



LLNJ Community Workshop
Parsippany Public Library
February 2, 2017

1. Context: What's happening in the world right now that is having--or will have--a big effect on libraries in New Jersey, their people and the people they serve? Consider all scales (global, national, local) and opportunities as well as challenges.

- Library as safe place in the face of social and political difficulties.
- People increasingly acknowledge the value of libraries and their ability to make sure information is accurate.
- Importance of information literacy, maintaining objectivity in what we do.
- Serving as a neutral place for all, including opposing political groups.
- Maintain a focus for disenfranchised.
- Fear of losing IMLS funding and/or the continued existence of IMLS.
- Value of libraries being questioned—under attack (Koch brothers).
- Cuts in federal funds that could impact libraries.
- Individual self-focused expectations from patrons.
- People know that the library is welcoming to all.
- Struggling to get information out in all formats for all audiences, evaluating our technology and how to apply, teaching information literacy.
- Changing populations.
- Corporate models that are encroaching on library services.
- Cultural hub of community, serving the unique needs.
- Changing economics, changing demographics, libraries as career center and doing it on a dwindling budget.
- Threat and opportunity is that people can get information from a variety of sources, including the library or not.
- Opportunity for celebration of culture.
- Need for ESL has grown a lot—doubled.
- Information literacy in time of "fake news."
- General hysteria in the world at large.
- Redefining public perception.
- Cuts in state, federal, local funding.
- Disappearance of funding.
- How do we serve a wide ranging group of political and socio-economic views?
- Reevaluating reference services—what opportunities might we have when not stuck behind the desk?
- How do we deal with decreasing funding?
- Staff no longer feel comfortable with job security so attitudes are negative, affecting day to day service.
- Ascendance of self (it is all about ME).

- Libraries are able to educate people on the democratic process, it is an ongoing civics lesson.
- Changing job roles, resistance to change.
- The political upheaval will impact the libraries in general, which includes budgeting, staffing and services.
- Feelings of anxiety, discontent, and uncertainty can be calmed by learning information obtainable at libraries.
- The library as beacon of hope.
- No political agenda.
- Change is necessary to avoid irrelevance.
- Evolving technologies, print vs. electronic.
- Libraries need to be responsive and resilient to changing demographics.
- Giving up things that don't work or are no longer needed.
- Digitizing of materials.
- Libraries are more than information sharing; they are community centers.
- Promoting tolerance by offering inclusive programming involving businesses, making sure different cultures are represented; if you don't have the budget, use what you have—include volunteers from the community; fake news; using it as a way to instruct.

Themes and further conversation: Funding is reduced; information literacy—importance of this; evaluating reliable info. sources; neutral place for all; helping the disenfranchised; libraries as a reflection of their community; library as a safe haven; role of librarian emerging and changing; access to electronic resources; competition from other marketplaces; political upheaval; change needed to remain relevant.

2. Envisioning our future: It's 2025 and libraries of all types are thriving hubs of their communities. Draw a picture describing what's happening. What do libraries look/feel like? Where are they? Who is in and around them? What are they doing? How are libraries connected to the rest of the community and the world? Who are our partners/collaborators? What services do they offer and for whom? What new skills do librarians have and what new roles do they take on?

[Link to photos on site here]

3. Strategic Analysis: Thinking about our conversation so far, what is working really well that we want to KEEP? What isn't working that we might do well to ABANDON? What might we INVENT or REINVENT that would make a big difference to our success?

KEEP

- Cutting edge professional development.
- ILL.
- Print materials.
- Delivery.
- Professional development, learning, passion.
- Reciprocal borrowing.
- Active responsiveness to the community.
- Broadband internet connectivity and wifi access.
- Collaboration of consortiums.
- Delivery.

- Democratic access, our talent.
- Emphasis on human customer service.
- Focus on reading and literacy.
- LLNJ's multi type library association.
- MAIN.
- Positive collaboration between librarians, min funding, positive patron relationships.
- Public pcs.
- Sharing resources, moving forward.
- Skill of information management.
- State-wide delivery service, safe havens.
- State-wide electronic access to resources.
- Professional development, cooperative purchasing.
- Delivery of materials
- Educational programming, edutainment programs.
- Inter-library loan, professional development, delivery, computers, wifi, print books, free space, programming, databases.

ABANDON

- Barriers to access.
- Outdated customer service attitudes.
- "This is the way we've always done it."
- Rules restricting public computer access.
- Fee-based sharing.
- Relationship with publishers/aggregators re: subscription pricing.
- Limiting cards, reference section, closing time, no food, fines, Dewey.

