

**Bucks County Free Library
Strategic Plan
2019-2021**

Mission Statement

Within our libraries and outside our walls, Bucks County Free Library fosters meaningful library experiences for the residents of Bucks County. We welcome our community by providing enthusiastic and effective staff, inviting buildings, a virtual presence, current materials, dynamic programs, and innovative services.

Vision Statement

The Bucks County Free Library creates comfortable, safe, and welcoming physical and virtual spaces. We provide materials and services to help young children enter school ready to read, write, and learn. We stimulate the imagination of all library users with programs and materials that provide pleasurable reading, viewing, and listening experiences and that satisfy their curiosity in areas from homework help to lifelong learning.

Values Statement

- We support intellectual freedom and free access to information.
- We honor diversity and treat everyone with respect.
- We use our human, physical, and financial resources efficiently and effectively.
- We believe the best service is friendly, prompt, and accurate.
- We welcome all library users to accessible physical and virtual environments.

Overview

This strategic plan — the result of a series of analytic conversations about the future of the library — is our road map to the future.

The twenty-first century has ushered in the need for great change in public libraries. In order to stay relevant, the library must continuously evolve in ways that track the pace of new technologies and individual preferences for access to information.

Collection and E-Materials

The dramatic rise in use of mobile devices has required new approaches to the services and resources the library provides. The Bucks County Free Library's collections include traditional print and multi-media materials for all ages, plus digital resources, which include download and streaming e-books, e-audiobooks, magazines, movies, and music.

We first introduced e-book and other downloads into our collections in 2006. The first full year we offered downloads, we had a little over 9,000 download checkouts, less than 1% of total checkouts. As of 2018, with more than 550,000 download checkouts, 20% of the total, downloads are the second highest circulating "branch" of the library system.

Public Spaces and Technology

People of all ages use our public spaces for a variety of purposes. Friends or colleagues meet to work together on assignments or activities in our group study rooms or the library at large. Individuals use the Internet or wireless connections to stay connected with others, browse, and do research. Children and their families come to story times and special programs.

As a “new norm” the library offers high bandwidth and access to plug-in power to library users. Usage of library computers is slowly trending downward as more people bring their own devices to use at the library. Library scanners and printers remain popular. Also popular are pre-school iPads with educational software and interactive walls that we provide to our youngest users.

Innovation

Innovation has been and remains an important part of how we do business. In recent years we have introduced several specialized spaces and functions to various branch libraries. Library users can videotape and edit video using our One Button Studio at the Yardley-Makefield Branch. Little Penn’s Village is a full-fledged early learning play area with several miniature houses where our youngest library users can learn by doing and pretending. In Quakertown, people of all ages can participate in array of fun, creative, and thought provoking interactive activities at the Discovery Studio, an exhibit space which changes monthly.

The Bucks County Free Library Board is committed to providing outstanding services to residents of Bucks County through its seven branches in Bensalem, Doylestown, Perkasie, Langhorne, Levittown, Quakertown, and Yardley-Makefield.

The plan will provide the library with vision, direction, and guidance during this time of great transformation. The plan will ensure that the library stays true to its mission and adapts thoughtfully to emerging challenges to best meet the needs of our patrons.

In 2019, the Library Board adopted the following service priorities, listed in alphabetical order:

Connect to the Online World: *Everyone will have robust access to the ever-growing resources on the Internet.*

Create Young Readers: *Young children (ages five and under) will have programs and services designed so that they will enter school ready to read, write, and listen.*

Satisfy Curiosity: *Everyone will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives.*

Stimulate Imagination (Children): *Children (ages 6-11) will have materials and programs that stimulate their imaginations and provide pleasurable reading, viewing, and listening experiences.*

Stimulate Imagination (Teens and Adults): *Teens and adults will have timely access to a variety of new and popular materials in current and emerging formats.*

Visit a Comfortable Place: *Everyone will have attractive, safe, and welcoming places to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read or work.*

Goals and Objectives

Library staff developed target goals based on the service priorities approved by the Library Board.

