



Eastern Shore Regional Library

Strategic Plan

FY2004-FY2007

Statement From The Administrator ...

The Eastern Shore Regional Library, Inc...empowering and serving for 38 years!!

Thirty-eight years ago the Eastern Shore Regional Library was called “The Lower Shore Area Library.” The original service area included Dorchester, Wicomico and Worcester counties. At that time funding was made possible through the Library Services and Construction Act.

On January 1, 1965, the name was changed to “Eastern Shore Area Library.” The service area was expanded to include the eight counties that are presently served by the Eastern Shore Regional Library, Inc. The current name of Eastern Shore Regional Library, Inc. is a result of becoming an incorporated entity on July 1, 1992 as permitted in Section 23-206 of the Annotated Code of Maryland. The ESRL, Inc. became a mandated state program July 1998 under House Bill 1233. Funding is realized from a state appropriation through the Maryland State Department of Education/Division of Library Development & Services.

Although there have been many changes over the years in the methods and tools used to provide service, the basic mission of ESRL has always been to empower and serve eight rural county libraries on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Empowerment and **Service** are the main thrusts behind this Strategic Plan. The Strategic Planning Committee felt so strongly about this that they voted to include those words in the vision statement.

The process that resulted in this Plan involved many levels of our customer base and all levels of ESRL staff. In determining strategies for empowerment and service we looked at the many challenges that our member libraries face such as competition for local funds, increasingly diverse public populations, a proliferation of formats for materials, rapidly changing technology, and the need for staff competency and training.

We are very pleased with the outcome of our planning process. Many thanks to the ESRL Board, county library staff, ESRL staff and our facilitator, Gail Griffith. This plan received ESRL Board approval on March 20, 2003.

We anticipate a stimulating, challenging, creative and innovative three years as we implement this Plan!

Planning Committee Members ...

Member Libraries:

Caroline County Public Library
Dorchester County Public Library
Kent County Public Library
Queen Anne's County Free Library
Somerset County Free Library
Talbot County Free Library
Wicomico County Free Library
Worcester County Public Library

George A. Sands, Jr., Administrator
Jean S. Del Sordo, Administrator
Gloria Urban, Administrator
Charles V. Powers, Jr., Administrator
Jean Johnson, Administrator
Robert Horvath, Administrator
Kathleen Reif, Administrator
Stewart L. Wells, Administrator

ESRL Staff:

Craig Abresch
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Eli Fulkerson
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Andrea Littleton
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Michael Rakowski
Davilynn Ward
June Yang

Raineyl V. Coiro, Administrator Eastern Shore Regional Library

Gail Griffith, Facilitator

Michael Osborne, Regional Liaison, Division of Library Development and Services

Vision ...

The Eastern Shore Regional Library empowers member libraries to serve their customers better.



Mission 1 ...

Assess members' needs and respond with appropriate services.



Goal A ...

Ensure that member libraries receive services that meet their customers' needs.

Objective 1:

- By June 30, 2005, 6 out of 8 member libraries will report they are satisfied with the support for children's and young adult services they receive from ESRL.

Objective 2:

- By June 30, 2005, 6 out of 8 member libraries will report they are satisfied with the support for technology services they receive from ESRL.

Objective 3:

- By June 30, 2005, 6 out of 8 member libraries will report they are satisfied with the reference, delivery, and support services they receive from ESRL.

Possible Strategies

- ✎ Use Zoomerang for member surveys
- ✎ Brainstorm ideas with library staffs
- ✎ Give them what they want
- ✎ User groups/problem-solving groups

Goal B ...

Ensure that ESRL and members' staffs receive the training they need to implement services.

Objective 1:

- By June 30, 2006, 100% of member libraries' staffs will demonstrate basic technology skills jointly developed by the regions' member libraries.

Objective 2:

- During each year of the plan, 100% of ESRL and member libraries' designated staff will receive ESRL-provided technology training that will increase their competency beyond the basic level.

Objective 3:

- During each year of the plan, 100% of ESRL and member libraries' designated staff will receive training through ESRL targeted to their needs.

Possible Strategies

- ✎ Establish training modules on needed topics, hold them regularly
- ✎ Develop computer competencies
- ✎ Analyze and update position descriptions
- ✎ Develop and annually review competencies list (not just computer)-build on others' lists
- ✎ Build members' capacity to do OJT
- ✎ Look at technology as a tool for all jobs-the target keeps moving
- ✎ Conduct training needs assessments annually
- ✎ Increase funding for staff development to pay for travel
- ✎ Cross-library (partnering) training programs

Misison 2 ...

Make it easier for member libraries to cooperate effectively.



Goal A ...

Create a sharing environment for ESRL and member libraries to learn together.

Objective 1:

- During each year of the plan, ESRL will create 50 opportunities to share ideas and projects among members.

Objective 2:

- During each year of the plan, ESRL and 6 out of 8 member libraries' staff will participate in joint problem solving activities.

Objective 3:

- During each year of the plan, ESRL and 6 out of 8 member libraries will report that the strategies used by ESRL are an effective use of their time.

