**TO:** PLA Board of Directors

**RE:** Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Update

**FROM:** Mary Hirsh, Deputy Director

**DATE:** October 8, 2021

**ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:**

Report

The 2018-2022 PLA Strategic Plan was finalized and approved by the board at its June 2018 meeting. The following provides an update on PLA’s efforts to promote and implement the plan. The activities below map to the existing plan. It is anticipated that new focuses will emerge as the 2020 refresh process advances.

Implementation and Tracking

PLA continues to make progress in meeting the goals outlines in its strategic plan. In spite of the ongoing pandemic, PLA continued to deliver valuable programs and services to members in FY21. PLA deepened its commitment to equity and inclusivity, not only offering member-facing programming but considering how to make itself more inclusive. PLA also entered into several new partnerships this year to benefit libraries and the communities they serve.

Results

Overall, PLA is making good progress in meeting all of its strategic priorities. Programmatic plans continue to be in flux in response to environmental factors as well as changes within ALA. PLA remains nimble, flexible, and committed to meeting strategic goals through a varied menu of opportunity.

**PLA STRATEGIC GOAL LINK (check all that apply)**

[x]  TRANSFORMATION [x]  LEADERSHIP [x]  ADV. & AWARENESS [x]  E.D.I.S.J. [x]  ORG. EXCELLENCE

**Goal: Transformation**

**Goal Statement:** PLA advances public libraries’ transformation from a library focus to a community focus, to meet the specific needs of people and communities.

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| **Objective** | **Recent/Current Activities** |
| **(1):** Define and support the transition of public libraries to become more responsive to – and reflective of – community needs. | *Discussed, slow progress:* Expand “professional tools” section of PLA web site to incorporate additional resources related to community needs; incorporate into CE/PD programming*Accomplished/Ongoing:* new 2021 Census Data Literacy series has increased PLA resources for understanding and using Census data to better understand community demographics and plan services |
| **(2):** Increase opportunities to explore and share effective emerging best practices that are addressing community priorities. | *Accomplished/Ongoing:* * Transfer lists and groups to ALA Connect for easier sharing and archiving
* Re-launched Podcast series to provide additional platform for sharing
* Open call opportunities to share best practices via presentations at PLA Conference (biennially), ALA Conference (annually) and webinars (monthly)
* Launched webinar series focused on libraries as partners in workforce development in collaboration with LibsWork network and outreach/inclusion of non-library partners at national, state and local levels
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| **(3):** Increase awareness of and access to the types of literacy necessary for skills development and success in the 21st century.  | PLA’s work has or is addressing early literacy (including computational thinking), family literacy, media literacy, digital literacy, health literacy, information literacy, and financial literacy. Some prioritization may be needed.*Accomplished/Ongoing:* * PLA continues its expansive portfolio of work on digital literacy, including new courses and new subsites on DigitalLearn.org
* With funding from Microsoft Corp and Google, distributed devices and training to rural libraries
* Hosted 2 additional cohorts of the Family Engagement online learning series; awarded IMLS grant to examine family literacy practices in Latinx communities
* Various articles and podcasts from Public Libraries addressing multiple forms of literacy
* Received funding from AT&T to expand digital literacy courses and co-brand/co-host trainings
* Through AT&T, partnering with Common Sense Media to introduce additional DigitalLearn.org modules aimed at digital citizenship for children and parents
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| **(4):** Increase the number of libraries using meaningful and actionable measurements to understand and expand their community impact.  | *Ongoing*: Continued support of Project Outcome *Accomplished/Ongoing:* * Issued first set of Benchmarks briefings infographics
* With the Public Policy Office, partnered on a series of Census Data Literacy CE opportunities, including two free webinars with total attendance over 1,000
* Conducted the 2020 library technology survey, which is one of a series of national surveys that replace the PLDS. Summary report published in summer 2021, and data is being integrated in new *Benchmark*: Library Metrics & Trends tool.

*In progress** Preparing to launch Benchmark and second of three rotating surveys, the 2021Public Library Staff & Diversity Survey.
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**Goal: Leadership**

**Goal Statement:** PLA builds and supports leadership for public libraries that is reflective of the needs of each community and the profession.

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| **Objective** | **Recent/Current Activities** |
| **(1):** Increase leadership and personal development training opportunities for all levels of public library staff reflective of the PLA leadership model.  | *Accomplished:* * Offered Leadership Lab online course to 100 attendees, exploring leadership through an equity lens
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| **(2):** Support public library staff in the shift from a library-centered to a community-centered approach, through PLA trainings and resources.  | *Accomplished:* * Leadership development committee hosted three free online discussions addressing timely leadership issues and challenges
 |
| **(3):** Encourage learning opportunities for all library staff through collaboration with library schools and support access to other types of learning available to library staff including CE, online courses, certificate programs and conferences. | *In Progress:* Integrating PLA online learning with new ALA online learning platform (LMS) to reach broader audience |

