

Chester Springs Library Strategic Plan Planning for our Future: 2014 - 2017

Vision Statement

We are a welcoming center of knowledge, inspiration and opportunity for all residents and contribute to a healthy, safe and economically vibrant community.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Chester Springs Library is to serve the residents of the area by making readily available a variety of materials, resources and programs to promote education, information and recreation. Being a vital part of the 18 member Chester County Library System enables us to ensure that our library users have access to exceptional opportunities to read, learn, create, connect and contribute to a better quality of life.

Guiding Principles

- Access** We deliver fair and open access to all library resources.
- Collaboration** We work with other members of the Chester County Library System to achieve better results for our community and the greater area.
- Consistency** We provide reliable and dependable services to our patrons.
- Customer Service** We focus on extraordinary customer service for all of our patrons, donors, volunteers and community partners.
- Literacy** We believe literacy is a fundamental need that enables every person to participate fully and equitably in our community.
- Respect** We appreciate and strive to respond to the diverse backgrounds, cultures and capabilities of our entire community.

Core Services and Programs:

- To provide a collection of popular materials for adults.
- To provide children's materials and serve as a resource for children's activities.
- To serve as an exchange for community information.

Strategic Goals (Key Objective, Strategic Initiatives and Success Measures)

Knowledge and Inspiration: Ensure that our library is a center of knowledge and inspiration that provides meaningful and relevant opportunities to read, learn and create.

Key Objectives

1. Curate, promote and advance relevant content in accordance with evolving usage trends.
2. Build basic and digital literacy skills to help people achieve personal, educational and economic goals.

3. Spur creativity in the arts and entrepreneurship in partnership with cultural and business organizations.
4. Help children enter school ready to learn in partnership with local schools and early learning organizations.
5. Encourage lifelong learning through educational programs for children, youth and adults.

Strategic Initiatives

1. Promote literacy, arts, entrepreneurship and educational program activities.
1. Improve our response to the needs of our patrons...by maintaining and improving our focus on popular titles, electronic media, children's reading materials and programs, and computer access.
2. Increase our appeal to our community and grow our membership...by hiring a part-time Program Manager to expand our existing line of children's programs and to develop new programs of interest to the teenage and adult patrons in our community, e.g., reading clubs, lecture series, learning programs, etc.

Success Measures

1. Customer satisfaction with the amount, quality and diversity of our print and electronic collections and materials.
2. Percent of active library users among residents of Chester Springs.
3. Collection usage and circulation rates.
4. Program attendance and satisfaction rates.
5. Number of active partnerships with arts, business and educational organizations.

Access: Provide an access point for the online and physical resources shared by member libraries

Key Objectives

1. Improve and better promote ubiquitous 24/7 online access to easy-to-use library services.
2. Optimize space within the library for reading, working, creating, gathering, and community activities.
3. Streamline customer ease of access to materials and information within the library.
4. Meet the social, cultural and linguistic needs of an increasingly diverse population in the area.

Strategic Initiatives

1. Invest in a more robust library website and social media.
2. Secure space planning and ADA compliance technical assistance services.
3. Increase our business hours and return to those that were in effect prior to the financial crisis of 2008-09.
4. Improve the physical experience of visiting our library...by upgrading or replacing the current facility.
5. Partner with non-library organizations to register new library users by meeting residents where they live, work, and play.

Success Measures

1. Customer satisfaction with online and physical library access, cultural competency, and space utilization.
2. Ratio of library space used for customer experience versus collections storage.
3. Customer Touch measures as defined by CCLS Funding Formula.
4. Website and social media usage metrics.
5. Percent of residents in our service areas with library cards.

Community Engagement: Position our library as a hub for community engagement and transformation.

Key Objectives

1. Empower families and individuals to improve their health, wellness, financial stability and civic participation.
2. Promote a healthy, environmentally sound, safe and secure community.
3. Support economic, workforce and entrepreneurial development.

