



FINNEY COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY

FINNEY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2023

Prepared For

Finney County, Kansas
January 2020



LIBRARY SYSTEMS & SERVICES, LLC

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INTRODUCTION

“A STRONG TRADITION OF QUALITY SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY”

The Finney County Public Library (FCPL) has a strong tradition of quality service to the community. From the 1897 opening of the Garden City Library by the Ladies Library Association, through the 1917 Carnegie building on land donated by Mr. George Finnup, to a new County building in 1985, the Library has served as an educational pillar of the community. The Finnup Foundation challenged the residents of Finney County to approve a 1.9 mil levy, which led to construction of the current building. The Finnup Foundation continues to be supportive to this day.

In 1983 the Garden City Public Library became a county library. The county established a 5-member Library Board at that time. Currently, the appointed board serves 4-year terms and provides governance and fiscal oversight.

In 2003, Library Systems & Services (LS&S) formerly known as LSSI, began operating the Finney County Public Library (FCPL). Finney County residents care deeply about their library and want to ensure FCPL operates with a focus on quality patron service. FCPL administration and staff share that commitment and work with the Board of Trustees, Friends of the Library and patrons to build on FCPL’s rich history and grow in service to the community.

Today the Finney County Public Library serves as a community destination, offering more than 124,000 items, educational and enrichment programs for all ages, and provides a certified Nature Explore site.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

When the strategic planning process began in October 2019, FCPL leaders and Library Systems & Services consultants set out to answer three key questions:

- 1. What does the community want?**
- 2. Where do we want to go and how do we get there?**
- 3. How can we innovate to best serve the community?**

Answers to these questions framed the project and informed strategic goals.

Input from people throughout Finney County and neighboring areas was gathered through surveys, focus groups and interviews. Business, education and nonprofit leaders, key stakeholders, Library staff and patrons and volunteers provided ideas and feedback. Public library best practices, experience from other LS&S libraries, Finney County and FCPL data were all part of the analysis.

Through this process, current and future needs emerged. Respondents agreed the Library is a valuable resource and consider family programs to be a key service. Leaders and Finney County residents love their Library and would like FCPL to play an even bigger role in inspiring a love of reading while building a sense of community.

As part of the strategic planning process, FCPL mission and vision statements were revised to align with current community needs.

MISSION

Engage our community, inspire lifelong learning, and provide universal access to a broad range of information, ideas, and entertainment.

VISION

To be the welcoming heart of our community where all come to learn, discover, create, and connect.



ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Finney County is home to 12,648 households and is a young community; the median age is 30.6 years. An estimated 31 percent of the population is under 18 years, 35 percent is 18 to 44 years, 23 percent is 45 to 64 years, and 9 percent is 65 years and older.

Most households in the County are families (74 percent) underscoring the importance of family programs at the Library.

Finney County is a diverse community. Among those at least five years old, 43 percent speak a language other than English at home. Early literacy education provided by FCPL is key to preparing these children for kindergarten. The library serves as the first classroom for this age group and must allocate resources appropriately.

The majority of 4th graders in Garden City are not proficient in reading (60.5%). FCPL must focus on early intervention so that these children have an opportunity to succeed.

The majority of adults over the age of 25 (71 percent) graduated from high school and 17 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher. Educational achievement in the County highlights the need for FCPL programs and services focused on career education and GED preparation.

Nearly one-fourth of children in Finney County (22 percent) live in poverty, compared with 13 percent of people 65 years old and over and 16 percent of the total population. FCPL is a crucial resource for low-income residents. As FCPL provides free access to computers, Internet, educational programs and other services, the entire community is supported and lifted to enhanced quality of life.¹

FCPL is a key contributor to the vitality of the Finney County community and works in concert with other County and nonprofit organizations. The FCPL Strategic Plan, therefore, aligns with the following Finney County Comprehensive Plan (2018) goals:

- Finney County should support efforts of educational institutions in development of more technical training programs that can help to build a thriving and sustainable workforce in the County.
- Explore new partnerships and strategies with local students and schools to build opportunities for retaining local talent within the community.²

CURRENT FCPL OPERATIONS

The Library, a bustling hub of activity close to downtown Garden City, has grown significantly as more and more families access educational opportunities. Patron satisfaction is high.

FCPL's Nature Explore Classroom is a space to build, create music, draw, read, and imagine. The outdoor classroom is used for storytime activities where families learn and read together in a friendly space.

The FCPL Board of Trustees govern the Library through budget monitoring while setting strategic initiatives. The Friends of the Finney County Public Library is an engaged group of volunteers providing strong support and consistent book sale revenue.

FINNEY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY OCTOBER 2018 - OCTOBER 2019

132,284
VISITS

21,724
PEOPLE ATTENDED A
CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

22,987
COMPUTER
SESSIONS

108,676
PHYSICAL ITEMS
CHECKED OUT

32,258
VISITED THE
WEBSITE

9,305
DIGITAL ITEMS
CHECKED OUT

LIBRARIES OF THE FUTURE

Achievement of the goals in this plan will ensure the Finney County Public Library continues to offer excellent 21st century library services:

- Provide access for all
- Act as educational and cultural center
- Inspire and engage the entire diverse community
- Build upon strengths by fostering and creating partnerships
- Lead in technology by providing information and access
- Connect with the community by providing engaging programs
- Reach out to the community to engage with users where they are
- Serve as a community hub where all are welcome

The Finney County Public Library and its Board of Trustees has challenged itself to change lives in the Finney County community. This strategic plan will guide the way by focusing on literacy, young children and the underserved, all while embracing and celebrating the cultural differences that make each neighbor unique.

STRATEGIC GOALS

EDUCATE | CONNECT | ENGAGE | ENHANCE

1. Educate

FCPL IS THE CENTER FOR LIFELONG LEARNING IN FINNEY COUNTY.

