



THE | DAUPHIN COUNTY
LIBRARY SYSTEM

LIBRARY

OPEN FOR DISCOVERY

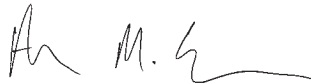
Strategic Plan 2020-2022 Overview

Dauphin County Library System

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Executive Summary

The Strategic Plan offered here provides The Library a roadmap for the next three years as it seeks to expand community access to the transformative power of public library service. The plan provides support and direction for The Library to become firmly embedded in and fully responsive to our shared community. It describes plans to embrace welcoming and inclusive service, provide a safe and supportive “third space,” facilitate our community’s desire to reconnect and provide equitable access to the resources that allow our community members to reach their fullest potential. It is a vision for the future built solidly on the foundation of a successful and adaptive past.



Andrew Enders
Immediate Past President
Board of Trustees



Annie Garner
President
Board of Trustees



Karen Cullings
Executive Director





Planning Process

The strategic vision offered in the plan that follows is the result of two important and intertwined activities that informed it: a clear-eyed look at internal operations and a conscious effort to turn outward. The plan is supported by standard planning activities, including benchmarking, an environmental scan and the analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. But the greatest insights continue to be gained through conversations with individuals and groups within the community. It is through that process that The Library has learned that community members are feeling increasingly isolated from one another, lack opportunities for civic engagement, are concerned about public safety, want a more inclusive community, and are seeking forums for the civil discussion of difficult topics. They want support for personal, economic and community growth and need help navigating a rapidly changing

technological environment. Those insights were significant drivers of The Library's planning for the next few years. In addition, a fresh look at internal operations allowed The Library to see where its practices could be altered or improved to provide greater access to library services and move the community toward its goals.

This plan does not aim to predict the future as much as position The Library to be nimble in responding to changing public needs. A core strategy supporting this effort is the development of effective community partnerships. The Library recognizes its longstanding status as a unique and truly democratic public service while embracing the efficiency and effectiveness of working in tandem with the county, its municipalities, and other community agencies to provide the resources critical to community health and growth.

Areas of Strategic Focus

Based on this feedback, planning, and review, The Library has identified six areas in which to focus its energy and effort:

- Building a connected and inclusive community
- Serving as a community “second responder”
- Providing a welcoming, safe and supportive place to learn and belong
- Being an effective workforce development partner
- Continuing to be a champion of literacy
- Ensuring a vibrant library organization for our community





Mission:

The Library builds community and transforms lives by connecting people, ideas, and opportunities.

Vision:

The Library is the community's trusted partner for growth and connection. Access to information and inspiration fuels a thriving community and individual achievement.

Diversity & Inclusion: Everyone is welcome here.

We're committed to:

- Respecting the uniqueness of each individual
- Serving with kindness
- Upholding human dignity
- Communicating openly and often
- Promoting access to information
- Encouraging the exploration of ideas and viewpoints
- Reflecting our diverse community through staff and services
- Eliminating barriers
- Supporting active minds and open hearts

How can we do better?

Let us know at dcls.org/strategicplan





Build a Connected & Inclusive Community

Input gathered from individual and group conversations has clearly identified our community's desire for safe spaces to discuss difficult topics and to reconnect community members currently distanced from each other by technology and other societal changes. **Community members have expressed their desire for a more empathetic and inclusive community.**

The Library will support this community goal by keeping open communication channels with our community and making service decisions that foster inclusion and celebrate diversity. We will seek to create community within the library system and connect with and support the broader community outside it.

PRIORITY STRATEGIES:

- Continue community conversations
- Integrate community input systemwide
- Identify and remove barriers to service
- Prioritize diversity and inclusion systemwide

connected



Serve as Second Responder

The Library will leverage its role as a longstanding, trusted public institution to support a safe and inclusive community. It will **seek out alliances that aid in connecting people with The Library and community services they need** and will pursue opportunities to meet community members where they are and listen without judgment to their input. When those needs cannot be met by The Library, we will seek to make effective referrals and communicate those needs to community partners.

PRIORITY STRATEGIES:

- Expand empathy driven service to all locations
- Expand Born to Read outreach
- Identify and deliver critical services to marginalized populations

responsive





welcoming

Be a Welcoming Place to Belong & Learn

To foster the joy of learning and sustain our community's desire to reach its fullest potential, The Library will **serve as an effective community third space, offering a welcoming atmosphere and facilities, staff and services that support personal and professional growth.** Library spaces and outreach delivery will be flexible to meet changing community needs.



PRIORITY STRATEGIES:

- Provide consistently excellent library service
- Create welcoming and flexible library spaces
- Evaluate and update service needs in northern Dauphin County



Be an Effective Workforce Development Partner

Embracing the clear connection between public libraries and economic development, The Library will enhance its services to further support the community's economic growth. The Library will provide learning opportunities that support the five literacies identified by the PA Forward initiative, as well as those that specifically support job seeker success and media literacy. School-age and teen services will focus on opportunities in basic literacy as well as science, technology, engineering, arts and math learning (STEAM).

PRIORITY STRATEGIES:

- Revise and expand early learning STEM/STEAM learning support opportunities
- Expand service at McCormick Riverfront Library to support STEAM
- Implement Grow with Google
- Expand partnerships with schools and educational institutions
- Introduce media literacy skill building programs



Serve as the Literacy Champion

Recognizing the pivotal role basic literacy plays in individual and community success and the unique ability of public libraries to support it, The Library will **assist in addressing the county's 13% illiteracy rate by focusing on Kindergarten readiness and student support as well as promoting and supporting a community of active readers.**



PRIORITY STRATEGIES:

- Develop and implement Kindergarten Readiness programming track
- Update Summer Learning program
- Develop consistent reading related communication with library members



reading



Ensure a Vibrant Organization

Organizational health is critical to successfully reaching strategic goals and continuing to support and connect our community. The Library will **work toward a mission-focused, open-communication culture that continually assesses performance and evaluates impact.** We will develop internal processes that support library staff retention, accountability and trust. We will approach our work with forethought and planning, as well as with the willingness to adapt plans to meet changing needs.



PRIORITY STRATEGIES:

- Formalize an internal communications plan
- Develop an effective marketing and community communication plan
- Support and deepen employee engagement
- Institute an annual outcomes and evaluation process



healthy



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