

# PaLLS Strategic Priorities

## Building Organizational Capacity

Ann Philbin describes capacity building as the "process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in the fast-changing world." A focus on capacity building will stabilize the organization and its membership, encourage intentional and explicit growth, and lay the foundation for exploring new initiatives in services and products available to member libraries.

2022-2025 Capacity goals:

- Sustainability: both fiscal and in terms of leadership
- Grow and enhance membership - focusing on growth that enhances the membership
- Trust, reliability and reputation

## Building Collaboration

Community building also refers to relationships beyond the realm of the member libraries. It includes knowledge sharing and collaboration within the library service ecosystem in Pennsylvania, and engaging more deeply in the larger Evergreen open source community statewide and nationally.

2022-2025 Collaboration goals:

- Deepen relationships with key partners
  - Focus on areas of high-impact outcomes, common purpose and mutual benefit
  - Pursue and develop stakeholder positions in the Evergreen community

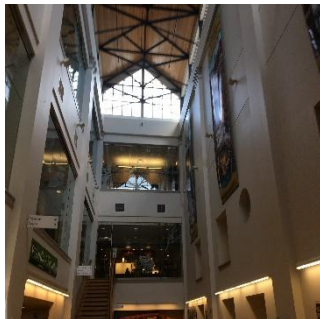
## Building the Community

Community building means the creation or enhancement of a community – whether it is organized around geography, similar interests, or shared goals. PaLLS' member libraries are all public libraries, geographically dispersed across the state, and are extremely diverse in size and the scale of their staff and services. However, PaLLS is the one factor these have in common with the ability to unite members across geography while focusing on automation and public access. Additionally, PaLLS can help its members leverage the unique strengths of each library, and consolidate areas of expertise to the benefit of all.

2022-2025 Community goals:

- Expand and focus on relationship with User Group
- Keep in touch with ("abreast of?") trends and technology relevant to library services and be ready to offer opportunities and assist libraries

These priorities are updates to the 2017 PaLLS strategic plan, which follows.



# Strategic Plan

## 2017

# Thank You

The PaILS Board and staff would like to thank everyone who participated by engaging in conversations and interviews, attending retreats and workshops, and completing the member survey.

We have listened closely and thought broadly about what we have heard, and discovered what we believe to the best, next steps on our path into the future. We look forward to collaborating with members, stakeholders, and the Evergreen community in even deeper partnership and to leveraging the influence and impact of libraries in Pennsylvania thereby enhancing the vitality of their communities.

## **From the PaILS Board and Staff (2016)**

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**Scott Thomas** Executive Director

**Lugene Shelly** SPARK Coordinator

# Looking to the Future

The Pennsylvania Integrated Library System (PaILS) is at the threshold of significant expansion as a library network. Its leadership and staff are ready to guide an organization that was created in a moment of crisis among smaller public libraries in Pennsylvania, toward a bright and exciting future of continued growth. We are looking forward to improved member engagement and opportunities for new collaboration with partners statewide and nationally. These innovation opportunities offer greater adaptation to member needs, the development of resource sharing among member libraries, and the adoption and development of emerging technologies and services.

This strategic plan is the first for PaILS, and expected to guide us in the mid-term for the next six years. The planning process included member, staff, and Board engagement in discussions, workshops, and a satisfaction survey; stakeholder engagement in conversations and interviews; and research and benchmarking of other consortia operating in similar environments. The outcomes of these activities informed the development of this Strategic Plan. Additional benefits of this process include sharing, learning, conceptualizing opportunities for collaboration; development of a greater sense of community among member libraries; and convergence around specific ideas related to new directions for the organization.



# Vision

PaLLS provides Pennsylvanians with a sustainable network of integrated library services and access to a statewide community of libraries and information resources.

# Mission

PaLLS provides access to information resources by offering a collaborative, high quality, open source integrated library system that is equitable, cost-effective, and promotes resource sharing among libraries statewide.

# Values

## Service

We are member-focused, proactive in anticipating member needs, and are responsive to their issues.

## Stability

Our services and staff are reliable, resilient, and committed.

## Collaboration

We work with members and other library service providers to create a strong network of service, technology, and expertise.

## Empowerment

We facilitate the work of libraries in providing equitable access to resources that change lives.

