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***Connecting people to the
transformational power
of knowledge and discovery.***

Strategic Plan
2015 – 2020



Contents

Looking Ahead with 2020 Vision

Goal 1 | Reading is Fundamental:

All Ages, All Content and a Variety of Formats

Goal 2 | Access to Computers and Technology

Goal 3 | Comfortable, Safe and Welcoming Place for All

Goal 4 | Supporting Students in Our Community and Schools

Goal 5 | Children's Programs

Goal 6 | Organizational Structure

Community Partners





Looking Ahead with 2020 Vision

*Our roadmap for the Strategic Plan has **six goal areas** which were identified and refined during our planning process.*

The Dothan Houston County Library System (DHCLS)

is a community educational partner that serves the 103,402 residents of Houston County, Alabama. The creation of the Strategic Plan is the end result of collaborative efforts from the library board, staff, community partners and residents during the planning process in early 2015 to create a vision of service for DHCLS's mission over the next five years.

During the prior Strategic Plan in 2010, the community and the library system exceeded all expectations by accomplishing the goals in four years. The bar has been set at a very high level for the staff and library board from the community to continue excellence in every aspect over the next five years and we accept the challenge! To meet expectations, the plan focuses on actions that will move the community to a greater

level of engagement with the public library, and for the library organization to more deeply embed itself into the community.

Working together as a community-based team, we are certain that our efforts will continue to uncover new ways of providing service while maintaining current programs that help the library appeal to a wide variety of users. Our roadmap for the Strategic Plan includes six goal areas which were identified and refined during our planning process led by our steering committee with input from our residents, staff, and library board via surveys, community gatherings, and staff meetings.

During our implementation of the Strategic Plan, the focus will be on highlighting ways the community will benefit from our actions and how we can measure our success so that we are in a constant state of improvement. We look forward to the next chapter in DHCLS's history and in providing our community an inviting place to connect, learn, and discover.





Goal 1

Reading is Fundamental: All Ages, All Content, and a Variety of Formats.

Dothan Houston County Library System will provide a wide variety of information in multiple formats that will expand the learning opportunities for residents of all ages.

Community Benefits

- Increase the number of book titles added to the library system.
- Provide current best sellers, popular multimedia and up to date information.
- Provide a wider variety of digital information.
- Increase the number of children's multimedia materials.
- Build literacy programming into children's activities.
- Partner with community agencies to engage adults in building literacy skills.

Indicators of Success

- Increased circulation of materials.
- Build formal and informal partnerships with Houston County Agencies.
- Demand from users for more programs.

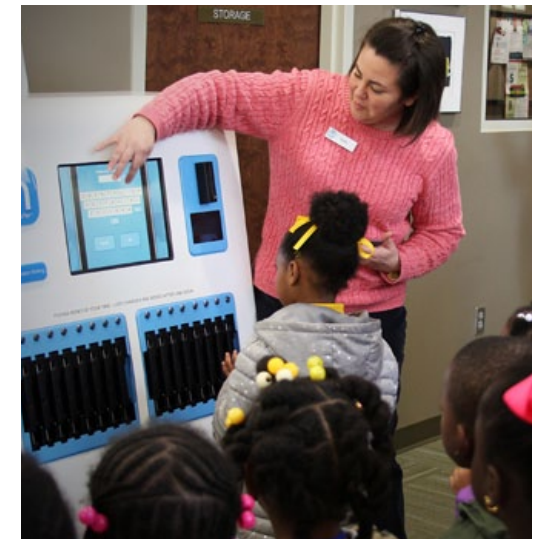




Goal 2

Access to Computers and Technology

The Library will stay abreast of the changes in technology and the delivery of information. The DHCLS will be the community center for trusted and relevant information to ensure that our residents are prepared for the work force of tomorrow.



Community Benefits

- Access to free Wi-Fi and the Internet in all DHCLS facilities.
- Access to multiple formats of technology.
- Access to information 24/7 via our library web site: www.dhcls.org
- Staff led training on technology, software and workforce skills.
- Access to equipment that is high performing, in good repair, and offers current functionality.

Indicators of Success

- Replace information technology equipment on a four year cycle.
- Introduce new technologies via classroom instruction at the library.
- Update Internet bandwidth as improved access becomes available in the community.
- Limit “out of service” equipment in public areas. Improve response time for repairs.
- Increase traffic to the library web site.
- Update the website as needed to reflect current consumer friendly practices.



Goal 3

Comfortable, Safe and Welcoming Place for All

We will offer services that integrate a dedicated focus to customer service both in-person and virtually that reflect a commitment to a positive end user experience at the library.

