key partnerships are highlighted and communicated.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	ОСТ	NOV	DEC

Assess each in-branch experience to optimize engagement opportunities and to encourage gathering as well as one-on-one engagement between patrons, and between staff and patrons. Find ways to make the branch a destination.

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Technology

Get acquainted with the eSport and gaming community to better understand where the library is best positioned to take steps toward providing access as well as creating opportunity regarding gaming educational curriculum, programming, and spaces to accommodate. Develop a testing lab at the KDL Service Center and determine where the first eSports branch lab will be.

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Invest in technologies to further streamline operational processes to reallocate staff time to better serve and connect with patrons. Conduct a time study and create a detailed time reallocation plan to ensure systemwide priorities remain aligned.

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Core Programming

Hold a galvanizing community read program (On the Same Page) program to engage current patrons and, more importantly, attract new people in our service area to KDL with all the library has to offer. In addition, focus on events that are guaranteed to bring our community together and find commonalities.

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Revamp the Mission Read program or create a replacement school aged program to address third grade reading deficits. Focus on creating a timely, achievable, and sustainable program to go in effect fall 2024. Leverage and strengthen school partnerships and market to students who are especially vulnerable.

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Develop a comprehensive school outreach menu for branches, showcasing various ways to partner and collaborate with teachers and students.

Establish clear boundaries for staff prep time and designate specific months for focused outreach efforts. This initiative aims to engage students and educators effectively while respecting the unique dynamics of each partnership.

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Technology

Strengthen and promote technology instruction in the library by ensuring staff have the training and equipment to assist patrons on the desk, and in one on one sessions with emerging technologies, like AI. Evaluate tech tutoring to create clarity around offerings and align efforts with the Michigan Digital Equity Strategy to tackle the expanding digital divide.

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Collect and reflect on the eGaming lab data from KDL's 3 branches. Expand eSports as patron interest supports, evolving usage from open play to formal team engagement and creation, while integrating eGaming as a central STEAM component for next summer's programming to enhance educational and career opportunities for public and homeschool students.

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Core Programming

Develop a clear framework and timeline for cross-promotion and invite-back strategies within our programs to enhance visibility and engagement, and to maximize the reach and impact of our services across all branches. Establish guidelines to streamline promotional efforts and ensure consistent messaging.

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Define and establish pathways for core programs, ensuring structured development and implementation. Create a schedule to regularly reassess and refine each core program. This initiative aims to maintain program relevance, ownership and effectiveness over time.

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Strengthening Community

Assess food insecurity trends across Kent County using current ALICE (asset limited income constrained employed) and other demographic data, public health reports, and community partner insights. Based on findings, create an integrated food model for at least three branches/and or bookmobile serving high-need populations and leverage KDL's reach for partners doing this work. Identify and secure at least one sustainable funding stream (e.g., community foundation grant, local sponsorship, or annual giving campaign) per branch to support ongoing food supply.

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Launch a Community Memory Project hosted on KDL.org, including both a public submission portal and a browsable digital archive that captures the stories, images, and histories of Kent County residents. Facilitate 4 to 6 storytelling workshops in partnership with local organizations (both in branch and in the community) to encourage community participation. By the end of year one, curate and publish a featured selection of submitted stories to showcase the depth and diversity of lived experiences across the county.

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Technology

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Evaluate the library's primary hardware needs by assessing the laptop distribution and public PC refresh schedule, POS system, people counters, and scanner/copier/printers to ensure efficiency, reliability, and alignment with patron and staff needs. Findings will guide a prioritized roadmap for future hardware investments

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Core Programming

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Launch a three-branch pilot to test activities and layouts that maximize space and engagement while requiring minimal staff involvement, using the results to shape a long-term strategy for systemwide implementation.

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