



Strategic Plan

2019-2022

**Prepared June 2019
by
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California Library Literacy Services

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The Vision for California Library Literacy Services in 2022

California Library Literacy Services programs are valued library services and valued members of California's adult education community. The programs are grounded in a shared set of values, program essentials, effective practices, and core competencies, and a shared culture of innovation. Program staff and volunteers participate in training, networking, information sharing, and the broader adult education community. Library literacy programs provide opportunities for learners to develop and practice leadership skills.

Introduction

The California Library Literacy Services 2019-2022 Strategic Plan was developed between October 22, 2018 and May 30, 2019. The planning process was guided by a strategic planning team of 12 members representing 12 library literacy programs. A list of team members can be found on page 17. The plan focuses intentionally on strengthening the infrastructure and foundation of California Library Literacy Services.

Methodology

Strategic planning team members were recruited to represent the regional literacy networks and the diversity of California's library literacy programs (rural and urban, small and large, city and county, etc.). Between October 2018 and May 2019, the team brainstormed and discussed current strengths and needs of California Library Literacy Services and researched its history and role within the landscape of California's adult education field at large. They conducted community conversations with seven regional literacy networks and found considerable consistency across the state on the issues that library literacy coordinators felt were most pressing and important to address. They distributed an initial draft of the plan to the field for comment and that feedback was reviewed and is reflected in the finalized plan.

Implementation Plan

The strategic planning team, state library staff, and the strategic planning consultant will guide and monitor the implementation of the plan through June 2022. Between September 2019 and June 2022, small working groups will address each of the goals in the strategic plan, and members of the strategic planning team will be represented in each of the groups.

The strategic plan provides each group with a program goal and a list of proposed activities to help them achieve that goal. Each group will use the proposed activities as a starting point to develop and implement a specific plan and timeline for achieving their goal and measuring the success of their work. Working group members have been tentatively identified in this document. Members may change or be added, as needed.

The groups will follow a set of guiding principles and implementation strategies. They will:

- Work with state library staff, regional library literacy networks, and individual program staff to gather input from the library literacy field.
- Look outside the field as well as within, and (where appropriate) gather input from California's network of adult education providers.
- Share local and regional conversations across the state to further consistency, understanding, and support.
- Develop tools to measure the success of the group's work.

Goal 1: MISSION, VALUES, AND PROGRAM ESSENTIALS

Staff and volunteers in California Library Literacy Services programs understand and adhere to a shared set of values and program essentials.

Assignment

Update and refine the current statements on program values and program essentials for clarity and alignment with the California Library Literacy Services legislation, mission, and current practices. Identify ideas and training needs for embedding the values and program essentials within California Library Literacy Services programs. Develop a plan for completing the assignment and measuring the group's achievement.

Background

The focus of California Library Literacy Services is established by California legislation, and libraries are accountable to that charge. The stated California Library Literacy Services mission and values guide libraries in fulfilling the purpose established in the legislation. Program essentials help to align library practice with the intent of the law and to assure quality library-based services.

Proposed Activities

1. Review and develop the current statements on program values and program essentials.
2. Collaborate with the Goal #4 Core Competencies work group to assure compatibility of the program essentials with the literacy coordinator core competencies.
3. Identify training needs, strengths, and gaps, among the library literacy community.
4. Identify training strategies.

Work Group

Full strategic planning team
Support: Natalie Cole, Jane Cook, Cathay Reta

Goal 2: LITERACY AS A VALUED LIBRARY SERVICE

Administrators and other library stakeholders value California Library Literacy Services programs as a core library service.

Assignment

Develop strategies that can be used to promote California Library Literacy Services as a core library service to library administrators and other library stakeholders. Develop a plan for completing the assignment and measuring the group's achievement.

Background

The acceptance of adult literacy as a core library service was one of the strongest themes to emerge from the regional network community conversations that were held during the strategic planning process. The degree of acceptance varies across the state, and many literacy coordinators shared their frustration that, in their view, their services are not always valued and respected. Coordinators would like their services to be fully integrated into their libraries.

California Library Literacy Services founder Gary Strong (California State Librarian 1980-94) envisioned and designed adult literacy services to be a standard offering of the public library. Quoting *Californians for Literacy: A Historical Study of the Development of the California Library Literacy Services from 1984–2004*:

"Because literacy is viewed as a core library service, both the state and local levels strive to ensure continuity of programming. The state funding process provides a continual baseline of support based on achievement of minimum standards and reporting requirements."

