

From Jonelle Darr:
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21st Century Literacies

Over the next few years, PaLA will be pushing forward a major initiative that will frame a lot of statewide programs (I'm co-chairing the PaLA Task Force, so this is kind of sneak peek at our work that will be unveiled later this year).

It may be helpful to think about the subject areas in terms of how it would enhance our community's 21st Century literacies in the following areas:

1. **Basic Literacy** – Libraries can play an important role in helping Pennsylvania achieve one of the highest literacy rates in the country, a trained and skilled workforce, and a growing tax base, economy and population.
2. **Online Literacy** – Libraries can play an important role in helping citizens know how to use online resources and current technology to improve their education, to enhance their job skills, to develop their personal lives and to fully participate in a digital society.
3. **Civic and Social Literacy** – Libraries can play an important role in helping citizens and students have the knowledge and skills they need to improve their lives, to participate and contribute effectively to their community, government and society and to connect with one another through civil discourse.
4. **Economic and Financial Literacy** -- Libraries can play an important role in helping citizens become informed consumers and exercise financial discipline as well as helping individuals, businesses and groups contribute to the economic vitality of their communities by stimulating innovation and by participating in civic and non-profit organizations.
5. **Health and Wellness Literacy** – Libraries can play an important role in helping citizens actively manage their own and their family's well-being, empowered to be effective partners with their health care providers so they can live longer, more productive lives.

Some ideas on how online resources might support these literacies

- **Basic Literacy** will improve through easily accessed early literacy online resources that improve school readiness and achievement. Librarians will link and guide people to use Pennsylvania Department of Education resources, such as the Adult Basic and Literacy Education web site, as well as provide online database resources that link to GED practices tests, eCourses and computer skills tutorials that support the mission of ABLE.
- **Online Literacy** will improve when librarians provide citizens with training in how to use and evaluate online resources, software, and digital devices. Enhanced library facilities will offer state-of-the-art computer labs with broadband Internet capability and trained tutors. Pennsylvania's libraries will provide the information and training needed to create successful and informed eStudents and eCitizens.

- **Civic and Social Literacy** will improve when citizens can use a web portal that organizes and presents historic and contemporary topics, government, news and training resources in easy-to-understand formats in one online location and a statewide library inventory management system that makes collections and digital resources located throughout the state readily available to all citizens.
- **Economic and Financial Literacy** will improve when citizens are encouraged to obtain reliable online resources in such areas as personal and family finances, legal and business information, careers and employment, continuing education, and grant writing. Mobile and virtual programs will enable individuals to find the information and training they need at a time and place convenient to them.
- **Health and Wellness Literacy** will improve when librarians link and guide people to use Pennsylvania Department of Health resources, while also providing direct access to hundreds of online magazines, reports, downloadable pamphlets and streaming videos that support the information needs of both healthcare consumers and practitioners.