

Swansea Free Public Library
Long Range Plan
2020 – 2024

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INTRODUCTION

This Long Range Plan of Service serves to guide the Library and the Town of Swansea in the delivery and development of library services for the next five years to meet the changing needs of the community. It provides information about the library's role in the community and how it fits into the Town's future planning initiatives. It provides a vision for the community and sets out goals and objectives for achieving that vision. As the Library and the Town plan for the realization of Construction Project¹, this plan will serve to guide us in the design and building of the new Swansea Free Public Library (SFPL). The emphasis of library service in the twenty-first century has evolved to be relational rather than transactional, responsive rather than passive, and creative and collaborative in its approach to literacy in all its forms—reading, digital, financial, civic, and cultural. Swansea's expanded library must reflect these evolving library service norms.

The implementation of the plan's goals and objectives is subject to funding by the Town of Swansea and the Swansea Library Board of Trustees. Approval of this plan does not commit the current or future Boards of Trustees of the Library to the expenditure of funds or a requirement to fulfill the plan in its totality should circumstances change. It is intended to guide and describe the Library's priorities for the next five years.

Committee Make-up

Community Representatives	Sarah Hunicke, High School Librarian for Portsmouth High School and Swansea parent Albertina Bell, Swansea School Committee Kenneth Baker, Local Business owner, Baker's Farm and Ice Cream Barn Barry Bibeau, Swansea resident and retired Director of Mechanics Bank James Devol, Swansea Business Owner Robert Silveira, Junior High School Principal, Swansea Public Schools
Library Trustees	Maureen Pacheco Susan McMullen Judite Carey
Library Staff	Eileen Dyer, Library Director Carol Gafford Marie Shea

¹In 2017 the Library was awarded a Construction Grant by MBLC for \$6,875,844, and remains last on the current waiting list for the funding.

PLANNING PROCESS & METHODOLOGY

In early 2019, the Board of Trustees formally re-established the Long Range Planning Committee and charged it with the development of a Long Range Plan for the Swansea Library that would meet the requirements for long range plans established by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). The Planning Committee was formed by asking staff and trustees to suggest stakeholders who would contribute to a wide ranging discussion about how the library could best serve the Swansea community. The Planning Committee Members selected represent a cross section of the community and included library users, school officials, parents, business owners, and community leaders. Our methodology was guided by The MBLC's strategic planning resources guide <https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/planning/workshops-resources.php>, the process outlined in the Public Library Association publication *Strategic Planning for Results* by Sandra Nelson, and the resources available from the Public Library Project Outcome web site. These resources call for a broad based community committee to assess community needs through visioning and SWOT analysis, to draft a mission statement, and to identify appropriate service priorities with goals and objectives. The newly drafted long range plan was reviewed by the Long Range Planning Committee and ultimately approved by the Swansea Free Public Library Board of Trustees.

In a foundational meeting, Long Range Planning Committee members met to establish a planning process with a timeline and to design a survey to gather community input. In order to effectively assess user needs, the survey was designed to elicit both library and non-library user feedback. It was distributed at the library and via the library web site and Facebook page, at the May 2019 Town Meeting, at community centers, senior housing, through the school department's newsletter to parents, and via direct email to SFPL cardholders. Additionally, the Library retained consultant, Elizabeth Hill, CFRE, to conduct two focus groups and administer Staff and Trustee surveys. Information gathered from 756 library survey responses, staff and trustee surveys, and focus groups guided the committee in its selection of Library Service Priorities and helped to identify priorities and goals for the Library for the next five years. Responses from the Library Survey, the Trustee Survey, the Staff Survey, and the focus groups can be found in Appendices A, B, C, and D.