The goal to educate will be achieved through implementing strategies such as:

- Celebrate reading for all ages throughout the year.
- Increase opportunities for local educators to engage with and use the Library and its resources.
- Ensure physical space and collections align with needs of the modern learner.
- Center programs on literacy-based practices for all ages with a special focus on early learning.

Measurable objectives will include:

- Summer reading participation (weekly participants) will increase by 5% each year. Staff will establish a baseline for weekly participation in the summer of 2020.
- Investigate and implement reading incentives for year-round activities.
- 25 percent of Finney County teachers will engage with FCPL collection and services by Dec. 31, 2023.
- Collection will be right sized and refreshed by Dec. 31, 2022.
- Between 2020 and 2023 circulation will increase 5 percent.
- From 2020 to 2023, 75 percent of Library programs will be focused on literacy in the following areas: early, adult, financial, technology, information, digital.



STRATEGIC GOALS

EDUCATE | **CONNECT** | ENGAGE | ENHANCE

2. Connect

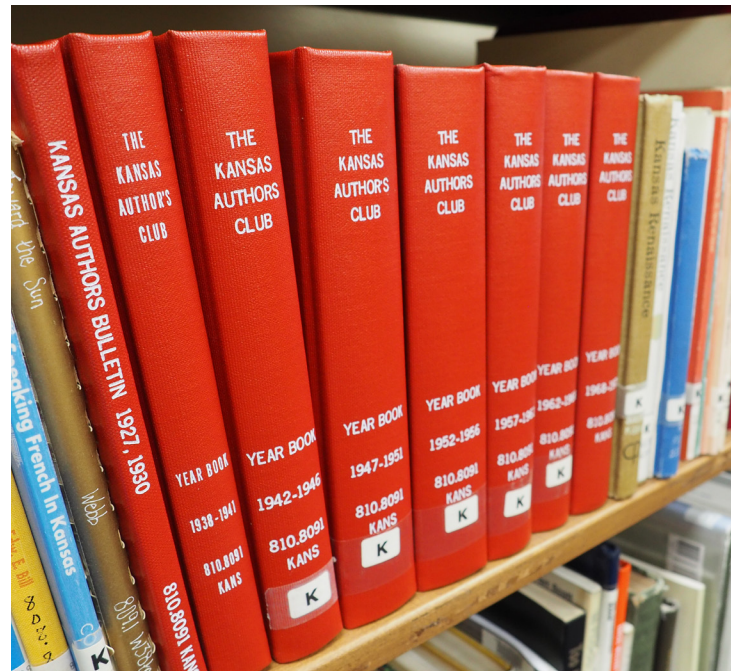
FCPL IS THE PARTNER OF CHOICE FOR SERVICE AGENCIES AND COMMUNITY LEADERS.

The goal to connect will be achieved through implementing strategies such as:

- Partner with entities to offer classes that enable community members to be successful in their personal and professional lives (starting a small business, cultural differences, adult literacy).
- Position Library as cornerstone for local connections, where learning and conversations happen in Finney County.
- Support goals of local organizations while communicating needs of the Library.
- Connect community members to share cultural experiences, share skills and capture stories of the history and progress of Finney County.

Measurable objectives will include:

- Offer classes based on community needs (Majority taught by outside partners) beginning with focus on adult literacy by Oct. 31, 2020.
- Library staff will present at four community events each year (county commission meeting, local community service organizations, etc.), and attend one different community meeting per month.
- FCPL will host a culture fair to bring the community together to learn and share during 2021.
- The Kansas Room will expand and add FCPL-produced oral histories by Dec. 31, 2023.



STRATEGIC GOALS

EDUCATE | CONNECT | **ENGAGE** | ENHANCE

3. Engage

FCPL PROVIDES INNOVATIVE SERVICES, WITH EMPHASIS ON UNDERSERVED COMMUNITY.

The goal to engage will be achieved through implementing strategies such as:

- Focus on needs of underserved populations - use technology, staff and innovative techniques to reach these community members.
- Embed Library into local community via regular contact with partner organizations (hospital, Tyson).
- Market services through various outlets in order to reach a broad audience.
- Provide research based early childhood literacy programs throughout the community.

Measurable objectives will include:

- Offer storytimes at out-of-Library location by August 31, 2020. Host one storytime per month at community meeting place (laundromat, store, etc.).
- Expand services to underserved community of adults by Dec. 31, 2021.
- FCPL staff will have established relationships with partners at Tyson, St. Catherine Hospital and Live Well Finney County by January 31, 2021 to raise awareness of Library services. Staff will host card registration drives in coordination with these locations twice per year, resulting in at least 50 new library cards per year.
- The Library will develop or work in partnership with another organization in order to create a series of early literacy programs to host at three locations per year beginning in 2021.



STRATEGIC GOALS

EDUCATE | CONNECT | ENGAGE | **ENHANCE**

4. Enhance

FCPL PROVIDES AN EXPERIENCE THAT SURPRISES AND DELIGHTS.

The goal to enhance will be achieved through implementing strategies such as:

- Update and promote Library collection.
- Focus on core programming and incorporate nationally recognized programs into Library services (1,000 books before kindergarten, Girls who code, Reading buddies).
- Investigate ways to better capture and tell the story of Library use (customer check-in process at programs) and implement strategies.
- Increase value of library card throughout the community.
- Create opportunities for staff members to learn and grow in their position in order to provide the best possible customer experience.

