Connecticut State Library
Division of Library Development
Strategic Focus Plan
2015-2018
Developed by the Division of Library Development Staff

What’s changed at DLD?
For libraries to thrive in the current information-rich, knowledge-based society, the Division of Library Development must concentrate its work in areas that meet the current needs and priorities of libraries and the people they serve. The Division’s key principal is to work together with our colleagues in the Connecticut library community toward the common goal of making libraries “a trusted community resource and an essential platform for learning, creativity and innovation in the community.”(Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries, Rising to the Challenge: Re-Envisioning Public Libraries, Washington, D.C.: The Aspen Institute, October 2014, page iv)
The Division of Library Development engaged in a strategic planning process in the Winter/Spring of 2015 to produce goals that would guide the Division through the next several years. Drawing on our participation in the Aspen Institute *Dialogue on Public Libraries* we identified six areas which will receive significant organizational focus and allocation of resources:

1. **Platform**
2. **Education**
3. **The seven literacies**
4. **Place**
5. **Advocacy**
6. **Strategic Communication**

While this plan moves the Division in some important new directions, it is not meant to be a comprehensive catalog of all DLD activities. Rather this plan concentrates on identifying the strategic focus areas our services were built on in the past and will be built on in the future. And within these focus areas we identify the specific objectives we intend to reach in the next few years. Our overall goal is to adapt thoughtfully to the emerging challenges and opportunities that we face as a state agency and find meaningful ways of helping libraries provide innovative services that meet changing community needs.

**How do we deliver?**

*Engage and Empower* through*

- **People**
- **Place** and
- **Platform**

(*reference Aspen Institute Report*)

**Overall Success Indicators**

- Library professionals across the state will have access to DLD resources and services regardless of location, time restrictions, job status, experience, or position.
- CT Libraries will have the tools and resources to develop into start-up incubators.
PLATFORM
constantly evolving; the way the Division delivers resources and services must transcend the traditional methods.

Objective 1: Build a flexible digital portal that meets the needs of the library and greater CT community.
Objective 2: Support a diverse range of digital initiatives that empower CT libraries as incubators for creativity.
Objective 3: Foster enthusiasm and support for the platform through meaningful engagement and consistent communication.

Success Indicators
1. The platform sparks a continuous flow of ideas for new services and new ways of delivering services.
2. A process is in place to incorporate these new ideas in the platform’s development plans.

EDUCATION
enhanced by technology to foster more dynamic training, brainstorming and creativity among CT librarians who will feel empowered to engage their communities.

Objective 1: Be the incubator for knowledge and creativity through interactive learning.
Objective 2: Recruit for a dynamic catalog of “experts”—home grown and beyond—with diverse backgrounds and unique skill sets to meet the knowledge requirements of the library community.
Objective 3: Be accessible; deliver education in a variety of formats and platforms to engage the broader CT library community.

Success Indicators
1. Library staff at all organizational levels and with diverse learning styles demonstrate a measurable increase in knowledge and understanding of library related facts, skills and issues.
2. Content of DLD training meets the professional development needs of the library community and is developed based on their feedback.
3. CT library community turns to DLD for inspiration, knowledge, and resources that improve their skills and enhance job performance.
The SEVEN LITERACIES

- **Early Literacy** – CT families will have the knowledge and support needed to foster early literacy skills in their young children. Children will start school with early literacy skills necessary for grade-level success.

- **Basic Literacy** – CT residents’ literacy rates will be raised, fostering a trained and skilled workforce that contributes to the economic growth and development of communities and the state as a whole.

- **Digital Literacy** – CT residents will be empowered to access information electronically, use and share information, create original content, evaluate the value of information, and make informed decisions to fully participate in a digital society.

- **Financial Literacy** – CT residents will have the knowledge and skill to become informed consumers, grow and manage wealth, and foster innovation and entrepreneurship, which will contribute to the economic development of their community and the state as a whole.

- **Health Literacy** – CT residents will be able to manage their well-being and will be empowered to become effective partners with their healthcare providers.

- **Civic/Social Literacy** – CT citizens will have the knowledge and skills they need to improve their lives, participate and contribute effectively in their community, and connect with one another through dialogue.

- **Legal Literacy** – CT residents will have increased access to justice and have the knowledge and skills they need to effectively navigate the legal services and resources available.

**Objective 1**: Create an interactive toolkit specific to each literacy, with enhanced links to critical resources, and integrated into all aspects of consulting, training, and outreach activities.

**Objective 2**: Continue to develop strategic life learning partnerships to foster empowerment, independence, and self sufficiency in each of the seven literacies.

**Objective 3**: With strategic partners, develop innovative and comprehensive learning modules to fully engage DLD staff and CT librarians in the seven literacies.

**Success Indicators**

1. All public and school librarians are aware of the literacy toolkits and learning modules available from DLD.
2. Library staff has the training and tools to assess their own understanding of the seven literacies and have access to resources to improve their knowledge.
3. Libraries are able to offer their patrons resources and services in any or all of the seven literacies using DLD toolkits.
PLACE
both physical and virtual; it establishes personal connections, provides an anchor to the library community, creates a connecting location, and engages librarians to share, network, create, and so much more.

**Objective 1:** Develop a plan for a model interactive, flexible, incubator space to engage the library community in learning, collaboration, and creating activities.

**Objective 2:** Focus existing and future space on services – consulting, training, digital creator labs, demonstration areas and programming.

**Objective 3:** Space as a platform to foster digital initiatives as well as a mobile space to engage the library community anywhere in the state.

---

**Success Indicators**

1. DLD will develop and implement a mobile lab with “try-it-out” maker concepts, new technology, and trainers to visit and engage librarians throughout the state.
2. DLD will have a modern, well-equipped, central location from which to offer state-of-the-art professional development, consulting, and digital information services.
3. DLD space will serve as a model for CT libraries and will inspire construction grant projects that design library space using these same principles.

---

**FOCUS 5**

**ADVOCACY**

training and resources are critical to ensuring the long-term sustainability of all libraries.

**Objective 1:** Develop the tools – resources, training, best practices, model programs—for libraries to “tell their story”.

**Objective 2:** Engage in ongoing outreach and consulting to empower the library community to feel confident in telling their story.

**Objective 3:** Foster strategic partnerships to leverage libraries as essential organizations in the community.

---

**Success Indicators**

1. Connecticut librarians are comfortable and confident in explaining the significance and importance of their libraries to their community.
2. Libraries will tell their stories with statistics using tools provided by DLD.
3. Libraries will be sought out by community organizations and municipal departments and agencies as partners to meet and align services with community needs.
FOCUS 6

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS
critical to all of the strategic focus areas; should be meaningful and consistent.

Objective 1: Develop a unified, clear message about who we are and what we do.
Objective 2: Deliver the message through personalized consulting with each DLD staff being responsible for engaging a specific regional area.
Objective 3: Continually evaluate and refine the message to ensure that DLD is maximizing PEOPLE, PLACE and PLATFORM to inform, engage and empower the CT library community.

Success Indicators

1. Librarians are well-informed of the resources and services available to them and the various platforms which they can access these resources.
2. Librarians are familiar with DLD staff and are fully aware of their expertise, skill sets and consulting areas.
3. Librarians feel comfortable and confident in their ability to contact DLD staff for advice, consulting, training, or other assistance as needed.
4. Present a unified social media voice, not just to pass information along but to put information in context and offer further assistance.