The first meeting of the Long Range Planning was a brainstorming session where members contributed to an environmental scan of the town, a community visioning exercise, and a community SWOT analysis as outlined in Nelson's publication. A demographic overview of the town and an overview of the library's history, building, resources and services were also provided by the Library Director. At the second meeting, members reviewed the survey instrument and planned for the focus groups and subcommittees were established to complete the survey instrument and work on the Library's mission and vision statements. At the third meeting the

committee reviewed the responses from the library, staff and trustee surveys and from the two focus groups. Having gathered all of this community information the committee selected four service areas from the Public Library's Project Outcome:

- Civic/Community Engagement
- Digital Learning
- Education/Lifelong Learning
- Early Childhood Literacy

Long Range Planning Committee Meetings:

- February 26, 2019
- April 30, 2019
- July 23, 2019
- September 17, 2019

Library Trustees Public Plan Hearing and Approval:

- September 26, 2019

ASSESSMENT OF USER NEEDS

A. Community Analysis

Swansea Demographic Profile:

The Swansea Free Public Library primarily serves the Town of Swansea. Swansea is characterized as rural suburban community. The July 2019 town census lists its population at 16,165. The population of Swansea has remained relatively stable in the past ten years and is expected to grow by 2.74% by 2024 (Claritas, Pop-Facts, Demographic Trends, 2019). Swansea is a homogeneous community, with 96.3% of the population White/Caucasian, .84% African American, .95% Asian and 1.67% Hispanic. The closest metropolitan area is Fall River, Massachusetts.

Trends noted in Claritas 360 Pop Demographic Trends indicate that the population is slowly aging. The median age in 2010 was 44.3 years, in 2017 it was 45.7 years, in 2019 it is 47.2 years, and the median age is expected to increase to 48.5 years in 2024. In 2010, 16.95% of the population was 65 or over. In 2019, 21.95% of Swansea's population is 65 and over and in 2024 it is expected to rise to 25.06% of the total population.

The number of pre-school and school aged children is also continuing to decrease in Swansea from 3,155 in 2010 to 2867 in 2019 and a predicted drop to 2639 in 2024. (Claritas)

According to Claritas 360, Swansea's median household income for 2019 was \$91,601, compared with a median income of 71,507 for all of Bristol County. It should also be noted that, according to the Census, 5.5% of Swansea residents are below the poverty level, which is up from 4.5% five years ago.

Environmental Scan:

The Long Range Planning Committee began its active planning process with an environmental scan of the Swansea community. Its purpose was to establish context – to establish current and anticipated conditions that might impact the community and begin to think about how these conditions might affect library priorities. It also set the stage for a SWOT analysis and community visioning exercise. The results of the scan are below:

- There are 4 Elementary Schools -- Hoyle & Gardner Schools serve grades K – 2 and Brown & Luther Schools serve grades 3 – 5. Swansea has one Junior High School and one High School.
- Swansea's population is steadily aging. The median age is expected to rise from 44.3 in 2010 to 48.5 in 2024. By 2024, 25% of Swansea's population will be 65 and over.
- Swansea Neighborhoods include:

- o Ocean Grove – cottages, family homes, some transient and some rentals
 - o Touisset – more upscale, established community
 - o Swansea Village – Main St, Elm St., Stevens Road – historic area
 - o Rural and sprawling areas – Locust St. Hornbine – some farms but also a lot of new developments in these areas
 - o North Swansea – toward Seekonk – some people tend to go to Seekonk rather than Swansea for shopping, etc.
 - o Wilbur Ave – Route 103 neighborhoods – family, smaller homes
 - o Cedar Cove/Baypoint – upscale – established neighborhoods
- Primary Businesses in Swansea are Walmart & Target. Swansea Mall is closed but has been purchased for redevelopment. Two new but small business/shopping areas were built in 2019.
 - SERTA Buses are the only public transportation available, but they originate in Fall River.
 - There is no intra-town public transportation. The Council on Aging does provide transportation for seniors but has scheduled routes for specific needs – prescriptions, groceries, etc. This service does not come to the Library.
 - Preservation of land is important to Swansea residents. The CPC plays an important role.
 - Other Items noted include:
 - o Family oriented
 - o Safe Location
 - o Convenient to the Cape, Newport, Boston, Providence, Southcoast
 - o Relatively inexpensive place to live
 - o Reasonable taxes
 - o Water access for recreation
 - o Village Park
 - o Open Space
 - o Pride in Swansea’s historic tradition
 - o Good school system
 - o Economic stability
 - o Sports available for kids
 - o No economic center of town
 - o Spread out with very few sidewalks – not a good town for walking in neighborhoods
 - o Can walk to library from 3 schools – Junior High, High School and Brown Elementary
 - o Home development has been on the rise lately but has been inconsistent in the past
 - o Low crime rate
 - o Septic systems
 - o Problem with brown water
 - o Town has a lot of land that is ledge
 - o Town being spread out could be a problem in a fire emergency
 - o Rural community but still close to “everything”
 - o Low crime

