



**BETHLEHEM AREA
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Learning Starts Here



BAPL STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2024

Educates, Informs, Inspires

MISSION STATEMENT

The Bethlehem Area
Public Library *educates,*
informs and *inspires* by
providing free and open
access to materials and
information.

11 W. CHURCH ST, BETHLEHEM, PA 18018
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Introduction

This strategic plan cycle began in an unprecedented global pandemic which has impacted the community's health, economy, education -- and the library. Customer interactions with BAPL have changed, with increased use of online resources, altered programming, and fewer building visits. The ultimate impact of COVID-19 on BAPL is as yet unknown, and the library must continue to adjust services to changing conditions and customer needs.

Despite the continuation of pandemic disruptions, themes were identified during the planning process that call for action, with initiatives that respond to changing community demographics and culture. They explore and embrace diversity and partnerships with other agencies. The initiatives are grouped under three key words of the BAPL Mission Statement: **educates...informs...inspires.**



Part One: Educates

BAPL will seek to provide diverse, multi-format collections that meet community needs during the pandemic and beyond.

Activity:

- Increase overall collection use.
- Provide a variety of online and hard copy options as use indicates.
- Represent demographic diversity in new acquisitions.

Continue and expand support for K-12 students, especially for those most at risk due to remote or changed learning environments.

Activity:

- Increase services and communications to local schools and homeschoolers.
- Expand summer reading opportunities.

Refresh buildings for post-pandemic use, with a focus on individual and small group comfort and productivity.

Activity:

- Main Library
 - Re-arrange and/or purchase new shelving to eliminate blind spots.
 - Rearrange seating area and public computers for improved safety and workflow.
 - Cosmetic improvements on the first floor and basement (i.e. new paint and carpet)
- South Side Branch
 - Install an elevator for meeting room accessibility.
 - Meeting room improvements (functionality/cosmetics/accessibility)
- Satellites
 - Hanover Township – Improve outreach and services, including the possibility of a satellite library, located in the Township.
 - Fountain Hill – Grow usage of Books on the Hill.
 - Bethlehem Township – Expand offerings at the Coolidge Building.

Part Two: Informs

Develop and execute a marketing plan, with special consideration to reaching the underserved.

Activity:

- Create a robust marketing plan with the goal of informing the extended community about all the services available at BAPL.
- Better understand the demographics of our active users and non-users and incorporate strategies to engage non-users.
- Identify best ways to connect with both users and non-users (social media, traditional media, library outreach, other innovative marketing techniques).
- Locate local social media influencers who can be library ambassadors.
- Increase interaction and collaboration with the Friends of the Library, in order to mutually further BAPL's marketing plan.

Expand and adapt outreach, especially to underserved parts of the community.

Activity:

- Identify and ameliorate impediments to access for current and potential library users.
- Evaluate and refresh the bookmobile schedule.
- Identify potential partners for collaborative outreach activities, including offsite programs and participation in special events.
- Receive and develop a plan for the Book Bike.

Promote community diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) through enhanced services and staffing.

Activities:

- Increase diversity of staff to reflect the community.
- Provide DEI training and resources for staff, board and volunteers.
- Provide basic vocabulary training and resources for staff in Spanish and other languages.
- Seek qualified bi-lingual staff.
- Identify translation services/resources.
- Expand DEI offerings in adult and children's programming.

Address the challenges faced by the community and library in serving the homeless, mentally ill, and others in need of social services.

Activity:

- Research and implement best practices for libraries in similar communities.
- Initiate a working group of partners to establish community-wide service solutions.

Part Three: Inspires

Increase communications and advocacy with municipal and state funders.

Activities:

- Provide regular library updates to municipalities and state officials on library successes and needs.
- Research methods of library funding, including fundraising.
- Review current contracts with the participating municipalities and revise to align with current bylaws and procedures of the BAPL.
- Continue to collaborate with BASD, review any gaps that exist in service.

Fully inspire staff potential, satisfaction and retention.

Activities:

- Establish formal HR services through a personnel officer or service.
- Cross-train staff in different departments and task sets.
- Strengthen communications within and between library departments.
- Launch a scholarship program for library staff to pursue library science degrees (Yoshida Scholarship Fund)

Develop present and future trustees as informed leaders and library ambassadors

Activities:

- Conduct a board performance self-assessment every 2 years.
- Provide opportunities for community members to serve on library board committees.
- Create and implement a campaign to identify and recruit potential trustees and committee members that represent all municipalities served.

Promote a culture of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) across all aspects of library operations.

Activities:

- Develop and adopt a DEI statement on behalf of the BAPL.
- Identify and connect with potential trustees and advocates that represent the diversity of the community.
- Actively seek resources to assess and address issues related to DEI.

Plan Methodology

The following activities were conducted to create the plan:

- Review of library and community data and trends
- Pre-planning board work session, November 2019
- Leadership interviews with key community stakeholders, Spring 2020
- Staff input meetings, Fall 2020
- Library board planning work session, December 2020
- Review of plan draft, January 2021
- Approval of plan, April 2021
- Revisions to plan / approval of updated plan, December 2021



Plan Participants

Catherine Alloway, Strategic Planning Consultant

Bethlehem Area Public Library Staff:

Josh Berk, Executive Director

Erin Poore, Assistant Director

City of Bethlehem Board Members:

Anne Felker

Jane Gill

Joyce Hinnefeld

Rachel Leon

Olga Negrón

Emil Signes

Sharon Yoshida

Julie Zumas

Bethlehem Township Board Members:

Randi Blauth

John Merhottein

Dale Sourbeck

Hanover Township Board Members:

Jay Finnigan

Jamie Paxton

Fountain Hill Borough Board Member:

Annamarie Jordan

