Community Leadership Breakfasts combine the discovery, dream and design stages of Appreciative Inquiry. Community leaders – government officials, executives from large and small business and non-profits, school administrators and representatives from faith communities, identified each library's strengths, then how the library, often in partnership with community groups, could leverage its strengths to address community issues.

Leaders in each jurisdiction envisioned their respective library as centers of their community and technology instructors, assisting community members to develop the new competencies required to succeed in the knowledge economy. Their recommendations were incorporated into strategies in each library's strategic plan. The breakfasts also re-framed participants' perceptions of the library and strengthened their support for new service initiatives.

Breakfast logistics:

Length: 2 – 2.5 hours
Size: 20 – 40 participants.
Divide participants into groups of 6 – 10 to discuss the questions.
Enlist library staff to facilitate discussions and take notes.

Begin the discussion by explaining its purpose and goals.
Be each participant receives a copy of the completed strategic plan.

Sample questions:

Please identify the areas in which Howard County Library excels. What makes the library critical to education for all ages?

Please identify the economic, social, and technological trends on the horizon in the county, region and beyond that Howard County Library System should consider as it plans for the future of self-directed education for the community.

In light of these trends, how might Howard county library System strengthen, enhance, and expand self-directed education in the next five years?

How has Somerset County Library System (SCLS) contributed to making Somerset County an
exceptional community. What factors do you think are responsible for the library's achievements?

What are your hopes for the future of SCLS?