**SACRAMENTO PUBLIC LIBRARY** ACCESSABILITY COMMITTEE:  HUB LIBRARIES

PROJECT SCOPE

**March 1, 2018**

### 1.  Project Background and Description

- [Recent estimates](#) show there are approximately **4.92 million** individuals in the U.S. living with an intellectual disability, which is about **17%** of the U.S. population (Braddock, et al. 2015).
- Approximately **15% of children age 3-17, or 1 in 6 children**, in the U.S. has some type of developmental disability (Boyle, et al. 2011) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2015).
- The State of California serves over **295,000 individuals** with intellectual and developmental disabilities through 21 regional centers (State of California Department of Developmental Services June 2015).
- In a **ten-year period**, the number of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities served by the State of California **increased 38%** (State of California Department of Developmental Services January 2015).
- The U.S. Census Bureau in a 2016 American Community Survey, indicates that there are nearly **170,000 adults** with disabilities in Sacramento County.
- More than **97,000** California public school students have been diagnosed as autistic, a number that has **risen seven-fold since 2001**, according to the latest special education data from the California Department of Education. The figure represent a **jump of about 6,500, or 7 percent, from 2014-15 to 2015-16**.

The SPL AccessABILITY Committee formed in the summer of 2016 to determine the Library resources available for individuals with cognitive and/or physical disabilities. The committee determined that while resources, such as audio, large print, and AWE computers were available, services such as programming and information sharing, were limited.  In the spring of 2016, programming for individuals with disabilities included Sensory Storytime and Sensory Family Movies at 2 out of 28 locations.  The committee agreed that services and programs were needed for all age groups and at more library locations.

In order to determine the aspirations, challenges, and important issues for the community with special needs, members of the committee received training from *Harwood:  The Institute for Public Innovation.*  The training prepared participants to deepen Library impact and increase the Library's relevance in the community.  The foundational idea of the training was practice called Turning Outward, which enables

practitioners to understand the community by asking the right questions, focusing on public knowledge, applying new knowledge to make sound decisions, to share that knowledge, and to make informed decisions by using the community as a reference point for choices and judgements.

Six Community Conversations were held to obtain the set of public knowledge that the Library needed to better inform decisions regarding the community of individuals with disabilities, six community conversations were held.  Library staff involved in the conversations included the following:  Kathy Middleton, Heather Bratt, Janet Wininger, and Amber Clark.  Throughout the conversations, Harwood training continued with coaching sessions via conference calls.  The calls included the before mentioned staff as well as Christopher Trew and Christie Hamm.  The community conversations were informal, kitchen-table style conversations that posed questions to the community with disabilities.  The questions were not focused on the Library; rather, the questions focused on the aspirations of the community, challenges in reaching those aspirations, and the changes that needed to be made to reach those aspirations.  While the original intent of the conversations was to gather information about children with disabilities and their parents or caregivers, teens and adults were so often discussed that a decision was reached to include the two age groups in the theming and final narrative*, which illustrated the results of the conversations.

The three major Harwood themes derived from the conversations include the following:

- Acceptance and inclusion
- Resources sharing
- Activities and programs for all ages.

Additionally, the Hardwood training prepared participants to create conditions for change and sustainability by identifying the stage of community change and identifying the right conditions to accelerate and support change.

The Harwood training attendees noted that the community surrounding those with special needs is at the **catalytic stage** -- a stage in community life where isolated groups and individuals are making small steps, taking risks, and experimenting, but the overall change is not enough to produce a large scale sense of hope.  However, this stage can continue to unfold as the number of people and organizations step forward and build networks between them and among them.  The greatest challenge for this stage is that the old narratives will dominate--the ingrained sense of "nothing can change"--until more progress is made and trust builds.


*See the Harwood Community Conversation attached to the end of this document.

Ultimately, Harwood staff created and shared a narrative that summarized the conversations and experiences of attendees.  The narrative is being shared with conversation attendees, Sacramento organizations and stakeholders, and SPL staff.  Specifically, the themes were shared at an Adult Services meeting, a Youth Services Meeting, and a Supervisors Meeting.  A meeting regarding a specific program, Library Insiders, was held in September to inform and prepare interested staff members from all levels, library assistants to library supervisors, to begin an Insiders program at their location.   Additionally, in September and December there were volunteer coordinator meetings at which the broader view of how to engage volunteers with cognitive disabilities and form partnerships with cooperating agencies was presented.  Overall, it was apparent that small sparks of interest and activity were spreading throughout the library system.

In order to fully capture the energy spreading throughout the library system, in October, the AccessABILITY committee extended an invitation to all public services staff for a goal setting meeting.  Fifteen staff members attended the meeting, representing twelve branches.  Many other staff members expressed interest but were not able to attend due to scheduling conflicts.  Most in attendance expressed interest in implementing at least one of the services highlighted in previous presentations.  At this meeting, branch-specific local, state, and national stats were provided for those that may not be familiar with this population or may still be on the fence about the necessity for services for this population.