Community SWOT Analysis:

The Long Range Planning Committee conducted a SWOT analysis as a strategic method for evaluating the Town of Swansea's **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats. It is a useful planning technique for developing a fuller awareness of the community that can help prioritize library services, programs and resource needs. The following points were made about Swansea in each of the four SWOT Categories.

STRENGTHS

Support Achieving the Vision:

- open space
- good schools
- safe with low crime
- waterfront access for recreation
- historical pride
- proximity to cities & leisure
- family friendly
- sports for kids,
- arts & theater programs in schools are welcoming and inclusive
- affordable

WEAKNESSES

Obstruct Achieving the Vision:

- lack of participation in town meetings
- lack of civic engagement in town government,
- lack of communication about town activities,
- lack of cultural organizations like lions, rotary, summer concert series, and other community events
- Need more volunteers and people to step up and organize events
- No "main street" center or economic activity other than Route 6
- lack of diversity in town population
- limited public transportation

OPPORTUNITIES

External Opportunities for Community:

- More family-oriented community events such as gazebo concerts, mud event at the Ice Cream Barn, food festivals, holiday festivals, etc.
- Garden club interest in town
- Need to leverage our historic location – Martin House, Luther Store, Land Trusts
- More community days that bring people together
- Community service could be part of a high school education
- Internships in civic engagement for hands on experience

- Partnerships with other town organizations, i.e. YMCA, Cole’s River recreation, senior housing
- Identify willing business partners i.e. Walmart, Target, local farms, local banks & credit unions
- Cannabis industry as tax base

THREATS

External Threats to the Community

- Residents are tax adverse
- septic & water issues
- aging population,
- running out of growth space
- cannabis industry (economic opportunity, family threats?)
- opioid epidemic – substance abuse
- deteriorating infrastructure in school facilities and town buildings
- competing with other town projects for money
- limited public transportation

Community Visioning:

With a fuller understanding of the community of Swansea through the Environmental Scan and SWOT analysis, Long Range Planning Committee Members engaged in a visioning exercise. Committee members were asked how they would like to see the town in the next ten years, reflecting on the common values of the community – what makes Swansea unique. The committee identified target beneficiaries as well as the benefits and anticipated results.

Will Benefit	it & Result
en	en will have a safe environment to be free, play and explore.
en & Young Adults	arn to be civically minded, critical thinkers, and curious about the world.
en & Young Adults	velop interpersonal skills for interacting with others and achieving balance in their lives
Adults	arn self-teaching skills for lifelong learning, more than just You-Tube, etc.
Adults	ve a community that they want to stay in and contribute to.

es	enefit from cultural events that will give them opportunities to discover diversity, engage them in the larger civic dialog, and increase appreciation for the arts.
es	enefit from family-oriented events to keep them actively involved in their community
Business	enefit from new opportunities for growth and expanded partnerships.
sea Community	enefit from an increased awareness of an environmentally oriented ecosystem that includes using farmland, community gardens, walking paths, land trust properties and other environmentally conscious development of community spaces.

B. LIBRARY PROFILE

History and Key Statistics:

The Swansea Free Public Library was built at the turn of the 20th Century with the generosity of the Frank S. Stevens family and has been in continuous service to its community for well over a century. The lovely Elizabethan granite and sandstone structure was designed by architect, Henry Vaughan of Boston, and is located in the Town’s historic center. A small, utilitarian addition was added to the rear of the building in 1964, bringing the Library’s total square footage to 5,850.