Proposed Activities

1. Review previous and current California Library Literacy Services projects that promote literacy as a core service to help to determine future efforts.
2. Survey the field for examples of the ways adult literacy is (and is not) considered to be a core library service.
3. Identify and share successful models of literacy as a core library service. Develop an understanding of what makes them successful and create materials and training for the field to replicate.
4. Identify and test strategies for promoting literacy as a core library service. For example, using state report data to generate informational materials (e.g. infographics) about program impact; increasing the connection with broader library professional development activities, such as statewide leadership training and the

regional library cooperatives; utilizing spaces where library directors convene (e.g. the Public Library Directors' Forum, regional cooperative meetings); drawing on learners and tutors as advocates.

5. Encourage work with regional library cooperatives to institutionalize literacy within their structures.
6. Create resources to help literacy staff and volunteers understand the role of adult literacy services in supporting the public library mission, raise awareness of their work and become effective advocates.
7. Seek recognition for unique library literacy services.
8. Create and support the implementation of training to support this goal.
9. Coordinate with the group working on Goal 3, effective practices.
10. Develop a pre- and post-activity survey that will measure the effectiveness of the group's work.

Resources

Some California Library Literacy Services projects (past and current) that were created to promote California Library Literacy Services as a core service:

- CLA award for Outstanding Librarian in Support of Literacy
- In late 90s/early 2000s California Library Literacy Services made inroads toward getting adult literacy as a library service included in coursework for Masters of Library and Information Service degrees (at San Jose State University). Is adult literacy services still part of this curriculum?
- In the past, regional networks set up special meetings in which they made presentations to library directors. (Note: It was challenging to get directors to attend.)
- Repeated discussion about the name "program" (implying temporary) finally resulted in adult literacy becoming "services" (implying ongoing). Its name was changed from California Literacy Campaign to California Library Literacy Services.
- Adult literacy set up as interest group within California Library Association.

Work Group

Carey Jones
Bev Schwartzberg
Heather Tovey
Support: Natalie Cole, Cathay Reta

Goal 3: EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

Staff and volunteers in California Library Literacy Services programs use effective practices and innovation.

Assignment

Identify effective practices for library literacy programs and develop a plan to share the practices with California Library Literacy Services programs. Develop a plan for completing the assignment and measuring the group's achievement.

Background

Coordinators consistently look for suggestions and request advice on how to best meet program needs: from recruiting learners and tutors, to training tutors, to developing partnerships, to managing program data, and so much more. The state library collects some of this information on annual reports and is beginning to share those results with the field. At the same time, it is not conclusive that these lists are *effective practices*; they may simply be *common practices*. It is time to look more closely to identify and document what works well in library-based settings, and to share those findings as a collection of effective practices.

Also important, a strength of library literacy programs is that libraries provide an environment in which staff can create and explore innovative ideas. We want to honor and encourage innovation and not suggest that programs should only follow what is designated as an *effective practice*.

Note: The planning committee chose to use the phrase *effective practices* rather than *best practices*. Emphasis is placed on the outcomes/results of the practice.

Proposed Activities

1. Define the terms included in the goal, including "literacy" (since it means different things to different people), "effective," and "innovative."
2. Determine outcomes by which to measure the success of different practices – what qualifies a practice as effective?
3. Define topics (objectives) to be researched for effective practices. Include internally- and externally-focused topics (e.g. working with learners and tutors as well as data management and program coordination).
4. Conduct research within and outside of California Library Literacy Services to identify effective practices in key topic areas. Review California Library Literacy Services reports, the Roles and Goals framework, the professional literature, conversations with learners, tutors, staff, etc.

5. Develop materials and training based on effective practices.
6. Identify “epic fails” from which to learn what not to do.
7. Engage regional networks to implement trainings.

