

# Allentown District Five Year Plan 2025-2030

## With 2025 Actionable Items

### **Mission Statement:**

The Allentown District Library Center (ADLC) is dedicated to supporting and guiding the libraries of Lehigh and Carbon Counties by fostering collaboration, resource-sharing, and ongoing professional development. ADLC coordinates the allocation of state-provided District funds to ensure that resources and services are accessible to all residents and taxpayers. By providing valuable databases, resources, and continuing education opportunities, and offering leadership and direction, ADLC empowers District libraries to deliver the highest quality service to their patrons.

### **Participating Libraries**

#### Carbon County

- Dimmick Memorial Library
  - Penn-Kidder (Branch)
- Lehigh Area Memorial Library
- Palmerton Area Library

#### Lehigh County

- Allentown Public Library
- Public Library of Catasauqua
- Coplay Public Library
- Emmaus Public Library
- Lower Macungie Library
- Parkland Community Library
- Slatington Library
- Southern Lehigh Public Library
- Whitehall Township Public Library

### **Affiliate Libraries**

- Panther Valley Public Library (Non-State Aided)
- Weatherly Area Community Library (Non-State Aided)

### **Background**

The Allentown District Library Center serves a population of 391,124 across 35 municipalities in Lehigh and Carbon Counties. However, five municipalities in the Weatherly School District, two in the Panther Valley School District, two Carbon County municipalities in the Hazleton Area

School District, as well as the Northwestern Lehigh School District, are designated as unserved areas. The Weatherly School District and Panther Valley School District are each served by a non-stated aided library.

In 2019, eleven district libraries formed the Lehigh Carbon Library Cooperative (LCLC), allowing patrons to access a shared collection with a single library card. The LCLC libraries established unified borrowing policies, billing standards, and card registration procedures, providing patrons with a seamless experience across all participating libraries.

In April 2024, resource sharing expanded further, including libraries from Allentown, Bethlehem, Easton, and Monroe County. This partnership, known as Multi-District Lehigh Valley Pocono Library Group, increased the catalog to over 1.4 million items, accessible to patrons through a coordinated delivery system.

### **Goal 1: Provide Administrative and Institutional Support**

The Allentown District Library Center will offer guidance and support to ensure all district libraries' compliance with state laws and requirements.

#### *Objectives:*

- Be available to advise libraries on state laws, regulations, and requirements.
  - **Establish a weekly virtual office hours program to provide directors and board members with a consistent platform for check-ins, addressing questions, and discussing key issues, fostering open communication and support.**
  - **Regularly communicate important deadlines and updates for state reports to directors through email notifications, scheduled reminders, and dedicated updates during meetings to ensure timely and accurate submissions.**
- Assist libraries in meeting state standards and expectations to ensure the smooth operation of all facilities.
  - **Conduct an annual one-on-one meeting with each library director to review compliance with state standards, address operational challenges, and provide tailored guidance for continuous improvement.**
  - **Attend at least one board meeting per library annually to offer guidance, address concerns, and respond to questions, ensuring alignment with district goals and state requirements.**

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### **Goal 2: Foster Collaboration**

Encourage a collaborative environment where district libraries, resource-sharing libraries, and the community work together to improve services and efficiency.

*Objectives:*

- Facilitate regular interlibrary department meetings to foster the exchange of ideas, solutions, and best practices.
    - **Organize and facilitate quarterly meetings with Directors, Youth Services, Adult Services, Circulation Services, and Technical Services departments to encourage collaboration, share best practices, and address service-specific challenges and opportunities.**
  - Offer guidance and support in strengthening relationships with municipalities and community organizations.
    - **Host one training session focused on enhancing relationship-building skills to support improved and sustainable community outreach efforts, fostering stronger connections with local organizations and stakeholders.**
  - Develop and distribute shared marketing materials to promote district-wide services and events.
    - **Host a training session on collaborative marketing and effective marketing strategies, aimed at equipping library staff with the tools and techniques to promote district-wide services and events more efficiently.**
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**Goal 3: Knowledge and Inspiration**

Support ongoing learning and professional development for library staff to inspire innovation and improved service delivery.

*Objectives:*

- Coordinate and offer diverse learning opportunities for library staff, including workshops, training sessions, and conferences.
    - **Provide a minimum of three continuing education workshops, tailored to the professional development needs of library staff, focusing on innovative practices, emerging trends, and skill enhancement**
    - **Curate and maintain a comprehensive list of relevant webinars, workshops, and conferences, updated monthly, to ensure library staff have access to current professional development opportunities**
  - Funds may be designated in the District budget to take advantage of further educational opportunities, including allocations to subsidize staff attendance at statewide and national conferences
  - Maintain a district-wide professional collection of materials for staff development and research.
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#### **Goal 4: Equitable and Inclusive Services**

Ensure that all residents have equal access to high-quality resources, fostering an inclusive environment for learning and discovery.

##### *Objectives:*

- Provide access to a variety of digital materials and other resources that meet the needs of diverse communities.
    - **Conduct an annual analysis of database usage by running detailed reports to assess their effectiveness in meeting patron needs, and use findings to guide resource allocation and improvement efforts.**
  - Provide a sustainable delivery system between district libraries and resource-sharing libraries to ensure equitable resource availability across all district libraries to support lifelong learning for all patrons.
  - Coordinate and maintain Interlibrary Loan services.
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#### **Goal 5: Funding**

Secure and effectively manage financial resources to support district-wide initiatives and library operations.

##### *Objectives:*

- Secure and utilize district funds to ensure the continued success of library operations and resource-sharing efforts.
  - **Prepare and distribute a detailed monthly expense report to member libraries, ensuring transparency and accountability in the management of district funds.**
- Pursue grants and other funding opportunities to support district-wide initiatives and expand services for patrons.
  - **Submit applications for at least one grant to support district-wide initiatives, with the goal of securing funding to enhance library services and resources.**
- Provide guidance to libraries on alternate funding such as fundraising and grants.
  - **Organize and conduct a training session for board and trustee members focused on library revenue streams and alternative funding opportunities, aiming to enhance their understanding and support of sustainable financial strategies.**