This small structure, originally built for a population of 1,627, has long ago exceeded the limitations of its physical space. Although the building is architecturally beautiful and well-loved by its community, it is not functionally sufficient for meeting the needs of the Town’s current population of more than 16,000 residents. The current facility’s major challenges to serving the community include: a children’s & teen library area located in the basement; inadequate ADA accessibility; physical obstructions to evolving technology; a complete absence of staff workspace; and a lack of quiet study areas or community meeting space.

In response to these obstacles, a Library Building Committee was appointed by the Swansea Board of Selectmen. The Committee worked with the Library Trustees, Library Director, and Town Administrator, to apply for and receive a 2017 Library Construction Grant, and at the 2018 Annual Town Meeting, voters granted that the Committee, Town, or Trustees could accept and expend these funds. Swansea, unfortunately, was placed last on the Grant waiting list at #24, now #17. Nonetheless, the Library and the current Town leadership remain committed to working with MBLC and the Swansea community to bring the Library expansion to fruition as soon as

feasibly possible, in order to provide a 21st century library and community hub to Swansea residents.

In the Library's Annual Report for 2018, total holdings were 74,811 – approximately the same overall total as cited in 2012². However, in 2018, the library's print holdings were 42,728 and non-print were 32,083, as compared to 2012, where 68,437 were print and 6,922 were non-print items. This shift away from print holdings is largely due to an increase in the number of electronic materials now available to patrons, which are calculated as non-print. Further, continued emphasis on collection management – including ongoing deselection of materials – has helped streamline the print collection, making it more up-to-date, relevant, and attractive to browse.

The total circulation of library materials in 2018 was 99,270, an increase of 14.5% from 2012. The library provided 16,987 items for interlibrary loan (ILL) borrowing and our patrons requested 18,476 items through interlibrary loan, which was a slight increase in ILL loans and a small decrease in ILL borrowing from 2012. As noted above, the circulation of electronic materials continues to increase significantly, with 2018's total circulation of electronic materials at 37,511, compared to 8,139 in 2012.

The July 2019 Swansea Town Census lists its population at 16,165. There are 7,502 registered borrowers, of which 6,592 are residents of Swansea – an increase of 6.3% in resident borrowers from 2012's totals. Per the 2018 Annual Report, total of 476 library programs were held throughout the year – 168 adult, 55 young adult, and 253 children's programs. While the variety of programs remain diverse, this is a decrease of 100 in the overall number of programs from 2012. This decrease may provide the opportunity for the Library staff to reassess programming and to potentially add new programs and collaborations as identified by the community. Further, this programming count may indeed reflect a more reasonable number for the capacity of programs provided by this small library staff.

Library Budget:

The Library's allocation from the Town for the five years prior to 2012 Report had remained essentially flat and inadequate for full library operations, requiring money to be withdrawn from the MEG Grant in order to fully cover basic salaries. In FY14 & FY15, there were small increases in the budget which allowed for minor increases in staff salaries and additional money for much needed electronic materials. The FY18 also included an increase, which allowed the Town to adjust the salary for a library director to a competitive range.

Though the Library's allocation has remained steady over recent years, modest increases have been made primarily to cover the Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs). With the exception of modest 2 % COLAs, the library staff have not received any raises, including step increases, since FY14. An analysis of MBLC's Comparable Library Statistics for Salaries, as well as a comparison to Swansea's current clerical union salaries, indicates that the SFPL's full-time non-MLIS staff are

² Data from the 2012 Annual Report was used in the Library's previous Long Range Plan, 2014–2018.

paid an average of 38% less than either comparative group. In addition, the Youth Services (YS) Librarian's salary is 28% lower than the average of comparable YS librarians in the state.³ A priority for the Town should be to adjust these salaries to reflect comparable wages in the Town and state, and institute ongoing step raises to remain current.

On a positive financial note, the voters and Town of Swansea – through the Annual & Special Town Meetings for FY19 – allocated funds to continue the design services for the Library Expansion & Renovation Project (\$25,000) and to allocate funds for Repairs and Extraordinary Maintenance to the Library building (\$35,000). These allocations allow the Library to continue its plan for expansion, as well as to keep the historic building sound. The Library leadership is fortunate to enjoy an excellent relationship with Town leaders at this time.

C. SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS

In order to effectively assess user needs, the library survey was designed to elicit both library and non-library user feedback. It was distributed at the library and via the library web site and Facebook page, at the May 2019 Town Meeting, at community centers, senior housing, and through the school department's newsletter to parents. Information gathered from 756 survey responses was used to guide the Committee in its selection of library service areas and to identify priorities and goals for the Library for the next five years. Of particular note is that 83% of survey respondents indicated that they would definitely or probably would support the Library Construction project. Additional separate surveys were done for the Library Staff and the Library Trustees and two focus groups made up of various Swansea constituencies were completed. The responses to these surveys and focus group reports can be found in Appendix A – D.

³ These analyses are available from the Library Director, but were not formatted in time for this document.

PLAN OF SERVICE 2020 - 2024

Library Mission, Vision and Core Values:

Mission Statement:

The Swansea Free Public Library is a strong community partner providing programs and services that bring people together, foster creativity, and encourage lifelong learning.

Vision:

To be a welcoming resource and the heart of our community where all come to learn, discover, create, and connect while preserving and honoring our historical past, enriching present lives, and preparing for an ever-changing future.

Core Values:

- Create a warm and welcoming place for community members to gather
- Engage actively in the life of the community
- Employ a collaborative, creative, and positive staff focused on library users' interests and needs
- Be responsible fiscal stewards of the Library's financial and material resources
- Ensure ready, equal, and equitable access to library materials
- Protect confidentiality of library patron records
- Champion everyone's right to intellectual freedom

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIVITIES:

Service Area: Civic/Community Engagement

Residents will have spaces and services to inform, enrich, preserve, and promote community engagement including cultural programs, civic engagement, government services, and recreational activities.

Goal 1: Design and build a library that inspires community and civic engagement and adequately addresses community needs, providing expanded space for current and future library services, programs, technologies, and resources.

Objective 1.1: Work with the Library Building Committee, Town officials, and the MBLC to establish a working plan for an updated building design.

Action Item: Reconvene the Library Building Committee to establish an appropriate timeline for hiring a new project manager and architect for the Library Construction Project (FY2020)

Action Item: Hire Project Manager and Architect (FY2020)

Action Item: Hold town focus groups with architect and building committee to gather town input into the design process. (FY2020)

Action Item: Have architect prepare two or three design sketches for review by Building Committee, and Swansea residents. (FY2020-21)

Action Item: Consult with MBLC about updated Building Design and Construction Grant Budget. (FY2020-21)

Action Item: Contact Massachusetts legislators as necessary to advocate for grant funding. (FY2020 - completion of building project)

Goal 2: Provide community members with opportunities to engage in cultural and informational programs that will increase civic engagement by informed citizens.

Objective 2.1: Partner with government agencies to offer informational programs and participate in areas of civic engagement.

Action Item: Interested staff will enroll in courses offered off site or online by agencies, such as the MBLC and the NNLM, to learn more about providing additional services, programs, or resources in consumer, civic, or health related areas. (FY2020-2024)

Action Item: Offer programs and resources that respond to community needs. (FY2020-2024)

Action Item: Actively engage in providing services and resources that promote voter registration and aid in census completion. (FY2020)

Objective 2.3: Partner with local schools and organizations to increase community participation in local events and civic engagement.

Action Item: Increase public library and school collaborations by attending school open house events and PTO meetings. (FY2020)

Action Item: Increase public library participation in community-wide events. (FY2020)

Goal 3: Make the Library facility ADA Compliant so that all residents may have equal access to library programs, services, and resources

Objective 3.1: Over the course of this five year plan, work to bring the library into ADA Compliance, whether through new building construction or renovations to the current building.

Action Item: Meet with appropriate authorities to identify areas of non-ADA compliance. (FY2020)

Action Item: Secure town funding to provide ADA accessibility to all areas of the library.
(FY2022)

Action Item: Hire contractors to correct physical barriers to make the building ADA compliant.
(FY2023)

Service Area: Education/Lifelong Learning

Residents will have the services and resources they need to gain and impart new knowledge and skills, improve academic performance and engage in a variety of lifelong learning activities to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives.