Resources

- Library of Congress Literacy Awards 2014, Best Practices
- ProLiteracy Program Accreditation Standards (though no longer in use, the lists may be helpful to articulate practices)
- San Diego Council on Literacy guidelines
- Investing in Quality: A Blueprint for Adult Literacy Programs and Funders, Literacy Assistance Center
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55a158b4e4b0796a90f7c371/t/5aceaaaa03ce64b9a468334d/1523493549232/Investing+in+Quality+-+Literacy+Assistance+Center+%28December+2017%29+.pdf>

Work Group

Full strategic planning team

Support: Natalie Cole, Jane Cook, Cathay Reta

Goal 4: CORE COMPETENCIES

California Library Literacy Services program coordinators share a set of core professional competencies.

Assignment

Determine what are the necessary, basic core skills and other competencies that effective literacy coordinators should possess or can learn. Create a document that coordinators (and their supervisors) can use to confirm their skills and to plan training and learning opportunities to continue to develop their skills. Develop a plan for completing the assignment and measuring the group's achievement.

Background

There has been high turnover among library literacy coordinators. New coordinators need to hit the ground running and learn about the many aspects of managing an adult literacy program. They want to know what it is they need to learn/know. . . and so do not-so-new coordinators. Equally important, library directors need to know what to look for in literacy staff, and library literacy coordinators need a framework they can use to demonstrate the contributions they make to the program and the library.

Proposed Activities

1. Define the term "competencies."
2. Draft a list of basic competencies for the field to review, consider, and react to.
3. Survey coordinators about the skills they need to do their jobs.
4. Create a framework/matrix for coordinators to use as a self-assessment of core skills based on key areas of program management:
 - Volunteer recruitment, management and retention
 - Learner recruitment, management and retention
 - Volunteer tutor training
 - Family literacy
 - Data collection and analysis
 - Evaluation
 - Partnership development
5. Conduct exit interviews with those who leave the field (the long-term veterans).
6. Collect and share sample job descriptions.
7. Develop professional development trainings around the core competencies.
8. Coordinate with the group working on Goal 2, literacy as a valued library service.

Resources

To be determined

Work Group

Carrie Scott

Lucy Sims

Val Hardie

Carol Chapman

Support: Natalie Cole, Cathay Reta

Goal 5: ADULT LEARNER LEADERSHIP

California Library Literacy Services programs provide opportunities for learners to develop and practice leadership skills.

Assignment

Research and gain an understanding of how adult learner involvement, leadership, and empowerment impact learning and how they impact library literacy programs. Identify strategies for supporting library literacy programs in supporting learner leadership efforts. Develop a plan for completing the assignment and measuring the group's achievement.

Background

California Library Literacy Services established itself as a service that is learner-centered. Instruction is focused on learners attaining personal goals; it is not focused on a textbook. Its earliest approach was heavily influenced by the Friarian model (see Paulo Friere, popular education model) in which learners are actively involved in guiding the instruction. Many programs supported adult learners as leaders and specifically worked to support learner empowerment. However, with budget cuts, staff turnover, and reduced statewide networking over the years, California Library Literacy Services programs increasingly aligned with more traditional tutoring approaches, using standard workbooks and materials. Further, managing a program based on the Friarian model is often not in the skill set of coordinators. Currently, the learner leadership emphasis has been lost in many programs. The question now is: How can we bring this focus back into California Library Literacy Services?

Proposed Activities

1. Define "leadership" as it relates to this goal.
2. Identify the status of learner leadership activities among today's California Library Literacy Services programs and aspirations for increasing these opportunities.
3. Encourage participation in learner leadership programs: Adult Learner Leadership Institute, Adult Learners on Staff, etc.
4. Leverage the success of the Adult Learner Leadership Institute to strengthen library literacy programs.
5. Explore existing and potential connections with the national organization VALUE (Voices of Adult Learners United for Education).
6. Develop a list of leadership opportunities for learners, such as being active at their child's schools, volunteering in the community and at the library, etc.
7. Explore how the Roles & Goals might be used to develop leadership skills.
8. Look at examples to model, such as what is used in Teen Services in libraries.

9. Establish an ad hoc committee of former Adult Learner Leadership Institute graduates and learner leaders.
10. Consider convening learner conferences (such as the annual conference in the Inland Empire).