Measurable objectives will include:

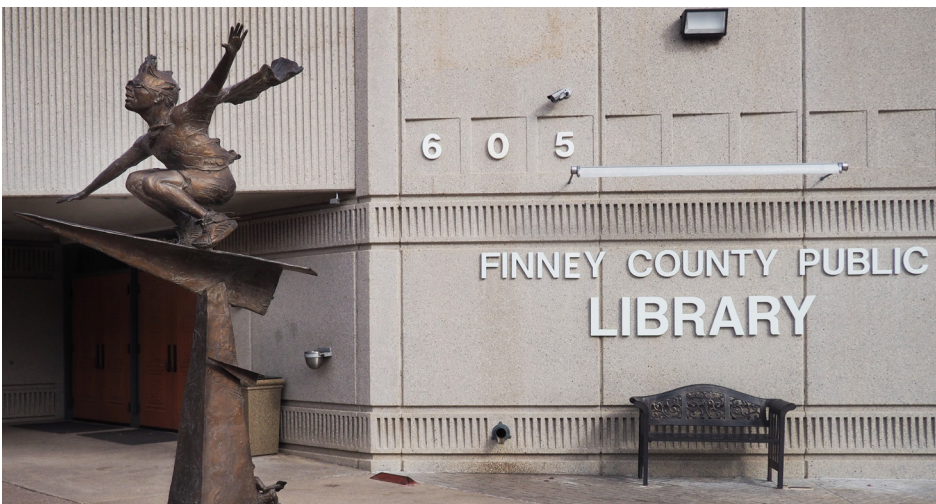
- Develop a variety of reading lists for children 12 and under by Dec. 31, 2020. Develop a variety of reading lists for teens 13-17 and adults by Dec. 31, 2021.
- Improve wayfinding signage throughout the building by Dec. 31, 2020.
- Research high quality Library programs and choose those that meet Finney County needs. Launch new programs by Oct. 31, 2020.
- Develop a process for patrons to use Library cards to check in at FCPL programs and launch by Jan. 31, 2021. By Dec. 31, 2021, 75 percent of programs will include the card check-in feature.
- Investigate opportunities to increase Library card value (discounts for event admission, local coffee shops, etc.) with at least one partner by Dec. 31, 2020. Program will expand as appropriate.
- All staff will receive customer service training by Dec. 31, 2020.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to everyone who offered ideas, suggestions and advice to ensure the Library continues to provide quality service to Finney County. Focus group attendees including representatives from Finney County government, Garden City Area Chamber of Commerce, Finney County Economic Development, Kansas Children's Service League, the Finney County Extension Office and many more provided valuable input.

Community members completed surveys, participated in focus groups and provided additional comments and ideas. Special thanks to Library Director Pam Tuller and the dedicated FCPL staff.



APPENDIX I

FCPL Use

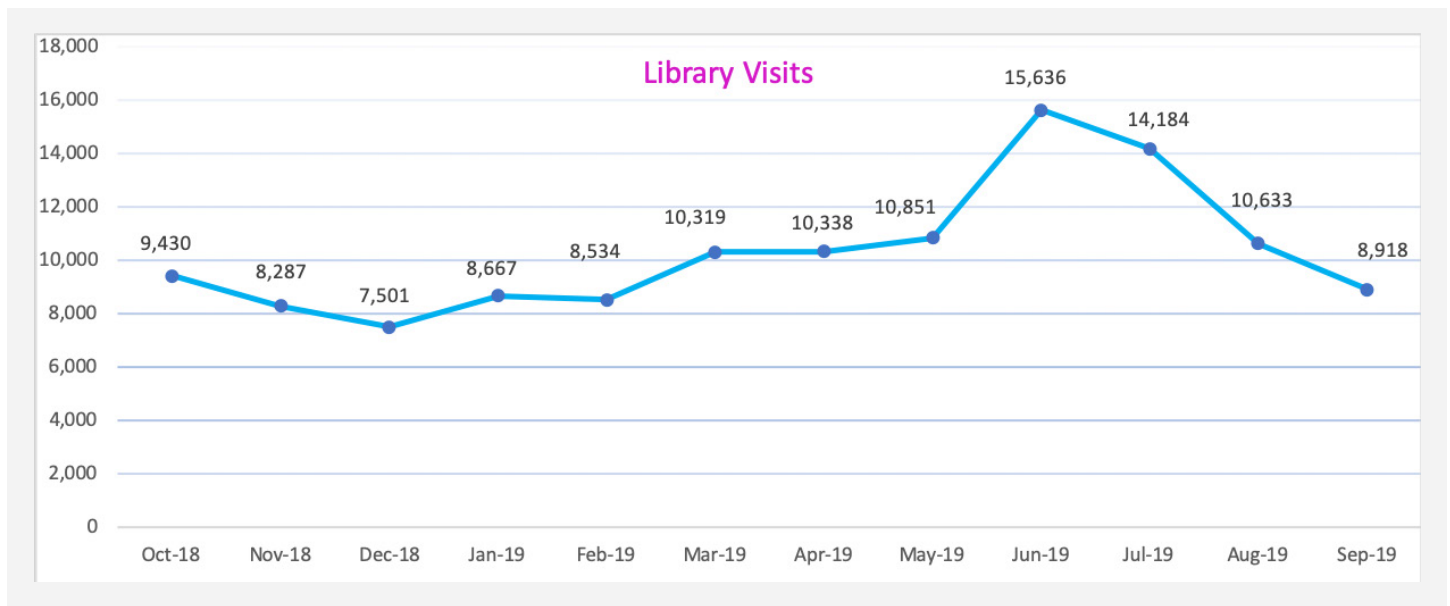
The information below was used to develop the strategic plan. As plan objectives are met, usage is expected to grow and change.

Patron Information

30 percent of the population of Finney County are registered library users, 10 percent of whom have used their card during the past 12 months. Heavy Library users comprise four percent of the total population, checking out 12 items or more during the past 12 months. Heavy users (1,350 card holders) accounted for 88 percent of all circulation during the past 12 months.

Library Visits

The Library welcomed 132,284 visitors from October 2018 to October 2019, with heaviest use during the summer due to the summer reading program.



Programs

Library programs are well attended, particularly by school-aged children, with 289 programs and 15,515 attendees.

