

# The Chemung County Library District (CCLD) Strategic Plan 2013-2018

## I. Background.

As the Strategic Plan for 2008-2012 nears the end of its life cycle, the patrons, board and staff of the Chemung County Library District must set directions for the improvement of the district and the library services it provides for members of the community. What should library service in Chemung County look like in the future? What roles will the library play in the constantly changing environment of information delivery and technological advances? What can and must be done to provide access to knowledge, information, and entertainment for the residents of a multicultural and economically diverse population? Is there a digital divide that when added to other economic and cultural realities, creates new opportunities for library service?

It is with these questions in mind that we revisited and revised our plan of service for the future. Like many of our contemporaries, the District realized the need to focus attention on creating a long-term plan of service that would make the district an essential part of county life.

## II. Library Mission.

It is the mission of the Chemung County Library District to provide exceptional public library services and programs to our citizens – fulfilling their individual needs for educational, recreational, and cultural information – through contemporary, well-maintained library collections and facilities located throughout Chemung County.

The Chemung County Library District is comprised of neighborhood libraries in Big Flats, Elmira, Horseheads, Van Etten, and West Elmira. The Bookmobile constitutes a mobile neighborhood library. Taken together, the collections of our libraries serve patrons who reside throughout Chemung County who seek both popular works and in-depth information on many subjects, in many formats, of current and historical interest. Electronically delivered library services available through the Library District's web page – [www.cclid.lib.ny.us](http://www.cclid.lib.ny.us) -- are becoming more important; for some segments of the population, electronic access may already be their primary avenue to information.

## III. Guiding Principles.

**Support intellectual freedom.** The Chemung County Library District enables all individuals in our community to exercise their right to access constitutionally protected information. The library upholds and supports the Library Bill of Rights.

**Promote literacy and a love of reading.** Recognizing the vital importance of reading to open doors and expand horizons, the District strives to support every patron in becoming a lifelong reader.

**Protect confidentiality of patron records.** The District respects the confidentiality of our patrons' requests for information, the online sites they access, and their borrowing history.

**Respect and embrace the entire community.** We celebrate Chemung County's diversity and strive to ensure that all people feel welcome in our libraries. We strive to meet the

needs and expectations of every patron. The CCLD actively supports efforts that combat prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination.

**Foster a healthy democracy.** The District is committed to building an informed community, and providing neutral ground where participation in civic life is open to all.

**Support children and youth.** We strive to join parents, educators and young people in helping to raise thoughtful readers and citizens. We recognize the priority of efforts to close educational achievement gaps.

**Form strong partnerships.** The District extends its reach and impact in the community through partnerships with individuals, public and nonprofit agencies, community groups, educators and businesses.

**Adapt and innovate.** To stay relevant to patrons' changing needs and interests, we continuously adapt what we do and how we do it. We are a learning organization and invest in our staff, technology, and infrastructure to improve service.

#### **IV. Process for Proposed Changes**

##### *Public Survey for Long Range planning committee*

A survey subcommittee formed from the CCLD Strategic Planning Committee comprised of: Ron Shaw, Owen Frank, Joe Rohl, and Marge Kappanadze composed a survey to be completed by members of the public. Between 9:00 am February 9, 2012 and 9:00 am March 10, 2012, the CCLD Strategic Planning Committee collected public surveys from the CCLD website, all CCLD Branches, CCLD Bookmobile, the Arnot Mall, and Tops Supermarket in Southport. In all, 387 surveys were completed. Based on Chemung County's 2010 population of 88,800 our survey has a confidence level of approximately 95% and was compared to the 2009 survey used in the previous strategic plan.

##### **CCLD Patrons Recognize the Library District's Value**

- 91% of respondents personally use library services & programs.
- 83% of respondents have at least 1 household member that uses CCLD library services & programs.
- 95% of respondents appreciate that CCLD programs & services are free.
- 97% of respondents think CCLD makes their community better.

##### **Patron Awareness Measures**

- Awareness of Holds
  - Within CCLD Branches: 92% of our respondents are aware of the Service, a decrease in 1.8% from the Fall 2009 survey.
  - 60% of our respondents are aware they can place holds for library items from the 5 county Southern Tier Library System, an increase of 5.1% from the Fall 2009 Survey.