Possible Strategies

- ✎ More 'short' effective meeting between ESRL and other libraries
- ✎ Increase number of meetings on topics such as reference, children's, technology
- ✎ Maintain reference, children's, tech users, admin staff, supervisory groups for purpose of sharing problems and solutions
- ✎ Orientation of new shore staff
- ✎ Social element to networking events
- ✎ Travel together
- ✎ Technological opportunities-web, teleconferencing, etc.

Goal B ...

Increase opportunities for ESRL and members' staffs to interact.

Objective 1:

- By June 30, 2004, ESRL and 6 out of 8 member libraries' staff will report that the number and quality of opportunities to interact are satisfactory.

Objective 2:

- By June 30, 2004, ESRL and 6 out of 8 member libraries' staff will report that their opportunities to interact have increased their effectiveness.

Objective 3:

- By June 30, 2004, ESRL and 6 out of 8 member libraries' staff will be able to identify each other's key services and the personnel who provide them.

Possible Strategies

- ✎ Use videoconferencing for meetings
- ✎ Expand opportunities for sharing
- ✎ Facilitate sharing between counties
- ✎ Publicize trips, meetings, etc. that have openings for shore staff
- ✎ Web boards and Listservs for library staff
- ✎ Bulletin board online
- ✎ Interactive intranets/extranets
- ✎ Develop expert system and knowledge base
- ✎ Bring all libraries' staff to ESRL for orientation
- ✎ Get ESRL out of member libraries
- ✎ Do on-site visits by ESRL staff to each library
- ✎ Introduction of shore libraries' new staff announced on ESRL home page-point to library's page
- ✎ Provide collaboration software across the shore libraries to enable members to work together

Mission 3 ...

Find and implement innovative and effective ways to provide services.



Goal A ...

Increase member libraries' awareness of opportunities for innovation.

Objective 1:

- By June 30, 2006, 100 staff from member libraries will report that they have used ESRL-provided resources to keep abreast of innovative services, programs, and issues applicable to members.

Objective 2:

- By June 30, 2006, ESRL and at least five member libraries will collaborate in innovating services.

Possible Strategies

- ✎ Initiate pilot projects
- ✎ Visionary/futurist workshops
- ✎ Innovative web development
- ✎ Identify emerging trends/trends analysis information
- ✎ Look beyond profession for ideas
- ✎ Continued staff development-acquiring new knowledge
- ✎ Develop a current awareness listserv on library topics
- ✎ Notify libraries of new and innovative services they might use
- ✎ Stay on top of appropriate professional literature
- ✎ Train 'subject teams' (i.e. reference, children's, etc.) on how to 'scat the environment' for new ideas
- ✎ Assist members to provide most effective virtual services; provide leadership role in this area more than others
- ✎ Change models-convening group from different libraries to study/analyze projects, etc.

Goal B ...

Assist member libraries to evaluate services.

Objective 1:

- By June 30, 2005, ESRL will provide member libraries with assessment tools to evaluate three services or programs jointly determined by members and ESRL.

Objective 2:

- By June 30, 2005, ESRL will provide member libraries with tools to identify target populations and assess their needs.

Possible Strategies

- ✎ Develop appropriate surveys
- ✎ Provide training for shore staff so new methods of doing things can be implemented locally
- ✎ Use outcome-based evaluation where appropriate
- ✎ Provide training in evaluation methodologies
- ✎ Address targeted groups such as non-English speakers

Mission 4 ...

Recruit support for quality library service.



Goal A ...

Increase marketing of member libraries.

Objective 1:

- By June 30, 2005, ESRL will provide each member library with tools and resources to market their services.

Possible Strategies

- ✎ Facilitate creation of effective partnerships with other agencies-especially to help libraries serve targeted groups
- ✎ PR/Marketing for new programs and old!
- ✎ Partnerships with other organizations i.e., schools, museums, historical societies, etc.
- ✎ Assist with customer and non-customer needs assessment
- ✎ Data-mining and remote needs assessments

Goal B ...

Increase library advocacy.

Objective 1:

- By June 30, 2004, ESRL will represent its member libraries to all targeted regional, state, and federal groups.

Objective 2:

- During each year of the plan, at least five ESRL Board members will collaborate with ESRL to advocate for library services.

Possible Strategies

- ✎ Represent shore libraries and state and regional committees/groups that can impact libraries
- ✎ Develop position papers on library issues affecting shore libraries with input from member libraries
- ✎ Create lobbying/advocacy communication pieces
- ✎ Stay on top of legislative/funding issues: state, federal, local
- ✎ Create 'legislative team'
- ✎ Develop legislative liaison
- ✎ Coordinate and participate in legislative advocacy for library support
- ✎ Develop advocacy skills in local staff

Goal C ...

Identify and pursue funding opportunities.

Objective 1:

- during each year of the plan, ESRL will identify and pursue at least one grant appropriate to its own needs.

Objective 2:

- By June 30, 2006, ESRL will identify ten non-DLDS grants appropriate to members' needs.

Objective 3:

- By June 30, 2004, ESRL will help all member libraries that request assistance in applying for grants.

Possible Strategies

- ✎ Develop collaboration skills in ESRL and local staff
- ✎ Identify and obtain grant-based support for shore library services
- ✎ Be proactive in telling members' staff that help is available
- ✎ Identify ESRL-non-Admin staff who can help