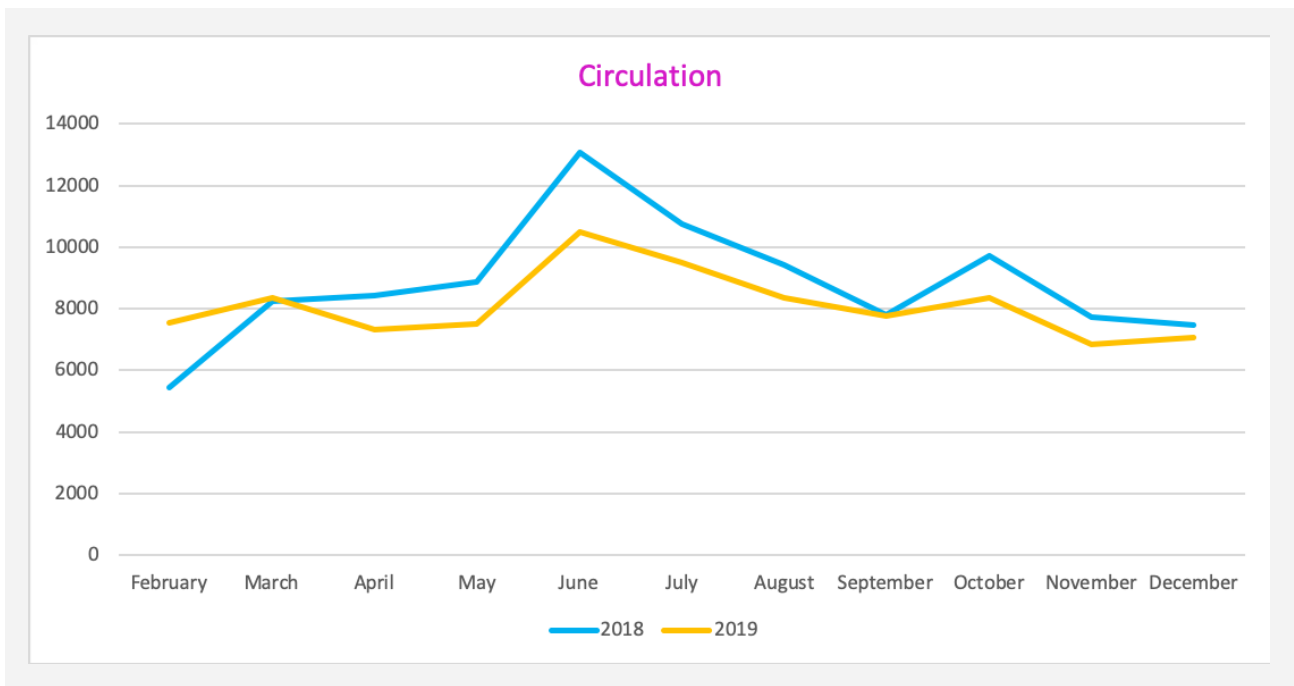
Age Group	Number of Programs	Attendance
Pre-School	132	6,209
School Aged	289	15,515
Young Adult	124	1,292
Adult	163	1,462

Circulation

Although circulation is down slightly (3.8 percent) for the period November 2018 through October 2019, plans are in place to reverse that trend. A new collection performance software tool (LibraryIQ Analytics) provides detailed analysis of the collection. The following steps will improve FCPL collection performance:

- Maintain a steady flow of new materials for all ages
- Fill in gaps identified in subjects and series
- Increase large print purchasing
- Actively maintain collections based on condition and/or lack of use in last four years
- Decrease reference collection to match current public library practice
- Shift collections to allow for more display areas and “face-out” shelving of materials
- Attend Library and community events with featured materials
- Use Library tours and social media to promote collections
- Refresh Spanish collection
- Build English as a Second Language collection of tools

These action steps acknowledge the fact that the shelves are very crowded, which makes browsing difficult. Outdated and underused items will be withdrawn to provide space for new materials and better merchandising. Selection efforts will concentrate on the areas of highest circulation (adult fiction, children’s picture books, and entertainment DVDs) with additional focus on the needs of preschoolers, families, teens, homeschoolers, seniors, and non-English-speakers. Space devoted to nonfiction will be reduced to better balance collection size and use. All work will be done while closely monitoring collection use by patrons. It is anticipated that collection use will change as more of the population engages with FCPL.



This shows the top ten categories for circulation.

Category	Circulation	% Total Circ.	Current Items	% Collection
Fiction	9500	9.53	15022	13.33
Children's Picture Book	8404	8.43	7565	6.72
DVD Drama	6935	6.96	2068	1.84
DVD Family	6880	6.9	1881	1.67
Nonfiction	5604	5.62	20240	17.97
Children's Fiction	5263	5.28	7084	6.29
DVD Television	4296	4.31	1479	1.31
DVD Action / Adventure	4228	4.24	656	0.58
Children's Nonfiction	3975	3.99	8007	7.11
Children's Easy Reader Fiction	9500	9.53	15022	13.33

Computer Use

FCPL technology offerings have changed and grown and will continue to do so. Bandwidth available to staff and patrons has improved. Continued monitoring is necessary as patrons increasingly use their own devices in the Library which impacts overall speed. A prime factor in modern libraries is access to data, services and entertainment in a fast and convenient manner. Staff access to collection and patron data can also be affected by bandwidth speed.

The Library has a fair number of computers that are at end of life and while there are already replacements scheduled for the coming year it should be a priority to replace as many as possible due to the end of life of the Windows 7 operating system. More current computer models can be upgraded to Windows 10 which could postpone replacement.

The Finney County Public Library web space was recently updated and continued improvement and ADA compatibility is in place. Library web spaces are vital to a good patron following and supply convenient access to the catalog and programming.

The Library should:

- Monitor Internet usage trends to determine the best possible solution for immediate and future needs and increase Bandwidth if needed.
- Re-examine existing technology and how it is setup with an eye to reduce connections and make sure existing connections and devices are needed and in good working order.
- Replace end of life devices and update more current machines to Windows 10 operating system.
- Continue improving the Library web space and expand outreach through social media.