##### **Patrons want traditional services as well as new or expanded services**

- Between 60-80% of respondents Valued the following services the most
  - Books for Pleasure Reading

- Programs for Children
- Access to Public Computers
- Books for Information or Research
- Reference Services
- The following categories for new services and programs were identified
  - Instructional Classes (technology the most popular topic)
  - Book Club
  - Lecture
  - Performance

## V. Focus of plan

The District will strive to meet a number of evolving goals that are both ambitious and measurable. Each goal will be underpinned by the overall objective of the District. Ongoing adjustment and achievement of the goals will be enabled by an annual review of a comprehensive set of measurements of District operations by the District staff.

## VI. Next Steps

This document is intended to develop strategies and tactics to guide staff work through 2017.

A strategic planning process began during 2012. Research took place on the demographics and activities of residents of the District's service population. New research and thinking on technological, economic, and political trends is necessary and should be ongoing throughout the life of this document. Methods of evaluation need to be developed systematically and continuously.

Developments and changes in education at all levels need to be analyzed. The implications of the Property Tax Cap on the District and other local organizations must be taken into account. As issues and opportunities in the community arise, lifelong learning needs for a changing population must to be calculated. It will be necessary to review or create services to support area institutions, businesses, community service organizations, and all levels of education. It will also be necessary to update or create services to support niche-specific groups of individuals, such as home-school families (to include elementary, middle, and high school students), immigrants, newcomers, adults seeking literacy services, seniors, grandparents as caregivers, and special needs populations.

## VII. Strategic Initiatives:

**Library Services, Materials and Resources.** Provide collections, programs, and services that will adapt to changing community needs.

### **Objective 1: Enable easy and effective access to library services.**

Desired Outcome: Provide optimal service hours and ample staff to give excellent customer service to library users

Activity A: Improve programs and services offered to the public through a variety of metrics – for example the number of programs held, number of people attending, ages of people in attending, and comments from post class surveys.

Activity B: Evaluate hours at all branches and make changes to provide better service. Using metrics such as hourly circulation reports or building traffic/visits, and patron requests for hours open will allow for the proper mix of open times and locations.

Activity C: Review staffing levels at all CCLD libraries and make changes according to service needs. By measuring daily circulation throughout the year with further subdivisions by hour, visitor counts, and program attendance, we will be able to adjust staff levels based upon actual need.

Responsibility: Director, Library District Growth and Staff Development Coordinator, Board of Trustees.

## **Objective 2: Fuel Chemung County's Passion for Reading, Personal Growth and Learning**

Desired Outcome: Offer the community a library with enhanced collections that will satisfy their needs in all formats and subjects.

Activity A: Build library collections in a variety of formats keeping pace with patron desires and technological advances by being aware of new technologies and move toward building collections as demand warrants. Metrics used will include standard circulation statistics of usage by category- non-fiction, fiction, large print, etc.

Activity B: Provide full access to Library materials for ALL demographics in our community. Possibilities include formation of focus groups for selection that includes members of the public, for example a Young Adult group, who will provide insight into what that population would like to see in the collection with an emphasis on obtaining members from each district to include all socio-economic areas. Measurements will be calculated by address, age, gender of patron use and participation in group selection.

Activity C: Evaluate and grow collections by subject and format, based on needs and interests of patrons and ensure that acquisitions are based, in part, on patron feedback and requests. Conduct an annual evaluation of the collection to meet the needs and interests of patrons of all ages and interests by subject and format. Measure by analyzing annual circulation – Dewey section by section, fiction, etc. – require every dept. head to do this and report back. The results will be used to calculate materials budgets based on circulation allowing funds to be allocated to interest level categories.

Activity D: Expand collections in emerging technology formats (e-books and other downloadable formats). Be willing to take risks and offer something totally out of the box to see public reaction or respond to public requests if there are any. Increase collection as use increases. Measure success of pilot programs in one CCLD library, gather lessons learned and use input to open up to other branches. Include evaluation forms in all new formats or get "on the spot" feedback by having staff interview patrons as they return materials.