Strategic Initiatives

3. Partner with health and human services organizations to promote access to library and community-based resources, information and support for health, wellness, financial stability and civic participation.
4. Partner with business, education, government, nonprofit and economic development organizations to promote access to library and community-based economic, workforce and entrepreneurial development resources, information and support.
5. Cultivate a volunteer management initiative to recruit, coordinate and mobilize volunteers for grassroots and online community outreach efforts.
6. Encourage and recognize Trustees and staff for participation in civic, nonprofit, business and professional associations and coalitions as library representatives.

Success Measures

1. Number and success stories of residents utilizing library services to improve their health, wellness, financial stability, civic participation, professional skills and entrepreneurial activities.
2. Number of library Trustees and staff members actively participating in community groups and activities.
3. Number and satisfaction of library volunteers.
4. Quantifiable impact of libraries on local economic development.

Customer Value and Experience: Provide exceptional value and experiences to patrons, donors, volunteers, community partners and the public.

Key Objectives

1. Provide excellent customer service to all library users, donors, volunteers and community partners.
2. Demonstrate the value of our library to policymakers, funders and the public.
3. Raise brand awareness, identity and loyalty of our library.
4. Cultivate and engage the next generation of library users, donors, staff and volunteers.

Strategic Initiatives

2. Develop and support a culture of customer service, learning and innovation.

3. Build capacity for marketing and strategic communications activities.
4. Participate in youth and young adult advisory boards to design and deliver outreach initiatives.
5. Use technology solutions to integrate library data with our market and demographic data to better understand our community, predict what people are interested in and deliver relevant services to them.

Success Measures

1. Customer satisfaction with every aspect of their library experience.
2. Increased number of library cardholders and active users.
3. Number of brand-related content of positive print, online and social media coverage.
4. Increased number of teenagers and young adults who give, connect and engage with our library.

Sustainability: Build the capacity of our library to ensure its long-term sustainability.

Key Objectives

1. Be careful stewards of our dedicated tax revenues...by providing superior value-for-money to the taxpayers.
2. Strengthen the governance of our library.
3. Develop our business/finance management and fundraising capacity.
4. Create a process to identify what library experiences will be desired by library users in 2025.

Strategic Initiatives

1. Reduce operational expenses through efficiencies and economies of scale.
2. Participate in a library advocacy campaign.
3. Encourage Trustee training and support for financial management and fundraising.
4. Host business roundtables with business, civic and community leaders on a regular basis.
5. Participate in a CCLS Futures Team to explore social, economic and technological trends and identify services residents will desire in 2025.

Success Measures

1. A balanced budget.
2. A three month operating reserve.
3. A long term capital reserve.
4. Increased amount of contributed income from donations, grants and corporate gifts/sponsorships.
5. Trustee and staff self-assessment of fundraising performance.
6. Participate in the CCLS Futures Team and semi-annual reports for CCLS SAC highlighting observations and possible recommendations.

Strategic Planning Process Methodology

During 2014, the Trustees, staff and library director worked together to explore and define the library's mission, vision, guiding principles and strategic goals using a data-driven process.

Access to data specific to the Chester Springs Library from surveys conducted by CCLS as well as the library's own surveys were utilized. Informal discussion groups were conducted during the spring campaign to pass the tax referendum in May, 2014 providing opportunities for community involvement. Finally, using the Toolkit created by CCLS, the library crafted its Plan, which is in alignment with the CCLS Strategic Plan 2014 – 2017.

Current Board of Trustees and Staff

Len Olsen, President

Gina DiGiacomo, Vice President

Debbie Wolk, Secretary/Treasurer

Becky Ginther, Trustee

Rosie Nicholas, Trustee

Jodi Sheehan, Trustee

Janet Spaventa, Trustee

Nancy McLaughlin, Library Director

Aileen Hall, Staff member

Jan Hall, Staff member

Diane McCormick, Staff member

Debra Montgomery, Staff member

Approved by the Board of Trustees on December 8, 2014.