



Community Based Plan of Service 2021-2026

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Adopted by the Board of Trustees
October 12, 2021

Library Board of Trustees 2021
Andy Manion- President
Meredith Tower- Treasurer
Linda Gawrys- Secretary
James Carter
Lori Acee

Library Director:
Andrea Simmons

Long Range Planning Committee: Andy Manion, Meredith Tower, Amy Jenkins, Andrea Simmons

Background:

The Ballston Spa Public Library (BSPL) was chartered in 1893 by the State of New York, to serve the residents of the Village of Ballston Spa. It existed in various locations throughout the village, until a permanent home was built for it in 1959. The library was expanded in 1971, remodeled in 2005 and had an elevator installed in 2008. The current building is two stories, and fully handicapped accessible. The Village of Ballston Spa now has approximately 5,556 residents, and is the county seat of Saratoga County.

Today about 50% of library patrons are village residents. Another third reside in the adjacent towns of Milton. The remainder come primarily from the townships of Malta, Ballston, Galway and Charlton.

Between 60% and 80% of library funding comes from the Village each year. The towns of Milton and Charlton are regular contributors, as is the Ballston Spa Central School District, via budget proposition. A small amount is received annually from Saratoga County.

Ballston Spa Public Library's By-Laws can be found at: <http://bspl.sals.edu>.

Demographic Review:

Ballston Spa Public Library is chartered to serve the Village of Ballston Spa. As of 2019, the total population was 5,469 and the median age was 41.1. The median household income in 2019 was \$61,378. In 2019, for a family of four, 23% lived below the poverty line*. In 2019, 20.5% of the population was 17 years old or younger.

Sources: *aspe.hhs.gov, U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010, ESRI forecasts 2019 and 2024

Mission Statement:

Ballston Spa Public Library is a learning center and gathering place. The needs of our community drive our services. As a result, we take a personal interest in ensuring that services are delivered in a welcoming, convenient, and responsive manner.

Vision Statement:

Our library strives to inspire learning, creativity and inclusion. We aim to be the cornerstone for our community's life-long learning efforts, social and cultural well-being.

Value Statements:

The following values guide our decisions and actions.

➤ Access and intellectual freedom

- ↳ BSPL values making materials in all formats available to patrons.
- ↳ We believe materials on all topics should be accessible to all library users.

➤ Excellent customer service

- ↳ BSPL values and respects its patrons, community partners, volunteers and staff.
- ↳ We are committed to providing welcoming, courteous and efficient service.

➤ Education & Lifelong learning

- ↳ BSPL values educational, inclusive and diverse programming for patrons of all ages.
- ↳ We believe the passion for learning is essential in all stages of life.

➤ Preservation

- ↳ BSPL values maintaining the historical resources and make them available to patrons in-house and out of the area.
- ↳ We are committed to preserving and promoting Ballston Spa's rich history.

➤ Community

- ↳ BSPL values teamwork, partnerships and serving the community.
- ↳ We are committed to fostering a strong and welcoming learning environment.

➤ Accountability

- ↳ BSPL values wise planning and responsible stewardship.
- ↳ We are committed to providing efficient use of public funds and resources.

Planning Environment and Description:

The Library Director formed a committee in February 2021 to meet monthly. The committee consisted of the Library Director, two Library Board trustees and a member of the community. The prior Plan of Service was reviewed, current programs and services discussed, and research of other libraries throughout the state was conducted. Survey questions for the community were created and shared with the library's Board of Trustees. The Trustees provided feedback and the final survey went live via Survey Monkey on June 1, 2021 on the library website. The survey was promoted by various community based websites and social media platforms. Paper copies of the survey were available at the library, Village of Ballston Spa city hall, a community center and senior housing complex.

Planning Procedure:

Data used in creating this plan was gathered in several ways.

- Compiled statistics from Census.gov, Village of Ballston Spa Economic Development Plan, and BSPL monthly circulation and program statistics
- An online survey
- A paper survey
- Input from BSPL staff
- Input from the BSPL board of trustees

Evaluation:

The survey focused on several key areas- programming, hours of operation, library usage by patrons, opinions on the interior and exterior of the library, strength of the library collection and customer service.

The results were reviewed with a focus on areas where improvements can be made. It is these areas of opportunity that have shaped the goals for the Plan of Service.