A significant idea presented at the AccessABILITY meeting was the idea of **HUB Libraries** being created to serve as library system models of inclusion practices.  HUB libraries would have staff trained to provide inclusive programs, such as—but not limited to—Sensory Storytime, an inclusive family movie, Library Insiders, and volunteer programs.  Also, HUB staff would be available to train employees from other system locations to provide inclusive programs as well as available to be observed and to respond to questions and concerns.  HUB library staff would work to form or strengthen partnerships with organizations that serve the community of disabled individuals, such as employment programs, adult transition programs, Special Education departments, assisted-living centers, parent groups, and early-childhood development programs.  Again, all Library staff have the option to perform in this capacity; the purpose of the HUB staff would be to assist in developing strategy and methods, providing models that demonstrate best practices.  HUB libraries would provide ambassadors for internal and external customer service training and recommendations.  HUB staff would serve to help communicate unique needs and to help inform others regarding library and community resources and services to meet those needs.  HUB staff would work within

the Library and the community to dispel bias, misconceptions, and stereotypes facing people with disabilities.

As mentioned above, each HUB library will provide **Programming** for intellectually disabled children, teens, and adults.  A HUB library designation does not limit the scope of services provided; as always, inclusive services should adapt to meet community needs.  The proposed HUB library system is meant to provide consistency and fully harness system and departmental resources.

**Existing SPL Inclusive Programming** includes the following:

Children:

- Sensory Storytime:  "This inclusive storytime was developed for children with developmental disability, such as sensory disorders and Down's Syndrome.  It features songs, stories, and sensory activities and is best for children with a developmental age of 2 years to 6 years.  Behaviors and/or noise are no problem.  Siblings are welcome!"
- Autism-Friendly Family Movie (Inclusive Family Movie):  "Join us for an inclusive family movie event for kids with developmental disabilities, such as autism or other sensory disorders. 'Typical' toddlers and preschoolers are welcome too. We'll have healthy snacks, the lights will be slightly up, the sound will be slightly down, and kids don't need to remain seated while enjoying the movie. There will also be lots of fidget toys."

Teens and Adults:

- Library Insiders:  "This program provides opportunities for adults and teens with intellectual and developmental disabilities to become familiar with library resources and facilities, to feel comfortable using the library, and to feel confident interacting with staff."
- Volunteer Opportunities:  Opportunities for adults and teens with disabilities will be offered that focus on individual strengths, talents, interests, and needs. Volunteer coordinators will work with partner agencies to provide work experience.

Also, each HUB library will highlight services and resources aimed at individuals with disabilities, such as:

- We Speak Library!:  "Patrons who are non-verbal or less-verbal can communicate with Library staff using our We Speak Library communication

tablets. Picture symbols are used to help adults and children find their way around the Library, request Library materials and more."

- This is My Library: "Introduce your family to an individual Library branch through photos so they will know what to expect on their first visit."
- Library Resources: Staff will provide information about the accessible features of library resources, such as the dyslexic font available on the Overdrive app.

Finally, HUB libraries will provide staff that serve as **catalytic ambassadors** to interact with the public and SPL staff.

- Library Tours: Staff will readily provide informative tours for all people, especially groups or individuals with disabilities. The tours will highlight the accessible nature of the library - physically and virtually.
- Outreach: Staff will provide outreach to organizations that provide services to people with disabilities.
- Partnerships: Staff will develop and foster partnerships for programs, outreach, and services.

- Training: Staff will provide program, customer service, and outreach training.

Once the 3-5 HUB libraries are at fully functioning, a **system-wide kickoff** will occur that highlights the stories and impact of inclusive and accessible libraries. The kickoff will occur in April 2019, which is Autism Awareness month.

It is important to note that libraries without the HUB designation may offer any inclusive programming, participate in outreach, and examine their community as they see fit. HUB libraries are meant to serve as a model for the library system and provide consistency. Libraries not designated as HUB libraries may begin or continue offering services aligned with the goals below.

The goals of the HUB libraries are in alignment with the themes identified in the Harwood conversations and narrative attached to this proposal as well as the SPL Strategic Plan and priorities.

## HARWOOD THEME I:  ACCEPTANCE AND INCLUSION

- **STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 1:**  Increase Awareness and Usage of Library Services to Meet Community Needs.
  - o  1.2: By May 2017, the community, for-profit, and not-for-profit organizations have strong, mutually supporting partnerships with the Library.

    **AccessABILITY Committee Goal:**  Form or strengthen mutually beneficial partnerships and outreach initiatives with organizations, such as InAlliance, EGUSD Workability, Special Education departments,  (school districts), and Progressive Employment to increase volunteers and services to individuals with disabilities.

## HARWOOD THEM 2:  RESOURCE SHARING

- **STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 2**:  Develop and empower staff to create a culture of customer service that ensures positive experiences.

  - o  2.2:  By January 2018, patrons have increased confidence in staff knowledge and skills to meet their service and program needs.