Activity E: Develop and implement an evaluation process for print reference collection development and migrate to digital and/or on-line format where appropriate. Develop an evaluation process for print reference collection development by measuring in-house usage and database usage statistics. Develop a proactive weeding plan for items identified as being readily available online or in databases.

Responsibility: Director, Library District Growth and Staff Development Coordinator, Adult Reference, and Branch Managers.

**Objective 3: Consider new ways of delivering services.**

Desired Outcome: Expand community awareness and convenience of CCLD by offering customer self service and/or off-hour information and location availability.

Activity A: Investigate expansion of reference services in the social network world through chat reference and the possible use of portable devices/smartphones in the delivery of reference services. Review the number of in-house reference questions vs. eDesk questions and investigate participation in a live chat during off hours. Patron input will be sought by newsletter, Facebook, and other media to determine preferred reference style.

Activity B: Investigate the feasibility of innovative services such as RFID tagging, self-checkout, print-on-demand stations and automated book dispensing machines in targeted locations. Cost is the main factor involved. Investigate what other libraries are doing in these areas and how much funding they put into it. Staff will also conduct a site visit to a facility with RFID tagging, self checkout in place etc. to see layout. Depending on cost factors, i.e. staff salaries to self checkout, possibility of transferring staff to other duties, etc. we may have to be willing to abandon the idea and think of other ways to make check out convenient.

Responsibility: Director, Library District Growth and Staff Development Coordinator, Adult Reference, and Branch Managers.

**Objective 4: Support the research, scholastic, and literacy needs of Chemung County.**

Desired Outcome: Increased CCLD awareness and use of local schools and organizations

Activity A: Work with Literacy Volunteers to expand adult literacy volunteer and mentor programs. Measure by use of library materials/equipment and consider dedicating some computers to literacy. Offer special classes by library staff, developed in coordination with Literacy Volunteers, and track hours trained, results of learners library experience, individual and family use. Results will determine whether to add high/low titles to collection and promote them and track usage.

Activity B: Extend strategic alliances with local organizations such as local public and private K-12 schools, higher learning institutions, local businesses, and other local nonprofit organizations. Utilize staff to increase library awareness presentations in schools, organizations and businesses. Continue to participate in more annual

community events with the bookmobile and any willing CCLD staff member. Track effectiveness by number of programs and attendance. Use different colored card applications whenever taking out to the community or schools to count number returned to libraries.

Activity C: Gather outside organizations input for collection development. Develop opportunities to provide bibliographic instruction, Bookmyne and downloadable sessions. Increase awareness of display spaces to organizations by combining displays with tours and exhibits.

Responsibility: Director, Youth Services/Young Adult Staff, and Library District Growth and Staff Development Coordinator.

**Objective 5: Focus on providing early learning experiences.**

Desired Outcome: Make CCLD a community leader in early literacy experiences for children and parents.

Activity A: Enhance early literacy programs, such as reading readiness, including age-appropriate, multilingual collections through collaboration with area organizations on early learning experiences. Success will be measured through standard measurements of storytime and family program attendance.

Activity B: Find success and new audiences by partnering with Family Reading Partnership/Child Care Council, GED classes and other local organizations who serve families to jointly promote events. Possible opportunities, both on- and off-site include parenting classes, programs for babies, and multilingual programs. Success will be measured through standard measurements of storytime and family program attendance.

Activity C: Increase use of collection by multilingual families through collaboration with local agencies who serve this group. We will seek patron input for selecting materials and will use standard circulation measures for evaluation.

Responsibility: Director, Youth Services Staff.

**Objective 6: Invest in and support district wide Young Adult Services.**

Desired Outcome: Provide Young Adults with dedicated library services and staff

Activity A: Hire and support a Young Adult Services Coordinator.

Activity B: Develop dynamic programming, services and spaces shaped by teens for teens. Establish volunteer opportunities or internships for teens. Review current circulation stats and traffic patterns of young adults and YA materials to establish a base line for measurement. Review annually to determine circulation statistics, program statistics, and usage of volunteers.

Activity C: Provide annual training to public service staff on current understanding of youth development to facilitate age-appropriate services. Success will be tracked by patron comments.

Responsibility: Director, Youth Services/Young Adult Staff, and Library District Growth and Staff Development Coordinator.