Revision Process:

The committee and the Library Board reviewed and discussed the results of the community survey. The goals were determined based on these discussions. For each goal, the following were identified: objectives, activities, resources required and how success will be measured. The document was shared with the Library Board for feedback. Revisions to the document were made and the Library Board approved the plan.

Goals and Objectives:

I.) Goal: Taxpayers and residents of the Ballston Spa School District will have ready access to a diverse and wide variety of materials in the library book and media collection.

1.1) Objective: Each year, the Ballston Spa Library will increase the number of diverse book and media offerings in the library by 10%.

Activities:

1. Annually, staff will review the collection & order needed materials.
 - a. Staff will weed out any item in the collection that has not been circulated in 3 years and/or damaged items.
2. Staff will look at *Library Journal* magazine and websites like bookriot.com and diversebooks.org for recommendations of diverse purchases in these areas: black authors, Latinx authors, LGBTQ authors, and people with disabilities.
3. Determine the destination of weeded library materials (library book sale or have Bulk Book Warehouse pick them up)

Resources Required:

- 1) Funding dedicated to books/media collection
- 2) Staff time

- 3) Supplies for weeding out – boxes, sharpies
- 4) Plan for weeding out books – boxing up books

Evaluation Method

Each year track the number of offerings and the amount of budget spent on collections with a focus on diversity.

II.) Goal: Taxpayers and residents of the Ballston Spa School District will have ready access to a diverse and wide variety of library programming.

2.1) Objective: Each year, the number and variety of tween/teen children’s programming will increase by 10%.

2.2) Objective: Each year, daytime programs aimed at homeschool families will increase by 10%

2.3) Objective: Each year, the number and variety of adult’s programming will increase by 10%.

2.4) Objective: Each year, hold quarterly programs for “day hab” clients of Saratoga Bridges.

Activities:

- 1) Staff will poll patrons about the programming they would like to see offered.
- 2) Staff will coordinate with the Friends of the Library to bring diverse and exciting programming to the library.
- 3) Staff will join Facebook Homeschool groups in order to connect with homeschool families. Doing so will allow information about programs to reach targeted families

3) Staff will research programs offered at other libraries to determine what offerings could be added to our programming.

4) Staff will contact Saratoga Bridges and form a relationship with the program director.

Resources required:

1) Staff time

2) Coordination between staff and Friends of Library

3) Program funding

4) Space to hold programming and hours convenient to the public

Evaluation Method:

Each quarter, track the amount of programs offered to the targeted groups listed above.

III.) Goal: Taxpayers and residents of the Ballston Spa School District will have increased access to the library, with library hours increasing to 6 days a week (including no less than 2 evenings open until 8 and longer Saturday hours) in order to borrow materials, conduct research, attend programs and attend meetings.

3.1) Objective: 60% of patrons will indicate that they have increased their usage of the library because of an increase in the variety of hours the library is open.

Activities:

1) Staffing

2) Review and revise job descriptions. This will ensure that all library tasks are properly achieved during each shift

3) Prepare and schedule staffing creatively to cover more hours and a variety of hours

4) Examine other libraries schedules and staffing to help guide Ballston Spa Public Library hours.

Resources

1) Staffing

2) Funding

3) Coordinate with the Friends of the Library to help determine hours – especially in the evening and weekend when events and programming may take place.

Evaluation Method

Track gate count numbers throughout the day. Evaluate library traffic every six months.

Conduct a follow-up in depth survey yearly to ensure the library hours are meeting the needs of the community.

IV.) Goal: Taxpayers and residents of the Ballston Spa School District will have an updated, comfortable, clean and accessible library interior.

4.1) Objective: Each year, the library will focus on updating an interior portion of the library.

Activities:

1) Conduct a “walk through” of the library with interested parties – including staff, Library Board and Friends of Library representatives to compile a list of needs and wishes for the interior of the library – especially with regards to updated seating.

2) Add a “Donation button” to the Ballston Spa Library website with a description of what the Library is fundraising for.

3) Compile a quarterly “wish list” to be published on the website for small items patrons may want to donate (ie- stamps, gently used items).

3) Order materials

Resources Required:

1) Staff and volunteer time

2) Funding for furniture and other items such as water fountains, updated lighting, etc.

Evaluation method:

Review the improvements list annually and track projects completed.