**Goal: Advocacy & Awareness**

**Goal Statement:** PLA leads in public library advocacy and influencing perceptions of public libraries.

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| **Objective** | **Recent/Current Activities** |
| **(1):** Increase awareness and strengthen perceptions of public libraries among key audiences and stakeholders.  | *Ongoing:** PLA works with the ALA Communications and Marketing Office to respond to 3-10 media request each month, usually resulting in coverage that promotes public library value
* PLA works with the ALA Public Policy & Advocacy Office to engage public library advocates and share public library successes with members of Congress and federal policymakers, such as with the Build America’s Libraries Act, federal relief funding advocacy, and the Emergency Connectivity Fund.
* Many PLA initiatives engage key audiences and educate them about public libraries, for instance PLA’s current digital literacy collaboration with telecom companies, work with education and family literacy groups such as Head Start, and coordination with the National Skills Coalition and other employment groups
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| **(2):** Increase awareness and the effectiveness of PLA/ALA’s advocacy resources and create new tools to support current and future advocacy efforts.  | *Accomplished:* Created customizable advocacy templates for use with local decision-makers*Ongoing:** Support PPA and OIF as requested, including as part of crisis communications
 |
| **(3):** Increase library staff participation in public library advocacy at all levels (i.e., federal, state, local).  |  *Accomplished/Ongoing:** Support work of ALA Policy Corps

*In process:** Aligning PLA’s Advocacy Committee to ALA’s Committee on Library Advocacy through deliberate partnership and cross-participation
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| **(4):** Improve PLA’s capacity to serve as a resource to public libraries outside of the U.S. that are conducting library advocacy.  |  |

**Goal: Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice**

**Goal Statement:** PLA advocates for equity, diversity, inclusion and social justice in order to enable every member, library, and community group to fully and equally participate in a society mutually shaped to meet their needs.

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| **Objective** | **Recent/Current Activities** |
| **(1):** Reflect EDISJ principles in association leadership, staffing, values, mission/vision, strategies and operations.  | *Accomplished:* * Created regular EDISJ column in Public Libraries magazine, dedicated July/August 2021 issue to EDISJ

*In process*:* Provided orientation and context from incoming board members and committee chairs
* With ALA membership, working to add demographic questions to membership and volunteer forms
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| **(2):** Equip members with tools, mentoring/coaching, learning opportunities, and other resources to advocate and apply EDISJ principles in their libraries and communities.  | *Accomplished:** Hosted Leadership Lab online course for 100 attendees
* Hosted 4th cohort of the Inclusive Internship Initiative

*In process:** Over 100 educational sessions selected by members as most timely, relevant, innovative, and EDISJ focused will be offered at PLA 2022
* Contracting with Mia Henry to offer Freedom Lifted’s library-focused online course, “Justice at Work for Public Libraries,” to PLA members
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| **(3):** Identify measurable impacts, including professional competencies, that demonstrate progress in key EDISJ areas.  | *In process:** Initiated a joint project with ACRL, ODLOS, and ARL to develop an EDISJ framework for public and academic libraries
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**Goal: Organizational Excellence**

**Goal Statement:** PLA is entrepreneurial, resilient, and successful in the sustaining and growing of resources to advance its mission and work.

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| **Objective** | **Recent/Current Activities** |
| **(1):** Maintain a financially stable and sustainable operating model.  | *Accomplished:** Exceeded budget projections for FY2021, largely due to program pivots in response to ongoing pandemic
* Sustained high level of grant funding, including new funding from AT&T for digital literacy support
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| **(2):** Commit to and support ongoing, regular data-driven assessment of PLA impact on the library field. | *Accomplished:** Surveyed members, past members and partners in strategic plan refresh process
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| **(3):** Increase the number of income-generating products and programs.  | *Accomplished*:* Developed and sold new products (early literacy calendar, health and family engagement posters and bookmarks, and new strategic planning publication)
* Offered 2 cohorts of Family Engagement online course
* Offered Leadership Lab online course
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| **(4):** Oversee successful stewardship of the multi-year Legacy and future grants.  |  |
| **(5):** Seek and adapt to new trends and models in association organization and membership.  | *In process:* Initiated strategic plan revision process in October 2020 |
| **(6):** Maintain strong relationships with existing partners, both nationally and internationally, and explore new partnership opportunities outside of the library field. | *In process:* Partnerships are a main theme of the strategic plan revision process |
| **(7):** Invest in more professional development training for PLA staff to strengthen their capacity to meet member and library field needs.  | *In process:* Established goal of 100% of all PLA staff engaged in at least one professional development activity each year; ALA supported with $200 stipend for each employee |

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| **Transformation** | **Leadership** | **Advocacy & Awareness** | **EDISJ** | **Organizational Excellence** |
| Programs that help *public libraries* be community focused, address emerging community needs, implement best practices, and address literacy | Programs that help *public librarians and library staff* become stronger leaders, and become community-centered | Programs that reach key audiences about the value of public libraries; that engage members in advocacy; or that work internationally | Programs that help PLA or members implement EDISJ principles or that help libraries create full and equal participation in their communities | Programs that help PLA sustain efforts, grow, implement best practices as an association, create external partnerships, and support staff |
| Continuing Education Project Outcome (Core Work)Every Child Ready to ReadFamily EngagementHealth Literacy and Programming (Health)Grow with Google (Digital Literacy)Microsoft/Rural Libraries (Digital Literacy)AT&T Connected Learning (Digital Literacy)Intellectual FreedomSocial WorkStrategic Planning Publication | Leadership Academy and other leadership trainingEmerging LeadersMember EngagementPublic Libraries 101Strategic Planning Training/SupportTheory of Change CE/PD Work | ALA Policy CorpsAwardsExternal Partnerships, including focus on workforce developmentProject Outcome Turning the Page | Inclusive Internship InitiativeInsurance Enrollment (Health)DigitalLearn (Digital Literacy)EDI Regional Trainings2020 Census outreach and subsequent Census Data Literacy resources for libraries | Governance (Board, Committees)Membership Recruitment and RetentionFundraisingCommunications Publications and Products Technology Staffing |