



**MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER**

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**M E M O**

**TO:** Executive Board & Strategic Steering Committee  
**FROM:** Kathy Schalk-Greene, Executive Director  
**DATE:** 5/3/17  
**RE:** **Strategic Planning FY18-20 Survey Executive Summary Results**

From April 3 - April 21, 2017, LibraryLinkNJ conducted an online survey of all member libraries.

Our goal was to get a response from all member libraries in all counties, as a supplement to the feedback we received in the Stakeholder Engagement Workshops. We received 121 responses as of the end of day on 4/21/17. This summary, compiled by Sophie Brookover, is based on those responses.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF RESULTS**

**Type of library**

Academic	15.69%	16
Private School Library	0.98%	1
Public School Library	10.78%	11
Public Library	66.71%	66
Special - Medical Library	4.90%	5
Special - Nonprofit	0.98%	<u>1</u>
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>100</b>

**Geography**

Libraries in all but 3 counties in New Jersey responded. We conclude that the relatively low response rate for this survey is due to the outstanding participation rate enjoyed by the Strategic Planning Stakeholder Engagement Workshops held over the winter, with 188 library staff participating.

**Type of library work**

Ranking	Work Focus	Percentage
1	Public Services	33%
2	Administration	27%
3	Most of the above	23%
4	Instruction	9%
5 (tie)	Information Technology	4%
5 (tie)	Technical Services	4%

The questions in the next sections mirror those posed during the Stakeholder Engagement Workshops held in seven locations around the state from January to March, 2017. Survey responses reflected very similar concerns and interests as those offered in the Stakeholder Engagement Workshops, and so are summarized briefly below. [Notes from the workshops](#) are all available on the LibraryLinkNJ website.

## Overall 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. Your thoughts might include everything from global interconnectedness through technology to the needs of New Americans in your home community.

### Themes:

- Funding
- The overall political climate under the Trump administration
- Technological developments
- Access to library resources
- Connectedness and community
- Safety for immigrants, refugees, religious and ethnic minorities
- Information literacy

### Representative responses:

- One of the most obvious is federal funding. With the proposed budget eliminating the IMLS, NEH, and NEA it is going to leave libraries and museums without certain grant opportunities. Additionally, it will limit state services that rely on federal funds. Globally, the refugee crises and the movement of economic migrants creates a need for more literacy and ESL programming. It also may create additional needs for technology training and materials regarding applying for citizenship, asylum, and other subjects relating to immigration. Locally, I am from one of the most economically disadvantaged areas in the State of New Jersey. We need more opportunities for financial literacy, entrepreneurship, technology training, job coaching, resume building, etc. As far as opportunities, we are at a point in time that we need to fight and advocate for those who are disenfranchised. Libraries, librarians, and library staff need to be on the front lines as a trusted resource and as people who are working to remove barriers to access.
- Streaming technologies. Balancing the need for digital services and supplementing instruction with "old" technologies and tools - hand crafts/hand tools/cooking.
- I believe that more people will be using libraries to connect with more people in communities that are diverse. Lower income communities can provide services to people who can't afford computers and expensive books. Seniors will be helped too for the same reasons.
- With regard to evaluating information accuracy. It's scary that some will think that we're being biased because we show them that their resources are not solid. But, at the same time, many realize the importance of vetting information now, more than before, and will rely on us for our skills. I also think it's critical to remain a safe space for our patrons, and to provide materials by and about diverse groups.

- Libraries have always been a source of information and as the world changes both politically and technologically, they become a hub of exploration and knowledge
- There is more competition for free time, especially with increased access to digital information sources and digital entertainment. Positioning the library to be a primary community resource for these and other offerings is a marketing and community outreach challenge and opportunity.
- We will need to balance the demands of the future (technology, going to people rather than waiting for them to come to us) with the long tail of printed materials, quiet spaces, and traditional library imagery and services.
- Besides funding issues and projected needs of increased global awareness, most local communities will see an increase in the technology divide. With no public pay phones and an increasing gap of knowledge between younger and older generations, libraries will need to increase their lending of digital tools, but the cost-effectiveness will be an issue for libraries. What we will need to do is find cost-effective ways of providing digital tools for public use.

### **Strategic Analysis: Keep, Abandon, Invent, Reinvent**

The lists below feature representative examples from each category.