APPENDIX II

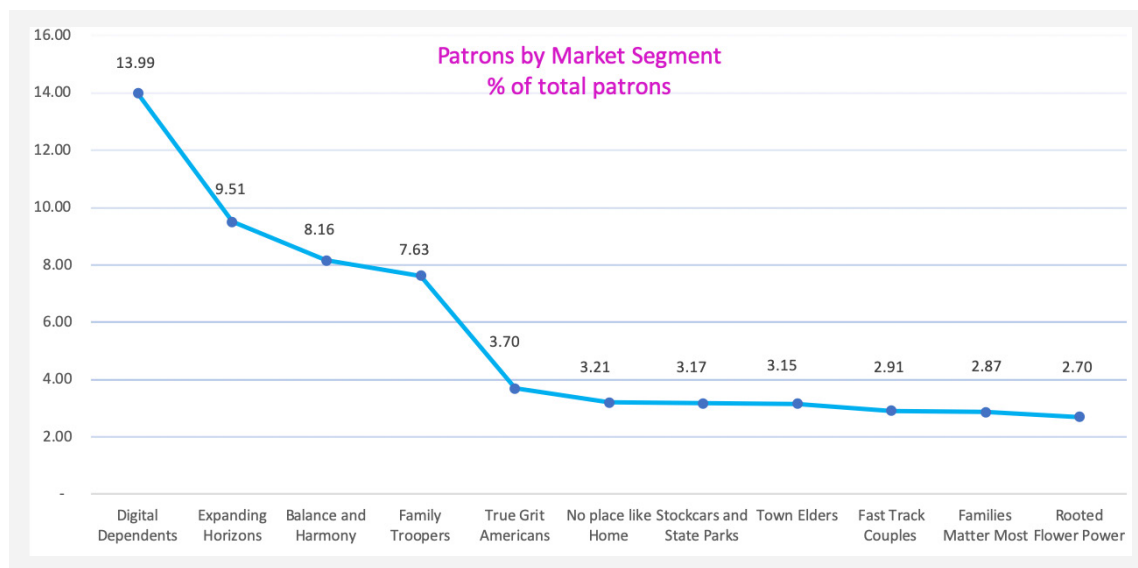
Demographics of Finney County

The list of Library patron addresses was uploaded to the Experian marketing services tool. The following information is a result of that comparison which gives insight into the users of the Library as compared to the population of Finney County.

Source: <https://www.experian.com/marketing-services/marketing-services.html>

Percentage of Patrons by Market Segment

Experian identifies various groups of people by categories. These categories allow us to anticipate behaviors and understand the community the Library serves.



Top Market Segments of FCPL users are

- Digital Dependents 13.9 percent
- Expanding Horizons 9.51 percent
- Balance and Harmony 8.16 percent
- Family Troopers 7.63 percent
- Together these segments account for 39.28 percent of the total patron base
- The remaining 60 percent of the patrons are divided among 67 different segments, none of which account for more than 5 percent of the total

Digital dependents are between the ages of 25-30, with an income between \$35,000-49,999. They are typically single, outdoor lovers who are ambitious and prefer to hear about news and events via their cell phone.

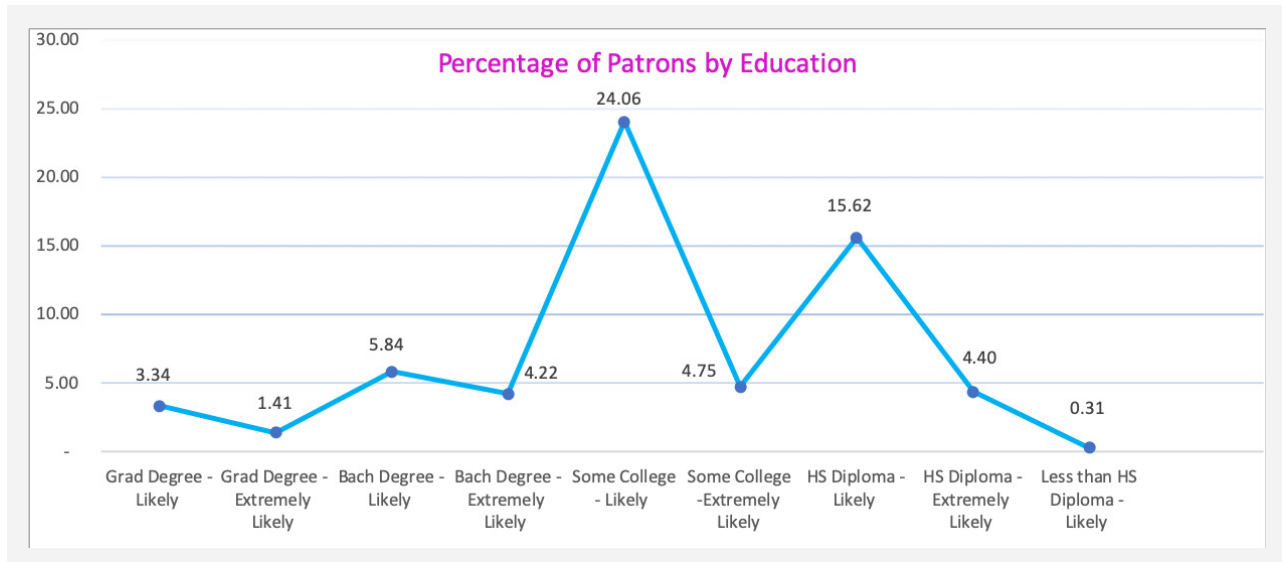
Expanding horizons are between the ages of 36-45, with an income between \$35,000-49,999. They are homeowners with children between the ages of 10-12. They work blue collar jobs and prefer to consume news through their computers.