Goal 1: Provide adequate spaces for enhancing the life of the mind.

Objective 1.1: Design a newly renovated library with appropriate meeting spaces that allow for all types of programming for all ages.

Action Item: Work with architect to ensure adequate meeting, gathering, and quiet study spaces are included in the library building design. (FY2020-2022)

Action Item: Work with architect to ensure that meeting spaces provide maximum flexibility for a variety of community needs. (FY2020-22)

Objective 1.2: Be responsive to community interest in creating a maker/creator space in the library

Action Item: Work with architect to create a flexible space that can be used for a maker/creator space. (FY2020-2022)

Action Item: Investigate opportunities to provide a small or pop-up maker/create space in existing library. (FY2021-2022)

Goal 2: All residents will have the resources needed to explore personal interests and continue to learn.

Objective 2.1: Continue to grow outreach and homebound services increasing delivery of library materials by 5% each year.

Action Item: Identify users in need of homebound services through the Council on Aging, senior housing, and other community organizations. (FY2020)

Action Item: Identify and develop a group of library volunteers to expand the library's capacity to provide homebound services (FY2020-21)

Objective 2.2: Increase library use by Young Adults/Teens through programs and collections by 5% each year.

Action item: Increase and focus social media platform presence used by YAs/teens to promote library services (FY2020-2021)

Action item: Create a teen advisory board to recommend programs, skills, materials, and services to be developed for YAs/Teens. (FY2021-22)

Objective 2.3: Increase adult programming and recreational activities by 10% over the next five years.

Action Item: Pursue funding opportunities for new programming initiatives. (FY2021)

Action Item: Survey adult users to determine their educational needs and program interests. (FY2020)

Action Item: Enlist local experts to offer technology related programs to Swansea adults, including senior citizens. (FY2020-2022)

Goal 3: Develop community connections to support lifelong learning.

Objective 3.1: Connect community members with expert users and provide at least two educational programs annually.

Action items: Identify community members with special talents that would be willing to provide a program on their area of expertise (i.e. knitting, self-publishing, gardening, money management) (FY2021)

Action item: Connect with area hospitals and health care providers to offer a series of health related programs. (FY2021-22)

Action Item: Collaborate with local/regional groups to provide a Public Service Fair where people can learn about services provided by local organizations and town agencies. (FY2023)

Objective 3.2 Provide cost effective services and programs and decrease duplication of effort by working with community agencies in joint programming initiatives.

Action item: Build relationships with the Council on Aging and other local organizations to establish clear communication pathways. (FY2021)

Action item: Maintain ongoing communications with these organizations by scheduling meetings at least twice a year with library representatives to discuss programs, schedules, and possible areas for collaboration. (FY2021)

Action Item: Create displays on community resources and events to promote on Digital Bulletin in Library. (FY2020)

Action Item: Participate in the Holiday in the Village annual event. (FY2020-2024)

Service Area: Digital Learning

Residents will have services and resources necessary to access technology, build technology –related skills and confidence and make beneficial use of digital resources and services.

Goal 1: Ensure that the library has adequate technology hardware, and networking capabilities to meet community need.

Objective 1.1: Ensure consistent and reliable access to software applications and the internet by implementing a plan to replace computer equipment on a rotating basis

Action Item: Continue with established replacement schedule to regularly update library computer and equipment. (Summer 2020)

Objective 1.2: Increase access to computer and online technologies for patrons of all ages.

Action item: Provide additional space for patron laptop use by adding narrow, window-height tables in Reference Room. (FY2020)

Action Item: Investigate the infrastructure and space capacity to add computers for youth downstairs in Children’s/Teen areas. (FY2021)

Action Item: Investigate purchasing two laptops for patron use in the library (FY2021)

Goal 2: Assure that the library offers reliable and consistent access to online resources and tools to all library users – both physical and virtual.