The goals are listed by target audience: first the goals that apply to all residents, followed by the goals for audiences based on age, in chronological order. If two goals serve the same target audience, they are listed in alphabetical order by the service response.

Visit a Comfortable Place

1. Everyone will have attractive, safe, and welcoming places to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read or work.

- 1.1 By December 31, 2021, the attendance at library facilities will increase from 1,194,579 (FY2018) to 1,300,000.
- 1.2 By December 31, 2021, the number of registered borrowers will increase from 163,855 (FY2018) to 200,000.
- 1.3 Annually, 30,000 people of all ages will participate in educational and engaging self-serve and drop-in interactive activities when they visit the library.
- 1.4 Annually, at least 85% of library visitors will indicate that the library was an attractive, safe, and welcoming place.

Satisfy Curiosity

2. Everyone will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives

- 2.1 Annually, the circulation of children's non-fiction will be at least 60,000.
- 2.2 Annually, the circulation of adult and teen nonfiction will be at least 240,000.
- 2.3 Annually, library users will register for at least 60,000 library-sponsored online classes.
- 2.4 Annually, staff will provide a minimum of 8,000 one-on-one technology assistance sessions.
- 2.5 Annually, a minimum of 85% of adults and teens surveyed who were looking for information or materials to explore a topic of personal interest will indicate the library's collection was very good or excellent.
- 2.6 Annually, a minimum of 85% of people who attended a library program will evaluate the program as very good or excellent.

Connect to the Online World

3. Everyone will have robust access to the ever-growing resources on the Internet.

- 3.1 By December 31, 2021, the number of hits on the library's web site will increase from 1,914,872 (FY2018) to 2,500,000.
- 3.2 Annually, customers will have a minimum of 145,000 sessions of use on library provided Internet access computers or devices.
- 3.3 By December 31, 2021, the number of people who connect to the Internet via the Library's Wi-Fi access will increase from 141,634 (FY2018) to 175,000.
- 3.4 Annually, a minimum of 85% of web site users surveyed will rate the Library's web site as informative and easy to use.

Create Young Readers

4. Young children (ages five and under) will have programs and services designed so that they will enter school ready to read, write, and listen.

- 4.1 Annually, the circulation of materials for preschoolers will be at least 325,000.
- 4.2 Annually, the number of young children attending a program in the library or at a non-library location will be at least 70,000.
- 4.3 By December 31, 2021, the number of young children who register for the Summer Quest Program, including Kindergarten Here I Come, will increase from 2,383 (FY2018) to 5,000.
- 4.4 Annually, a minimum of 85% of parents and caregivers surveyed will indicate that the library's services for young children are very good or excellent.

Stimulate Imagination: Children

5. Children (ages 6-11) will have materials and programs that stimulate their imaginations and provide pleasurable reading, viewing, and listening experiences.

- 5.1 Annually, the circulation of children's fiction will be at least 200,000.
- 5.2 Annually, the circulation of children's media (CDs, DVDs, games, etc.) will be at least 100,000.
- 5.3 Annually, the number of children who attend a library sponsored or co-sponsored program designed to stimulate their imaginations will be a minimum of 50,000.
- 5.4 Annually, the number of children who register for the Summer Reading Program will be at least 5,000.

Stimulate Imagination: Teens and Adults

6. Teens and adults will have timely access to a variety of new and popular materials in current and emerging formats.

- 6.1 Annually, the circulation of adult fiction will be at least 425,000.
- 6.2 Annually, the circulation of teen materials (fiction and sound books) will be at least 40,000.
- 6.3 Annually, the circulation of adult media (CDs, video games, DVDs etc.) will be at least 325,000.
- 6.4 By December 31, 2021, the circulation of downloadable content (e-audio, e-books, e-magazines) will increase from 550,560 (FY2018) to 1,000,000.
- 6.5 By FY2021, a minimum of 85% of adults and teens surveyed will indicate that they found something good to read, listen to, or view in the library's collection.
- 6.6 Annually, a minimum of 85% of adults and teens surveyed will indicate that they received the material they reserved in a timely manner.