    **AccessABILITY Committee Goal:**  Ongoing staff training at HUB libraries for programs and services.  Staff Day 2018: Offer series of staff development around special needs.  All staff required to take at least one. Ambassadors at each HUB library facilitate ongoing training for staff and maintain a point of contact for public information and reference in regards to resources and services for individuals with special needs in specific regions.  HUB library staff provide training for other regional staff; and serve as ambassadors to dispel bias, misconceptions, and stereotypes facing people with disabilities.

## HARWOOD THEME 3:  ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMING FOR ALL AGES

- **STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 3:**  Connect people with the universe of possibilities to enrich their lives.

  - o  3.2:  By July 2018, the public has access to diverse, high quality, system-wide (regionally accessible) programs that meet the unique needs of children, teens, and adults.

**AccessABILITY Committee Goal:** Regional HUB libraries provide core programming (Sensory Storytime, Sensory Family Movie, Library Insiders, and teen and adult volunteer opportunities for individuals with special needs); SPL has a HUB library Kickoff in April 2019, which highlights system-wide accessABILITY efforts and successes.

## Project Scope

- The AccessABILITY Committee will be revised for existing members, to be formed with staff from HUB libraries and staff that offer programs or resources at other libraries.

  o Committee members must be actively engaged in providing, promoting, and engaging programs, resources, and services to this community. Meetings will be held quarterly.

  o HUB library supervisors must be committee members and attend meetings on a regular basis to ensure HUB libraries are fulfilling their roles in the library system overall.

  o At least one Public Services Manager will attend the committee meeting held quarterly.

  o Committee meetings will establish regional programming needs, system training needs, and formulate goals that focus on consistency in services and resources, staff training and follow through, increasing and enhancing programs, sharing information, and reducing bias and discrimination towards the population with disabilities.

  o The result will be at least three fine-tuned HUB libraries that support regional libraries and staff.

    ▪ The three libraries most readily prepared to be a HUB library at this time are SYL, SOU, and RAN.

    ▪ Proposed HUB libraries:

    Region I: **Sylvan Oaks** serves as HUB library for regional training and observation

    Region 2: North Natomas as HUB library for regional training and Observation

    Region 3: **Southgate** as HUB library for regional training and

Observation

Region 4: **Rancho Cordova** as HUB library for regional training and observation

Region 5: Martin Luther King as HUB library for regional training and observation

Region 6: No HUB library

- Also, at the 2018 staff day, all staff will be required to take one training course related to programming, customer service, outreach, or resources and services for individuals with special needs.

## Timeline

January 2018 -- AccessABILITY Proposal delivered to Public Services Managers. Provide input for revision and/or clarification.

February 2018 -- AccessABILITY Proposal delivered to administrators.

February - March 2018 -- AccessABILITY Proposal introduced to Branch Supervisors at Regional meetings; Public Service Managers make determination which branches will serve as HUB libraries. Staff day training developed.

March - April 2018 -- AccessABILITY Committee meets with staff directly involved in providing programming, outreach, and trainings and partnerships development. Training of necessary staff begins. Staff day training continues to be developed.

May 2018 -- Training continues.

June - August 2018 -- HUB libraries provide summer programs, outreach, and work to develop and maintain partnerships. Staff day training continues to be developed.

September - December 2018 -- HUB library initiative continues, regional efforts spread, training continues as needed. Kick-off planning begins.

October 2018 -- All-staff participate in training at Staff Day.

January 2019 -- Kickoff planning heightens. HUB libraries continue efforts.

February - March 2019 -- HUB libraries polish efforts.

April 2019 -- HUB Library Kickoff!!

## 2. High-Level Requirements

The AccessABILITY HUB libraries leading to system-wide kickoff:

- System-wide buy in from supervisors and direct support from Public service Managers and library administrators.  The HUB library project needs to be an integral part of library system priorities.
- Departmental collaboration and support, COM, IT, CSD, Youth Services, Adult Services, and FAC.

## 4. Deliverables

- Library Supervisors, Librarians and Library Assistants will receive training to support programming, outreach, and partnership needs.
- COM will provide marketing support and internal and external communication products to support the AccessABILITY HUB libraries, regional efforts, and system-wide kickoff.
- Customers will experience an enhanced sense of acceptance and inclusion, resource sharing, and activities and programs for all ages.
- Partners will be provided with active communication by necessary library staff, information sharing, and accomplishment of shared goals.
- Schools will experience specialized outreach to students, teachers, and departments that highlights library accessibility.
- AccessABILITY committee will provide specific plans as needed as well as organize staff day training with outside organization.
- CSD will provide collections and other resources, such as sensory toys at each branch, that directly support system-wide and HUB library efforts.  - Adaptive versions of technology.

## 5. Affected Parties

- Library supervisors and staff
- Youth Services
- Facilities
- IT
- COM
- CSD

## APPROVAL AND AUTHORITY TO PROCEED

We approve the project as described above, and authorize the team to proceed.

| Name | Title | Date 3-8-18 |
|---|---|---|
| Kathy Middleton | Assistant Director, Public Services | |
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Comments: CSD, COM, IT, FAC support TBD.

| Approved By | Date | Approved By | Date |
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