Resources

- 2017 Adult learner forum/reunion conducted by Common Knowledge
- Adult Learner Leadership Institute Survey 2019
- VALUE (Voices of Adult Learners United for Education), a national nonprofit organization developed by adult learners for adult learners
- Current and past activities include:
 - Adult Learner Leadership Institute (ALLI) – ongoing
 - Adult Learners on Staff (ALOS) initiative
 - Adult learner regional and statewide conferences
 - Adult learner led project development: Easy Reading Voter Guide, Project Money (San Francisco Public Library), etc.
- Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Paulo Friere <https://www.iep.utm.edu/freire/>

Work Group

Linda Sakamoto-Jahnke
Sabrina Rosengren
Support: Natalie Cole, Cathay Reta

Goal 6: NETWORKING & INFORMATION SHARING

Library literacy coordinators invest in learning, networks and collaboration to improve service delivery and program sustainability.

Assignment

Support and coordinate networking and information sharing among and between the regional literacy networks. Work with other strategic plan working groups to engage the networks as necessary. Develop a plan for completing the assignment and measuring the group's achievement.

Background

The community conversations and feedback from the field tell us that library literacy staff want to connect with one another and learn from one another. It benefits individuals, programs, libraries, and the entire California library literacy community to strengthen those connections – via the listserv, website, regional networks, training, conferences, and more.

Proposed Activities

1. Promote use of listserv, regional networks, the website, conferences, and CLA Interest Group.
2. Highlight and share successful collaborations with other library departments, city partners and community partners.
3. Establish mentoring programs with those library literacy networks that want them.
4. Establish and maintain a coordinator-to-coordinator site visit/travel program.
5. Establish a directory of individuals' and programs' expertise on the website.
6. Provide regular trainings for coordinators.
7. Use webinars to introduce community members to great resources.
8. Coordinate a common agenda topic each quarter at regional literacy network meetings to increase common sharing across the state.
9. Develop welcome packet for new coordinators/programs.
10. Develop and maintain a resource-rich website.
11. Encourage use of technology to allow remote participation in network meetings.

Resources

To be determined

Work Group

California State Library staff

In year one, state library staff will continue to implement increased training and networking programs by providing training at the state and local levels, a welcome packet for new coordinators, and supporting a site visit program, a mentoring program, and a database of individuals' and programs' expertise. At the end of year one, a new working group will be developed to focus on other items in the activities list.

Goal 7: ROLE AS ADULT EDUCATION SERVICE PROVIDER

California Library Literacy Services programs are active and respected members in the wider adult education community.

Assignment

Identify strategies to promote library literacy programs within the adult education community and help library literacy programs connect with other adult education providers. Become familiar with and maintain awareness of Adult Education Program events and news, and promote library literacy integration in the system. Help individual programs achieve the connection with their local adult education community that they aspire to. Develop a plan for completing the assignment and measuring the group's achievement.

Background

From its inception, California Library Literacy Services programs were created to fill a unique niche in the California adult education system. They would target services to English speaking adults with low literacy skills -- too low to be successful in a traditional classroom setting. More recently, the Adult Education Program -- formerly known as AB86 Consortia -- legislatively unified K-12 Adult Education Programs and Community College programs.

- Consortia *members* are restricted to community college districts, school districts, or county offices of education, or any joint powers authority consisting of community college districts, school districts, county offices of education.
- Consortia *partners* include libraries, among many other community organizations.

Consortia partners often participate in consortia workgroups. Library literacy is named as a partner, but libraries report differing levels of communication and cooperation with local adult education providers. Some libraries have experienced success at being accepted in their local consortium, but others have not. Some have received funding through their consortium and others have not. For a full background on the unification of the Adult Education Program, see page 7 of 2015 Adult Education Regional Planning report, http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/Portals/0/FlipBooks/2015-Adult-Education/2015_AB86_AdultEducation_ADA.pdf

Proposed Activities

1. Identify models of successful collaborations with the Adult Education Program consortia.

2. Identify models of other successful collaborations with adult education (outside of consortia).
3. Identify successful strategies for reaching out to other groups and collaborating successfully.
4. Identify training needs and strategies to help libraries connect successfully with other members of the adult education community.
5. Write talking points/template, language for coordinators to use for interactions with consortia members.
6. Arrange a series of webinars to introduce California Library Literacy Services to Adult Education Program (consortia) members.
7. Create presentations for coordinators to understand background of Consortia.
8. Connect with Consortia at the state level.
9. Present successful models at adult education conferences and at the California Library Association Conference.

Resources

California Adult Education website: <https://caladulted.org>

Work Group

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Support: Natalie Cole, Cathay Reta

Strategic Planning Team

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