- Antiquated practices, unreceptive thinking, lack of cooperation.
- Barriers between different libraries.
- Home Rule.
- Idea that we can accomplish more with less.
- Large print reference collections.
- Obsolete print collections.
- Outdated modalities.
- Overly-complicated policies.
- Public libraries discard physical reference materials.
- Punitive elements—fines, rules, what we can't do.
- Reference desk.
- Smaller units of service in favor of larger units of service, i.e. county or district libraries, for economies of scale.
- Traditional hours, days for service.
- Vendors who silo.
- Pets policy, certain policies, physical library cards.

INVENT

- Sharing our different programs for common use.
- Common classes in commonly taught library/computer skills.
- Statewide library card.
- Statewide access.
- Cross-training of staff at different libraries, all branches of one statewide library system.
- Universal catalog, 100% digital content, checkout forwarding.
- Cloning technology.

- Collaborative learning spaces: worth with public officials.
- Demographic data collection.
- Partnerships with community agencies, etc.
- Repositories for e-book collections.
- Robert W. White Commemorative statewide library card.
- Statewide library card.
- Additional funding, political support, next governor will be a former librarian!
- Outside points of view to break out of the library thought bubble.
- Teen programs.
- Drone delivery, wireless community, flexible in space and timing, ways of accessing information.
- Meeting our patrons where they are, drones, human library.

REINVENT

- Digital collections (shared).
- Look at statewide technology needs and how to address the needs going forward.
- NJLA.
- Policies that should reflect the needs of patrons.
- Use of space, services and programs.
- Marketing and outreach, collaboration.
- The profession of librarianship as an in-demand choice.
- 24-hour reference.
- Cataloging.
- Customer service.
- Digital presence.

- eBook Lending models.
- eMaterial ownership models.
- Expand delivery.
- Funding models.
- Funding opportunities.
- Library card, with a menu of types of service.
- Library facilities.
- Library grad school curriculum.
- Library hours in favor of library users instead of the staff.
- Library spaces.
- Marketing.
- More bookmobiles.
- Parameters for success (move away from circulation numbers)
- Programming.
- Public perception of the library, image
- Reference services.
- The message.
- Delivery.
- Governance structure—needs to be broken apart into smaller areas.
- NJSL Advertising.
- Discounts program (maybe a task force of consortia and LLNJ to negotiate common discounts).
- The way public libraries are funded in the state.
- Invent new ways that school and public librarians interact.
- Library and funding models.
- Library school education.
- Fine structure.

3. Thinking about what we've learned so far, what is an action step/project/initiative that we might start today to create the desired future for LLNJ and its members and stakeholders? Include a 5-6 word catchy title and 50 word description of the project.

1. **Libraries Transform Statewide Marketing Campaign.** Adaptable for all types of libraries, developed by ALA, will continue for at least another 3 years. And in the box program ready to go!
2. **Libraries Connect...**with local businesses, local government departments.
3. **Bandwidth to the Future:** replicate other states' fiber optic wiring infrastructure projects to give amazing bandwidth speeds to all libraries, regardless of geographic location.
4. **Mobile Services, Cut up that Reference Desk.** A pilot project demonstrating a fully mobile staff in the library doing business if tablets. No more central reference desk.
5. **Rent a professional:** along the same lines as the training with the reimbursement, have a pool of professionals (graphic designer, web page design, advertising)—skill sets that we don't have in house that we can contract with Library Link for Talent time share.
6. **Advocacy Toolkit:** direct-to-librarian OR direct-to-patron sample letters to editor, telephone call scripts, quick links to legislator phone numbers, printable flyers, and similar ready-to-go resources for immediate and long term action. To be used to support library funding and services.
7. **Concierge Service:** providing extensive cross training to staff, remove traditional barriers of compartmentalization (e.g. service desks, departments), empower staff to revolve issues and satisfy service requests, getting to yes, tapping into staff talents.
8. **Connecting Community and Library:** ensuring that we are meeting our constituents where they are and including their voices in decision-making. Honoring their input. Having meeting in community spaces. Unity roundtable: members of community meet regularly and advise on how to increase unity and multiculturalism within the community. Find the people who ARE NOT regulars in the library.
9. **Libraries and Lawmakers:** partnering with organizations to create meet the candidate nights, political education, lessons in civics, adopt a legislator; this would increase our visibility, bolster support, get both messages out—candidate and library, citizen forums.