## Evolution

We continually learn, improve, innovate, and seek new opportunities to best serve current and future member libraries.

## Open

We operate with integrity and transparency.



# Strategic Priorities

## Building Organizational Capacity

Ann Philbin describes capacity building as the "process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in the fast-changing world." PaLS will soon cross the threshold into a mature organization that is intentionally building both organizational and member capacity to optimize the use of PaLS's existing technologies and services. A near term focus on capacity building will stabilize the organization and its membership, encourage intentional and explicit growth, and lay the foundation for exploring new initiatives in services and products available to member libraries.



## Building the Community

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## Building Collaboration

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# Strategies

## Building Organizational Capacity

### Strategically Develop the Board

- Build and expand the board continually by assessing organization strengths, recruiting board membership in areas of strategic priority, and enriching communication and collaboration with other library and information service providers in PA and within the larger Evergreen community.

### Craft Formal Organizational Communication and Documentation Protocol

- Develop internal communication protocols and practices that clarify expectations and outcomes desired between the Board and staff, for member libraries, and state and national partners.
- Design formal documentation that represents the history of the organization, and formalize memoranda and annual reports that document organization changes and development.







# Strategies

## Building Member Capacity

### Define Member Responsibilities and Representation

- Convene the Users Group and ask them to facilitate agreements on member responsibilities, standardization of practices and policies that benefit user experiences, and requirements for member engagement in SPARK community work.
- Review Organizational Bylaws regarding member representation in the SPARK User Group to be more equitable than the current one vote per agreement.

### Facilitate Statewide Broadband Connectivity

- Facilitate and coordinate member library relations by partnering with entities that assist in connecting libraries to existing fiber access points statewide to address both network reliability and speed.

### Organize Member Communication and Training Materials

- Communicate more clearly on availability of and access to mailing lists, organization documentation, and the PaILS helpdesk in order to develop and broadly publicize documentation materials and how to get system help.
- Deploy onsite and regional training to develop a member culture that integrates knowledge of available resources and shares freely learning and collaborative work.

### Expand Staff and Foster Individual Autonomy and Responsibility

- Provide professional development and training opportunities for all staff.
- Develop new staffing solutions that focus on support, member relations, development, and training.
- Reassess (periodically) the extent of out sourcing of Evergreen administration, migration, and hosting services.



### Cultivate Standardized Policies, Procedures, and Interfaces

- Implement common cataloging, system-wide borrowing standards, and fine policies.
- Create a common user interface that also reflects the local library's identity.
- Build recognition that standardization needs to be addressed before introducing resource sharing into the consortium.

### Initiate Regional Resource Sharing

- Implement resource sharing among member libraries on a limited, regional basis at first in order to accumulate data to demonstrate the impact on library services for their communities.
- Address concerns, create agreements, and maximize opportunities for resource sharing.
- Lead the development of education and instruction activities across libraries for both staff and patrons that ensure a positive experience for all.
- Use the ILL delivery systems currently existing in the various geographic areas of PA when possible, and potentially partner to expand the statewide Interlibrary Delivery Service (IDS) into underserved areas as necessary.

# Strategies

## Building the Member Community

### Augment Member Engagement Opportunities

- Create additional formal avenues for member engagement by establishing charters for the existing Cataloging Committee and a new Circulation/Patron Experience Committee.

### Activate Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing Opportunities

- Encourage contributions to the PaILS knowledge base, participation in committees, and engagement in forums.
- Develop and implement regional training programs and conferences.
- Continue the annual Users Group meeting.



# Strategies

## Building the Community Ecosystem of PA Library Services Providers

### Delineate Relationships and Pursue Collaboration Opportunities

- Formalize existing relationships and develop new partnerships.
- Convene or co-host an annual forum in which partners can come together to understand how to best serve shared clients through closer collaboration.

### Seek Collaborative Grant Opportunities

- Collaborate on relationship development with funding agencies and develop teamed grant applications.
- Seek high-priority initiatives with partners to create high-impact outcomes and future synergistic growth.



# Strategies Engagement with the Evergreen Community

## Motivate and Sustain Member and Staff Engagement

- Integrate members and staff into the active and skilled Evergreen community in person and online.
- Build relationships with other Evergreen users in PA and nationally.
- Encourage aspirations to leadership in the Evergreen community.





**For further information, please contact**

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