Patrons by Language Spoken

Although Finney County is noted for its diversity, the overwhelming majority of Library patrons speak either

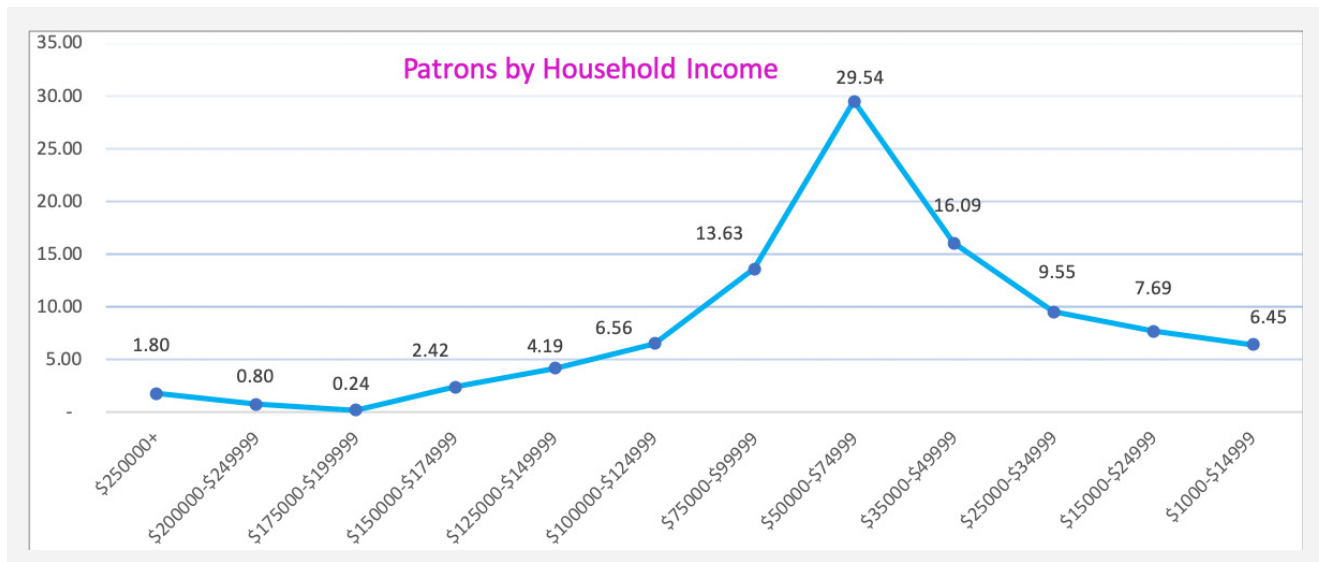
- English 64 percent
- Or Spanish 33.06 percent

Patrons by Education



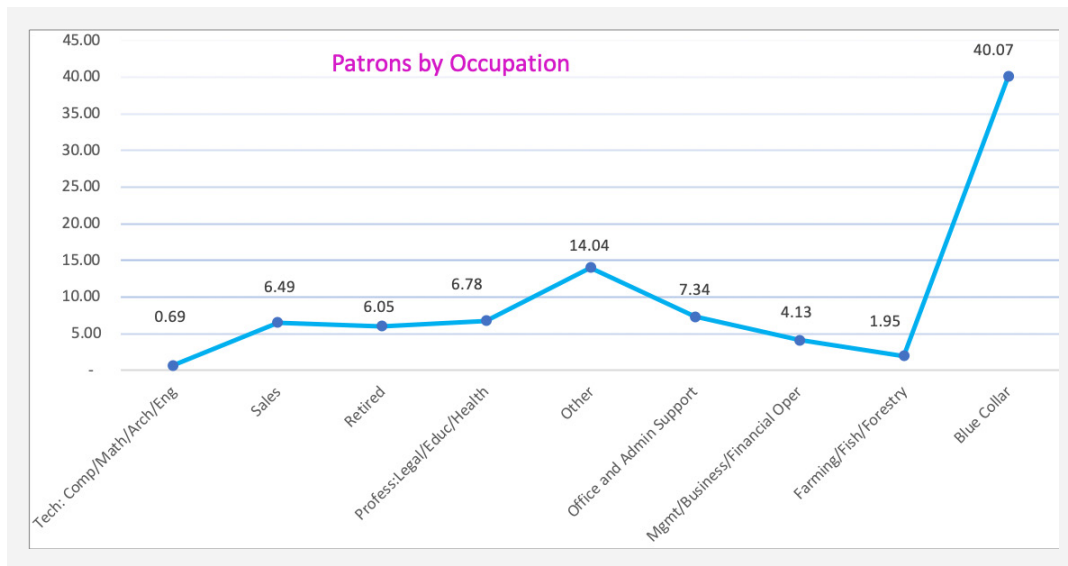
14 percent of Finney County patrons are likely to have a graduate or bachelor’s degree, while 44 percent had some college but did not graduate. 20 percent stopped their education with a high school diploma and the remainder have not started, or are currently in school.

Patrons by Household Income



The median household income for Finney County Library patrons is \$50-75,000. 85 percent of the patron households have household incomes greater than \$25,000 and 15 percent of the patron households have household incomes below \$25,000. This tells us who is currently using the Library.