#### **KEEP**

- Interlibrary loan & resource sharing
- Delivery services
- Access: to library materials and programs, to technology, to learning opportunities
- Excellent library collections, marketed well (“libraries need to do books best”)
- Outreach
- Services to vulnerable populations (children, senior citizens, immigrants, refugees)
- Lifelong learning
- Bookmobile
- ESL classes
- Community spaces
- Friendly staff

#### **ABANDON**

- Technological & service fads
- Home rule
- Outdated policies & procedures
- Libraries as only quiet spaces
- Fines & other barriers to access
- Lack of cross-library collaboration
- Programming that doesn’t work anymore
- Underused print reference & service

#### **INVENT**

- Statewide borrowing/statewide library card
- Better wayfinding in the library for people who don’t want to ask for assistance
- Library as community center
- More consistent messaging

- Partnerships with allied community organizations
- Fiber optic network / optimized connectivity
- Social media directory for libraries
- Statewide ebook platform
- Tech consulting services for patrons

## REINVENT

- Outreach
- Branding, image, values, messaging, marketing
- Collaboration across library types & across communities we serve
- Library as place, town hall, hub of the community, resource center, heart of the community
- Interlibrary loan: lower barriers to participation
- Library spaces
- Shared services & consortial arrangements
- Traditional literacy programs for a new age

## Taking Action

Taking Action: what is an action step/project/initiative that could help create your desired future for NJ libraries? This might be a project that LLNJ initiates and you collaborate on, or one that you would like to start and involve partners like LLNJ, New Jersey Library Association, New Jersey State Library or others to help make it happen.

Themes:

- Statewide library cards
  - School library advocacy
  - Outreach
  - Marketing
  - Funding opportunities
  - Cross-library collaborations
- Any time there is an opportunity to see a library beyond its walls, I feel like it's a good thing. I don't know if that means funding opportunities for libraries to coordinate programs with other organizations where libraries serve as the touchstone, maybe even provide transportation for groups or dual live streaming, but some way for the people who don't think of the library to see it as an opportunity or access point for other organizations that seem like obvious connections in our eyes.
  - Partnering with other nearby state library organizations to share the costs of mass advertising campaigns. Getting the telecommunications companies in a room and finding out what we can do to have equitable bandwidth across the NJ.
  - Libraries need to promote libraries and the tremendous advantage that really literate individuals have in this competitive world. The next generation of children are not being raised to be the readers of the previous generation.
  - There's nothing new about advocacy, but I think it is more needed now than ever, and - while it wouldn't necessarily \*change\* services to our communities, I think we need better advertising. I'm not sure we need to do different things, we just need to do what we do better and reach more people doing it. (Also, I think this is a question best answered by asking

- people who aren't librarians what they wish about their libraries)
- GoFundMe campaigns for the extras that government can't pay for; partner with Digital Public Library of America -- digitize & contribute local histories, histories of local clubs, Emergency Squads, Scout troops, local veteran memoirs
  - More connection from school libraries to public libraries. A way for students to grow into lifelong library users, not only high school or college level users.
  - There are lots of ideas, but little follow-through. We need a "Brookings Institution" that can research ideas and create plans.
  - Everyone should have a complete and up to date immigration resources including referral information to local advocacy groups. Also, information for LGBTQ groups and resources that will allow us to refer anyone who needs it to the proper social services. Also there is a need for a collection development plan that incorporates acquisition of material that reflects all members of the library constituency.
  - Would like to be on a promotional end, Social Media platform, creative team for advertising or promotion, VR discussion for software development that links school curriculum to learning... so many ideas to develop with the STEAM initiative and MAKERSPACES in a school setting. Main objective is promotion of library services on every level of library service (School Libraries)

### LibraryLinkNJ Services: Service Awareness

Which of these LLNJ services were you aware of when you started this survey today? Check as many as apply. Responses are displayed in descending order.

Ranking	Service	Percentage
1	Continuing Education	89%
2	Delivery	88%
3	Lynda.com	74%
4	Product discounts	72%
5	Archived recordings of webinars	63%
6	On-Site, On-Demand Professional Development Program Subsidies	57%
7	MentorNJ	54%
8	Incubator & Other Projects	51%
9	Social Media Consultations	32%
10	Training DVD Library	12%

### LibraryLinkNJ Service Use

Which of these LLNJ services have you or your library used at any time? Check as many as apply. Responses are displayed in descending order.

Ranking	Service	Percentage
1	Delivery	79%
2	Continuing Education	76%
3	Product Discounts	51%
4	Lynda.com	49%
5	Archived Recordings of Webinars	45%
6	On-Site, On-Demand Professional Development Program Subsidies	29%
7	Incubator & Other Projects	23%
8	MentorNJ	13%
9	Social Media Consultations	10%
10	DVD Training Library	4%

### Prioritized Question: Additional Continuing Education Opportunities

We asked participants to rank the following possibilities in Continuing Education, from lowest interest to highest interest. The table below shows weighted averages for each choice, from highest interest to lowest. The overall lowest- and highest-ranked options are highlighted in yellow.

Ranking	Topic	Low Interest	High Interest
1	Advocacy & Engaging Stakeholders	7%	71%
2	Community Engagement & Outreach	3%	70%
3	Library-wide User Experience: Analysis & Improvement	9%	62%
4	Marketing & Communications	10%	52%
5	Internal Customer Service: Managing Collegial Relationships**	27%	50%
6	Programming: All Ages & Interests	15%	48%

7	Mobile Devices: Privacy & Security	14%	47%
8	Social Media: Management & Strategy	14%	46%
9	External Customer Service: Working With The Public	19%	39%
10	Readers' Advisory	16%	36%

\*\*N.B.: Internal Customer Service is ranked in both the Top 5 for high interest and low interest.