Community Benefits

- Library spaces meet a wide variety of needs.
- Clean and maintained facilities.
- Maintain resident and visitor friendly lending privileges.
- Provide meeting rooms for instruction and gathering.
- Inside and outside library spaces designed to welcome visitors.
- Furnishings that are comfortable and encourage spending time in the building.
- Exterior and interior infrastructure to ensure safety measures are in place.
- Maintain Greenspace at Main location.

Indicators of Success

- Review lending rules to ensure all residents can easily access our services.
- Improved mechanism for gathering both positive and negative customer feedback.
- Greenspace is used by library staff and community partners.
- Library meeting rooms are frequently booked.
- Increase the number of new library cards issued each year.
- Increase our in-person visits by 3%.



Goal 4

Supporting Students in Our Community and Schools

The library is the community educational partner for our residents wherever they are in the pursuit of learning.

Community Benefits

- Providing current and accessible content in a variety of formats and multiple reading levels.
- Provide online tutoring assistance.
- Provide study rooms for collaborating.
- Access to internet and technology for no charge.
- Support for homeschool groups.
- Age appropriate resources to align with local K-12 curriculums.
- Staff assistance for identifying research and information needs beyond our library system.
- Partnerships with public, private and university institutions.

Indicators of Success

- All library locations will support curriculum subject areas for our K-16 campuses.
- Develop programs to accommodate busy schedules of families.
- Staff will provide instruction on the resources available to students, parents and educators.
- Marketing DHCLS services at campuses and businesses throughout Houston County.



Goal 5

Children's Programs

Engage parents, caregivers and children with the resources the library provides. Focusing on building early literacy skills to ensure our young residents are prepared and ready to excel when they enter kindergarten and throughout their school career.



Community Benefits

- Students who are prepared to master curriculum at or above their grade level.
- Develop lifelong readers with a natural curiosity that encourages innovation.
- Provide the tools that parents and caregivers need to support learning in the home or educational center.
- Provide free programming to encourage children to engage with others in their age group.
- Offer books, study kits, technology and one on one instruction to help our youngest residents learn.
- Offer a safe and welcoming space for our teens to visit.
- Provide materials, technology and programs to encourage teens to engage in educational, entrepreneurial, and artistic interests.

Indicators of Success

- Children, Tweens and Teens program attendance increase by 10%
- Create teen advisory board.
- Partner with community groups for shared events, programs and training.
- Market our services to schools, day care, teen spots and church community centers.
- Increase our early childhood, tweens and teen collection titles held by 10%.

Goal 6

Organizational Structure

Dothan Houston County Library System will commit to providing the community with an internal structure of curiosity, exploration and service excellence. Staff and library board members recognize their responsibility for creating a positive customer experience and take pride in performing their jobs.



Community Benefits

- Increased community awareness of programs and services.
- Stellar service at all library locations.
- Highly trained employees.
- Community-focused library board.
- Commitment to fiscal responsibility.
- Library partners with the Friends of the Library for organization support.
- Participation in local community events.
- New ideas and new innovations are present in programming and initiatives.

Indicators of Success

- Library seeks outside funding through grant opportunities.
- Create a marketing plan.
- Library expends budget dollars with a focus on community centric services
- Library secures future with growth of the endowment fund.
- FOL group expands in membership.
- New library board members are recruited from all walks of life in the community.
- Library leadership is engaged at the state and national level to bring a sense of best practices to our community.
- Hiring of highly qualified staff with a passion for serving the community.
- Salaries and compensation plans keep pace with state and national indicators.
- Training for all staff occurs each year.



Community Partners

Library Board Members

Steve Roy, *Chair*
Bob Theune, *Vice Chair*
Cindy Aman
Vince Edge
James Etheredge
Theodore Fagan
Ted Hall
Cindy Hollis
Michael Jackson
Gloria Jeffcoat
Edna McLoyd
Harrison Morris
Charles Owens
Mary Alice Veale

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Community Steering Committee

Jansen Tidmore, *Chair Dothan Downtown Redevelopment Authority*
Hon. Mike Schmitz, *Mayor, City of Dothan*
Hon. Mark Culver, *Chair County Commission, Houston County*
Brandon Shoupe, *County Commissioner*
Cindy Bedsole, *Wiregrass Foundation*
Everlie Bolton, *Chair, Friends of the Library*
June Christian, *Library Supporter*
Bettye Forbus, *former Library Director*
Juhi Shaw, *Student*
Mark Williams, *Dothan City School System*
Debra Wright, *Dothan City School System*
Hilary Yost, *Flowers Hospital*

Library Staff Leadership Team

Jason LeDuc, *Library Director*
Lexie Aldridge, *Technical Services Manager*
Charlotte Mitchell, *Branch Manager-Main*
Michael Mitchell, *Branch Manager-Westgate*
Kristin North, *Children's Manager*
Melissa Wright, *Business Manager*



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