Patrons by Occupation



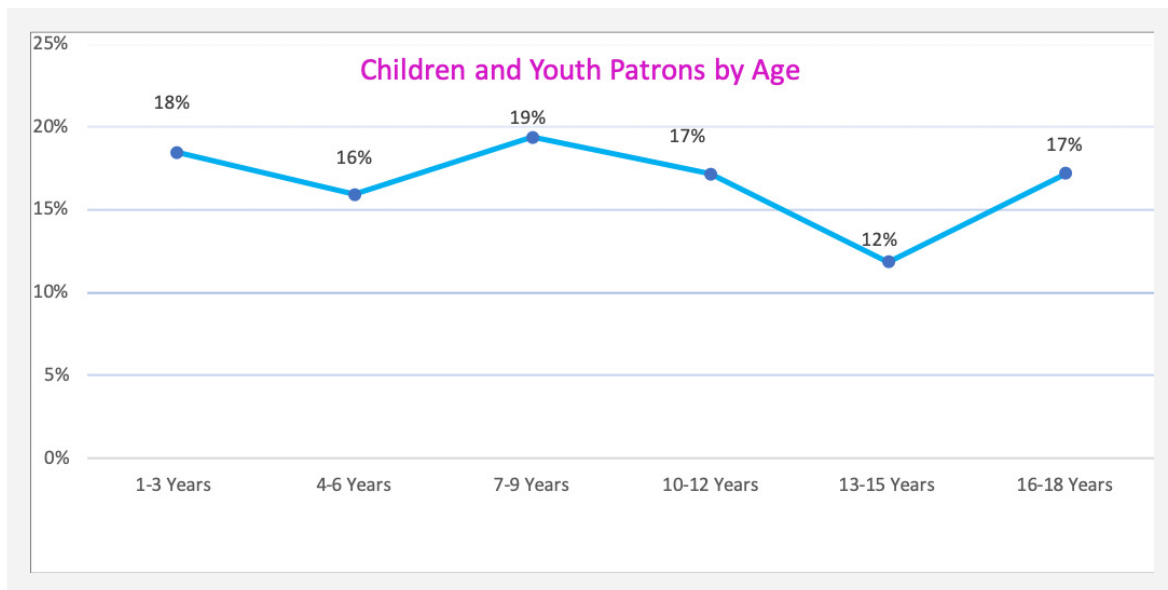
The largest occupational group among Finney County patrons is Blue Collar encompassing over 40 percent of all patrons. Farming only accounts for 1.95 percent of all Library patrons.

Patrons with Children

Over 60 percent of Finney County Library patrons have children under 18 at home, while 27 percent do not have children under 18 at home.

46 percent of all Finney County households have children living at home, so the Library has a larger share of the households with children under 18 than the County as a whole.

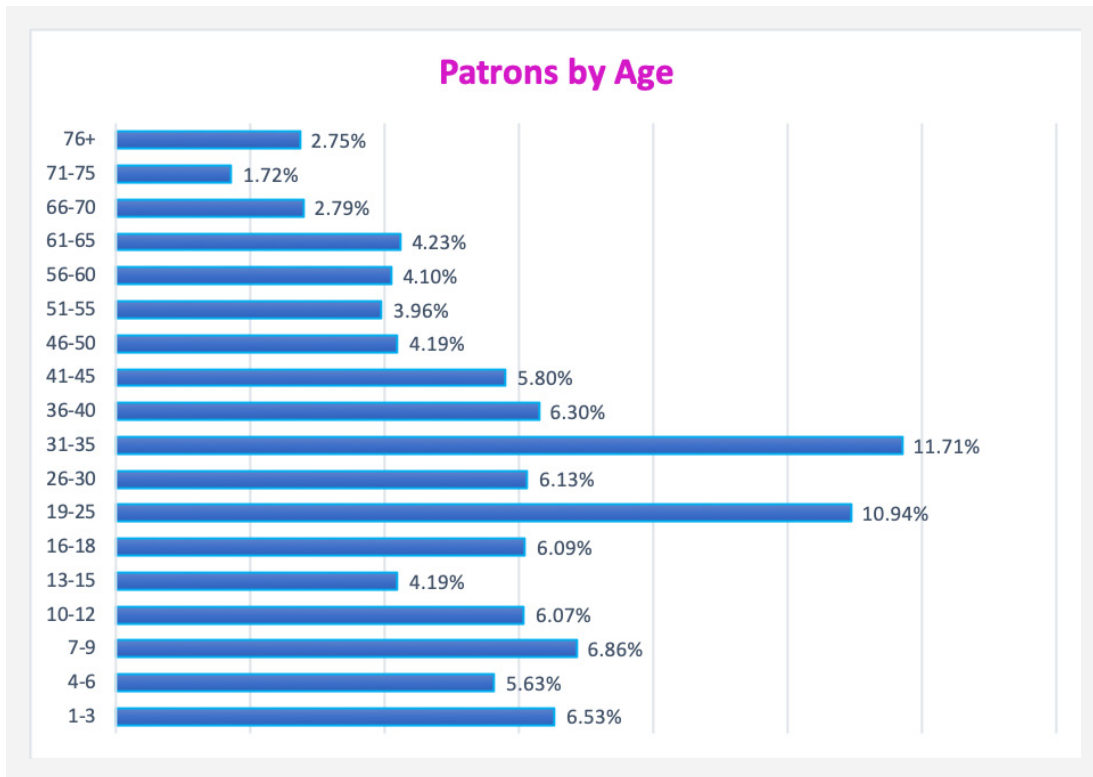
Children and Youth Patrons by Age



Finney County Library's children and young adult patrons are fairly evenly divided between the age groups

- The largest number are between the ages of 7-9 accounting for 19 percent of the total
- The smallest number are between the ages of 12-15, accounting for 12 percent of the total

All Patrons by Age



The 31-35 age group has the largest number of patrons at 11.71 percent. Young adults between the ages of 19-25 are the second largest group at 10.94 percent. The smallest age group is 71-75 at 1.72 percent. Patrons under the age of 18 account for 35.38 percent of all patrons, while patrons over the age of 50 account for just 19.54 percent of all patrons.

APPENDIX III

Mission Statement

The Library's current mission statement is:

The Finney County Public Library, its staff and board of trustees are committed to providing materials, programs and services that will advance the educational, informational and recreational needs of our culturally diverse and growing region.

