

Proposed Theories of for Public Access Technology and Library Boards

Public Access Technology

...supports technology and digital literacy and digital inclusion SO THAT...

individuals have access to more career choices SO THAT...

each community in Montana has the ability to keep up with the growing and ever-changing digital world...SO THAT

our communities benefit one another through careers that enrich our society and local economy

Assumptions: people have some access to technology and libraries supplement that. Maybe in 20 years, this won't be an issue, but for now, we still have people who are functionally or completely digitally illiterate – no computers, no smart phone, no keyboarding skills, even. The elderly, especially are struggling, but some catch on really fast and do not have problems. We will probably always have a group economically disadvantaged that cannot afford Internet access at home. We also have digital inequity in the rural areas of Montana – it's more expensive for poorer quality Internet access for rural ranchers, for example. Digital literacy may become less of an issue over time, but digital access will remain an issue forever.

Public Access Technology

...supports technology and digital literacy and digital inclusion SO THAT

All Montanans have equitable access to Internet resources ... SO THAT

Montanans can apply for job (even Town Pump REQUIRES online job applicants), or file for unemployment or take a class or pay their taxes – essentially, so that they can participate in society... SO THAT

We don't have a growing group of digital have-nots...that are not able to function in a digital world

Public Access Technology

...supports technology and digital literacy and digital inclusion SO THAT

Information and digital literacy are central to library services...SO THAT

Patrons have access to resources to help them with their devices and patrons are able to navigate their digital world and be smart consumers of digital information... SO THAT...

The library identifies community needs and responds appropriately... SO THAT...

Programming and services related to digital literacy and inclusion reflect community needs.

Library Boards

...Understand and reflects community needs...SO THAT

Broad representation of the local community is apparent...SO THAT...

The library honestly reflects the people that they serve... SO THAT...

Programming and services can be targeted to the local community's needs ... SO THAT...

The community recognizes that the library is an essential community asset ... SO THAT...

The community supports the library SO THAT

There is always a library

Outcomes statement:

Library boards conduct community stakeholders map to consider as they are replacing empty seats on the board to more clearly reflect the community on the board.

Library boards consider advisory groups, like a teen advisory, as an adjunct to their governance structure to more clearly reflect the community's needs.

Library systems consider local advisory groups or other systems for branches or communities not directly served by the county seat library to more clearly represent their whole community.

Assumptions: The term community often means the immediate area around the library – the town that the library sits in, rather than the larger geographic area the library is served. Libraries struggle to serve outlying communities and rural residents. Reservations that cross county lines have even more hurdles.