Objective 2.1: Enhance connectivity and ensure reliable WiFi access for laptop users in the library building. (FY 2021)

Action Item: Install additional electrical outlets for laptop use and charging stations. (FY2020)

Action Item: Increase WiFi coverage and speed. (FY2021)

Objective 2.2: Identify online resources of interest to the community and make them available via the Library website.

Action Item: Increase staff awareness of online resources through staff development opportunities. (FY2020)

Action Item: Increase patron awareness with targeted social media postings spotlighting each resource. (FY2021)

Goal 3: Provide workshops that will aid the community in the use of digital technology and online resources.

Objective 3.1: Offer technology programming that will increase the user's knowledge of the online environment and electronic devices.

Action Item: Identify and hire a technology trainer to provide technology workshops to patrons, to be paid via MEG or other grant funding. (FY2020)

Action Item: Provide instructional sessions for adults, including seniors, wanting to learn more about technology and online tools and apps. (FY2021)

Action Item: Provide instruction sessions for online research using the digital resources provided by the State of Massachusetts. (FY2022)

Service Area: Early Childhood Literacy

Children from birth to five will have programs and services designed to improve early literacy and learning skills to ensure that they will enter school ready to learn to read, write, and listen.

Goal 1: Build a new Children's Room

Objective 1.1: Work with the Library Building Committee, Town officials, and the MBLC to establish a working plan for an updated building design.

Action Item: Hold town parent/family focus groups with architect and building committee to gather town input into the design process for the Youth Services areas. (FY2020)

Goal 2: Parents and caregivers will have increased access to programs and experiences that encourage children in developing early literacy skills.

Objective 1.1: Offer programs and experiences that stimulate young readers and involve parents and caregivers in early literacy skills, increasing attendance at these programs by 20%.

Action item: Utilize social networking opportunities, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, to promote programs and engage parents and caregivers. (FY2020)

Action item: Recruit knowledgeable and reliable volunteers and interns to collaborate with offering early literacy programs. (FY2021)

Action item: Continue to promote early literacy programs on Swansea Cable Access TV, and in online newspapers such as the Seekonk/Swansea *Patch*. (2021)

Objective 1.2: Build relationships with outside partners to offer at least four special programs that stimulate early learning.

Action item: Partner with PACE and other organizations that are participating in the American Library Association’s initiatives to offer story times that enhance the interaction between young children and books. (FY2020)

Action item: Contact the outside organizations to explore possible speakers and program opportunities. (FY2021)

Action Item: Offer sensory storytimes. (FY2020-21)

Objective 1.3: Provide early literacy programming and story times to Swansea’s children. (FY 2020-24)

Action item: Coordinate with teachers at Head Start to offer a monthly early literacy program. (FY2020)

Action Item: Offer at least four evening or weekend programs annually for families with working parents who cannot attend weekday programs. (FY2021)

Action item: Identify and expand outreach, and collaborate with staff from Swansea day care centers, to offer early literacy programs at the library and/or at the day care center. (FY2021)

Action item: Identify and expand programming to home-based daycares. (FY2022)

Action item: Expand “Book in a Bag” activity packets for parents and caregivers to use with their children. (FY2022)

Goal 2: Children will have access to collections that enhance their desire to read.

Objective 2.1: Provide and promote children’s collections that are carefully developed and maintained in order to encourage the love of reading. Circulation of children’s materials will increase 20% in the next five years.

Action Item: Continue to grow the new Board Book collection for babies and toddlers (FY2020)

Action item: Increase visibility and promote circulation of children’s books that are of interest and in good condition by continuing to weed outdated titles and items in poor condition. (FY2020-2024)

Action item: Provide displays throughout the library that promote reading and highlight areas of the children’s collection. (FY2020-2024)

Action items: Prepare “pathfinder” bookmarks – “if you like this author, try these” – or selection of titles on a similar subject. (FY 2021)

Objective 2.3: Continue to provide access to at least 100 e-books to Preschool Children.

Action Item: Continue relationship with Tumblebooks and investigate purchasing/licensing content via other e-content providers. (FY 2020)

Action Item: Market the availability of e-books on the library website, at children's programs, and through social networking. (FY 2021)