**Sustainability.** Enable the continued growth of the district by implementing efficient operations and seeking new financial opportunities.

**Objective 1: Market library expertise and services to the public.**

Desired Outcome: Create a customer satisfaction environment with knowledgeable and approachable staff.

Activity A: Ensure that the community, elected officials and business partners are aware of the full range of library services and resources available to them. Staff will contact individual groups and establish a mutual social media presence to include Facebook, and website links. A database of community partners will be developed to send regular updates such as newsletters and tweets.

Activity B: Proactively demonstrate library expertise and customer service for patrons in the library and those accessing the library's resources remotely. Emphasis will be placed on staff approachability and patron interaction.

Responsibility: Director, Virtual Services Librarian, Library District Growth and Staff Development Coordinator, Department Heads.

**Objective 2: Sustain and expand the Library District's Marketing Plan to inform residents of programs and services.**

Desired Outcome: Increase the number of cardholders, patron visits, circulation and public support.

Activity A: Create a marketing and advertising budget to increase the Library District's marketing and media communications capacity. As part of this, we will establish a solid practice of obtaining patron feedback from programs and a formal method of communicating regularly with teachers/school librarians and administrators.

Activity B: Educate residents so they understand that they are funding their own local library. In addition to budget presentations at the branches, we will conduct presentations outside of the library in October – community centers, churches, etc. Success will be measured by audience responses and votes.

Activity C: Launch a marketing campaign to increase the number of local resident card holders. Measure increase in patron registrations – compared to same time period of previous years and directly after a promotional event such as the Library Card Sign Up Month.

Responsibility: Director, Virtual Services Librarian, Library District Growth and Staff Development Coordinator, Department Heads.

**Objective 3: Explore additional ways to reach patrons/non-patrons**

Desired Outcome: Increase awareness of library outside library buildings to those who may not be regular users.

Activity A: Participate in events that bring the library to the community and maintain an active presence in community groups and community events. Track the number of events annually, increase gradually and encourage all staff to participate.

Activity B: Designate staff to ensure that library fliers and other promotional materials have a wide distribution in the community (community bulletin boards, store bulletin boards, etc.). Results will be measured during community surveys.

Responsibility: Director, Virtual Services Librarian, Library District Growth and Staff Development Coordinator, Department Heads.

**Objective 4: Social Media Initiatives**

Desired Outcome: Increase use and interaction by patrons

Activity A: Promote the library e-newsletter for wider distribution. Continue to track constant contact members and number of views.

Activity B: Evaluate and expand the Library website and website calendar of events to better meet the needs of patrons of all ages, i.e. allowing for on-line registration for events and programs. Monitor website and calendar hits, Facebook posts and comments.

Activity C: Explore and expand the use of Social Media outlets for communicating and interacting with patrons and non-patrons. Track number of hits/responses to posts by patrons.

Activity D: Promote all social media initiatives so that patrons are aware of their availability. Use social media as a survey tool to gather patron input through requests for input.

Activity E: Develop promotional and other videos for posting on webpage, Facebook and YouTube. Track numbers of press releases, mentions in the TV or print news, numbers of likes or hits on social media, numbers of hits on website, etc.

Activity F: Educate all staff in the various types of social media being used.

Responsibility: Director, Virtual Services Librarian, Library District Growth and Staff Development Coordinator, Department Heads.



**Facilities.** Chemung County Library District patrons will find our libraries to be inviting spaces with a customer-focused staff that supports the library’s service program and meets community needs.

**Objective 1: Provide library spaces that are inviting, stimulating, comfortable, clean, and safe.**

Desired Outcome: Updated libraries with more inviting and functional multi-purpose spaces.

Activity A: Employ creative space planning to make Library buildings flexible and responsive to patron priorities as less space is needed to house physical collections.

Activity B: Develop a long-term capital plan to address the recommendations in the Existing Conditions/Capital Reassessment Report.

Activity C: Develop a plan to update or renovate library furnishings. Input will be gathered from the public and used during the renovation design phase.

Activity D: Look for opportunities to reutilize space in existing buildings for group work, conversation, and conference.