Staff and board members were asked to provide feedback on the mission statement by reflecting on the values of the Library and these were the findings:

FCPL staff and board members value

- Meeting community needs
- Literacy
- Joyful education
- Customer service
- Rights of all to learn and grow
- Intellectual freedom, accountability, diversity, fairness, integrity of information
- Patron satisfaction
- The power/importance of story
- Role in igniting passion for reading
- Providing a welcoming/peaceful/encouraging environment to all people where they can grow, discover new things and connect in meaningful ways with others

In order to meet the goals and strategies of this plan, it is recommended to change the mission statement to:

Finney County Public Library Mission - Engage our community, inspire lifelong learning, and provide universal access to a broad range of information, ideas, and entertainment.

Vision Statement

The Library's current vision statement is:

We aspire to create a welcoming place that celebrates diversity and lifelong learning while being a recognized leader and facilitator within the community.

Staff and board members were asked to provide feedback on the vision statement by reflecting on what the Library wants to achieve and these were the findings:

FCPL staff and board members hope to

- Bring knowledge and literacy to the community through a love of the Library
- Provide a safe place for patrons to gather, express themselves and explore their interests
- Be a place for lifetime learning for all ages in the community
- Be a safe and inclusive environment for all patrons and guests regardless of their background
- Provide educational materials for all ages

- Offer a safe and welcoming environment where diverse minds grow and dreams are achieved
- Celebrate a diverse community
- Offer the absolute best customer service
- Welcome a continual stream of diverse people coming to the Library, learning and connecting here at our facility
- Offer a great selection of rich literature, new technology, engaging programming and family fun - and in that, to become an exciting community hub

As a unique exercise, staff and board members were asked what type of award the Library would receive in their vision of the future. Responses include:

- Patron relations – Individuals within the community are better informed of Library resources and other community resources due to the Library's presence
- Be the best Library in Kansas
- Resource equity – providing patrons of different backgrounds with opportunities to socially advance through Library resources and connections
- Outstanding achievement award for interlibrary loans
- Adapting – staff, programs and resources adapt based on the needs of the community
- New cards – register a record number of elementary and high school students for their own Library card
- Significant increase in visitors and patrons in the Library
- My desire is to see our Library leave patrons with the feeling - "I can't believe this is all free!" Updating some parts of the Library here and there, getting more professional marketing tools, and continual training of our staff in how to reach out and meet the needs of those who walk through the door.

In order to meet the goals and strategies of this plan, it is recommended to change the vision statement to:

Finney County Public Library Vision - To be the welcoming heart of our community where all come to learn, discover, create, and connect.

APPENDIX IV

Public Survey

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Of the 348 responses, 292 (84 percent) had used the Library in the past 12 months. The remaining 56 (16 percent) had not used the Library in the past 12 months. 55 percent of community members have a very positive impression of the Library and only 3 percent have a negative or very negative impression of the Library.

FREQUENCY OF FCPL USAGE IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS

Many respondents (26 percent) use the Library at least once a week, the majority (35 percent) visit the Library once or twice a month, with the rest visiting 1-5 times per year (39 percent). 37 percent stated they had attended a program at the Library in the past year, while 63 percent had not.

IMPORTANCE OF VARIOUS FCPL SERVICES

The top-ranking services were: Book collection, Summer Reading Program and the Children's Area. The lowest ranking services were: Music collection (which has been withdrawn), Magazine collection, and the DVD/movie collection.

SATISFACTION WITH FCPL COLLECTIONS

35 percent of respondents were very satisfied with the Library's collection and only 5 percent were satisfied or dissatisfied. When asked which areas needed to be improved, the highest response was Adult Fiction, with Adult Non-Fiction as the second highest. A list of specific requests can be found on p 15 of the survey.

SATISFACTION WITH FCPL STAFF

87 percent of responses indicated that staff are kind and helpful when assisting customers. 3 percent said staff were not kind, and 8 percent weren't sure. Open-ended responses included comments that stated customer service varies by the staff members.

Respondents believe staff to be knowledgeable when assisting customers, 3 percent did not find staff to be knowledgeable and capable and 10 percent were not sure.

AWARENESS OF ONLINE RESOURCES

Community members were aware of audiobooks and streaming services, but the majority were not aware of Learning Express or Mango Languages. Only 8 percent were aware of Mango Languages.

39 percent had used an electronic resource through the Library in the past year, 61 percent had not.

Many stated they were not aware or not interested in using electronic resources. In the open-ended question users requested ancestry.com.

FINDING OUT ABOUT FCPL SERVICES, PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

87 percent of respondents were aware of Library programs, 13 percent were not aware and 62 people skipped the question. The majority of responses indicated that Facebook was their primary resource for

finding out about Library programs, with word of mouth, the outdoor sign and online calendar closely following.

The preferred method of communication regarding events was through Facebook, with the online calendar close behind. The least preferred method was through a newspaper ad or a printed newsletter. Several open-ended responses requested they be notified of programs through email.

NON USERS

REASONS FOR NOT USING FCPL

Of the respondents who stated they did not use the Library, the following reasons were given: 44 percent have a computer at home and do not need Library services, 24 percent do not have time to use the Library and 16 percent claimed Library programs did not interest them enough to visit the Library. Open-ended responses indicated customers had moved, with only a few negative comments about staff or the facility. "I have moved out of state, but your Library has been one of my favorite public libraries."

52 percent of non-users were aware of Library programs and 37 percent were aware of eAudiobooks.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF ALL RESPONSES

- Of those with children, the majority of responses indicated their children were between the ages of 7-11.
- 25 percent of respondents were between the ages of 25-34 and 81 percent were female.
- 76 percent were white and 20 percent were Hispanic or Latino.
- 84 percent listed 67846 as their zip code.

ENDNOTES

[1] US Census Bureau. (2017). Narrative Profiles - Finney County. Retrieved November 1, 2019, from <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/narrative-profiles/2017/report.php?geotype=county&state=20&county=055>

[2] WSP Consulting (2017). Finney County Comprehensive Plan. Retrieved October 15, 2019, from <https://www.finneycounty.org/DocumentCenter/View/4370/Finney-County-Comprehensive-Plan---Revised-2018>