Activity E: Explore ways to reduce/contain noise in certain areas of the library, allowing for both quiet and active spaces and, through space re-allocation create a significantly enhanced separation between different areas of the library

Activity F: Explore ways to create additional meeting, program and study space, and add gallery space; identify ways to make greater use of outdoor patio/surrounding lawn and the promenade.

Activity G: Investigate the possibility of a “reading garden”—outdoor space for reading, meeting, games, laptop/tablet use, and other activities.

Responsibility: Director, Board of Trustees, Buildings & Grounds Committee, Budget & Finance Committee.

**Objective 2: Bring Library resources to where people are.**

Desired Outcome: Develop the ability to plan for expanded services throughout Chemung County.

Activity A: Begin collecting demographic and statistical data of Chemung County.

Activity B: Determine factors to be considered for library expansion within the county.

Activity C: Investigate possibility of new branch in northern section of county.

Activity D: Investigate possible location on Southside.

Activity E: Investigate new bookmobile stops. Staff will generate reports and analyze circulation and visits at all stops, determine need at schools, daycares, other community locations based on requests or lack of physical library location and consider change in bookmobile hours – evenings, more programs, then evaluate success by visits and circulation.

Responsibility: Director, Outreach Services Staff, Board of Trustees, Buildings & Grounds Committee, Budget & Finance Committee.

**Objective 3: Improve existing environmental and recycling efforts and continue to support current green initiatives.**

Desired outcome: Demonstrate the District’s stewardship of natural resources.

Activity A: Develop procedures for paper and plastic recycling including the reduction of paper and plastic waste at library programs. Ask supervisors to institute changes (paper separation, print on both sides of copy paper) their department’s routine and report back and track progress. Determine whether trash haulers are recycling.

Activity B: Investigate green energy initiatives, i.e. solar panels, building control systems, etc.

Activity C: Incorporate environmental best practices in any future building renovation initiative.

Activity D: Continue to maintain physical library building through good and timely maintenance and repair, thorough and proper cleaning, and preventative maintenance.

Activity E: Seek ways to reduce energy use and costs district wide.

Activity F: Use more environmentally friendly products for housekeeping tasks.

Activity G: Make CCLD a smoke-free campus.

Responsibility: Director, Custodial Staff, Branch Managers.

**Special Collections.** Citizens of Chemung County will be provided access to their common cultural heritage through the ongoing development and preservation of distinctive special collections including local history and genealogy.

**Objective 1: Begin evaluation for the establishment of a separate and distinct space for Local History and Genealogy.**

Desired Outcome: Planning for expanded local history and genealogy services.

Activity A: Gather usage statistics for all genealogy and local history related topics.

Activity B: Revise CCLD's Material Selection Policy to include a clear evaluation process for acquisitions and gifts to special collections.

Activity C: Offer programs to schools, community groups, etc., that highlight items in local history collection.

Responsibility: Director, Reference Department, Genealogy/Local History Staff.

**Objective 2: Lead the system in providing access to digital material**

Desired Outcome: Develop relevant and inspiring collections in all formats that meet Chemung County's evolving needs and expectations.

Activity A: Create and collect original, non-published local interest material such as podcasts of community events and oral histories. Measure use online and in-house; make sure we aren't duplicating services already offered by Historical Museum

Activity B: Develop strategic alliances with other local history organizations to collaborate on special projects promoting the Chemung County History with an emphasis on building digital collections freely available to all

Responsibility: Director, Reference Department, Genealogy/Local History Staff.

**Technology & Services.** The Chemung County Library District will provide technology and technology training for patrons of all ages and interests.

**Objective 1: Develop a Technology Plan.**

Desired Outcome: Assure that computer hardware and software is regularly updated to provide high functioning technology for staff and public.

Activity A: Develop and implement a schedule for replacing Public Access PCs. Easily measured based on annual replacements, budgets.

Activity B: Investigate the need for additional computer stations in the adult computer and youth services areas. Justify by measuring current computer check outs and demand, number and length of times patrons wait for an open computer to include branch libraries.

Activity C: Explore the addition of computers for teen use. Track use of current PCs by teens in both children's areas and adult and, if use warrants, create a new YA computer area. Continual monitoring of usage and get input from teens on what type of new computers (and software) and in the new computer lab.

Activity D: Explore a tablet (iPad) or eReader lending program for patrons at all branches.

Responsibility: Director, Library District Growth and Staff Development Coordinator, IT Department, Virtual Services Librarian.

**Objective 2: Assess existing and explore new/added technology for staff use to maximize ability for optimum productivity and efficiency**

Desired Outcome: Provide first-rate assistance on all types of technologies by developing an informed and educated staff.

Activity A: Establish an eTraining program for library staff to include training on new technologies, formats, and equipment. Survey the current capabilities of all staff, plan and execute training accordingly with a hands on demonstration of skills gained after training completion- if necessary, provide remedial training.

Activity B: Provide staff with opportunities to train on new technology devices by providing the devices for staff use. Survey what types of devices are needed based on current services to public and staff office needs include new devices as they are offered to public.

Activity C: Develop in-house expertise in technology by reallocating staff duties or hiring new staff with technological expertise. Identify those staff with expertise, and then create a training team. Continue to make technology a priority when canvassing for new staff.

Responsibility: Director, IT Department, Library District Growth and Staff Development Coordinator, Virtual Services Librarian.

**Objective 3: Provide training for patrons in all aspects of technology including basic computer skills, e-books, social media, etc.**

Desired Outcome: Become a community leader in technological training for the public

Activity A: Ensure that adequate computer and technology classes are available for patrons and establish an instructional program series that meets the needs of our diverse community. Measure by class attendance, customer satisfaction survey, and determine what is already offered in the community to allow for improvement in scheduling, topics offered and avoid a duplication of effort.

Activity B; Ensure that staff is well-trained in all aspects of technology so that patrons can obtain the answers to their questions at any time during the library's operating hours. Provide ongoing training for staff with practical skills tests to demonstrate proficiency. Compile statistics of patron requests and success in meeting patron need. Consider the use of volunteers as technology trainers.

Responsibility: Director, IT Department, Virtual Services Librarian, Reference Department.

**Staff Development.** The District will continually assess community needs, trends, and demographics in order to prioritize staffing needs that will continue to provide a high level of service to taxpayers.

**Objective 1: Maximize the effectiveness of available staff**

Desired Outcome: Supply library users with exceptional customer driven staff. and capitalize on the availability of professional expertise on staff.

Activity A: Develop a District Wide staff development policy to opportunities toward professional and personal growth. Create a knowledge base of staff with operational experience throughout the District who can be called upon to offer assistance in their area of expertise. Empower staff to ask questions directly to subject area experts and use the team approach to provide excellent service.

Activity B: Use annual staff evaluations to assist in identifying individual staff strengths and talents in order to provide job assignments that will maximize effectiveness for public service and programs.

Activity C: Streamline processes to more effectively utilize staff in accordance with the current Staff Plan. Evaluate what we do and why we do it in every department/library and eliminate what is not necessary.

Activity D: Encourage a spirit of community and cooperation within library staff and buildings in order to provide optimal service to the public. Create a training plan that partners new and experienced employees. Measure success by staff comments at evaluation time, better job satisfaction and delight in coming to work. Encourage patron comments in person, in suggestion boxes and online. Establish staff recognition program that recognizes employees' contributions to the overall objectives and efficient operation of the District.

Activity E: Create a shared staff plan for all libraries so staff can travel from library to library at any given time to fill needs. Allow staff opportunities to work in a different department or library periodically to experience "branch life" vs. "main branch" to achieve a comfort level at any location for all staff.

Responsibility: Director, Board of Trustees, Library District Growth and Staff Development Coordinator, Department Heads.

**Objective 2: Foster an Organizational Culture of Innovation**

Desired Outcome: Build District staff and institutional capacity to innovate.

Activity A: Use rigorous analysis to provide a positive user experience. Investigate how other libraries are analyzing patron experiences to find innovative ways to gather feedback.

Activity B: Manage change with flexibility. Conduct "change" workshop for all staff to cultivate excitement, positive attitude toward change

Activity C: Communicate and celebrate progress.

Responsibility: Director, Board of Trustees, Library District Growth and Staff Development Coordinator, Department Heads.