

Read

Learn

Grow

Baxter Public Library
Strategic Plan
2020-2025

Approved by the Trustees December 4,
2019

Baxter Library Trustees

Renee Hammer – President
Donna Akins – Vice President
Jerry Roby – Secretary
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Baxter Library Staff

Marie Van Beek – Director
Jennifer Headlee – Assistant Director

Motto

Read - Learn - Grow

Mission Statement

The library is a place for people to come together to learn and grow. It is a place for all patrons to have access to print and digital resources.

Community Analysis

The city of Baxter, Iowa, is located 35 miles NE of Des Moines. We have a population of 1093. We have a K-12 school with 419 students of which 25% are open enrolled into the district. We have a day care/preschool which is filled to capacity and often has a waiting list. The Baxter Community School is our largest employer. We have a grocery store, gas station/convenience store, restaurant, bar, 3 churches and several other businesses in town.

Baxter's population is 99% white. Our largest populations are 23.6% who are 9 and under and 23.9% over 55. 75% of Baxter's population lives in family households. Baxter's over-25 education level is 31.2% with a high school diploma, 60.2% with at least some college, and 8.6% without a high school diploma.

A large number commute an average of 27 minutes to work. 200 leave for work between 6:00am and 7:30am. About 60 leave for work between 4:00pm and midnight with small numbers leaving at other times. The average income is \$61,295.00 per family. The working people are pretty well divided with 25.5% professionals, 24.8% sales and office, 24.2% service, 9.4% natural resources, construction and maintenance, and 16.1% production and transportation jobs.

Our poverty level is 7.9%. For NW Jasper County the poverty rate is under 10%, unemployment under 2.5% and the median income is \$50,000.00 and 69,999.00.

Strategic Planning

The Baxter Public Library participated in Planning for Results in 2006 with Maryann Mori, our State district consultant. This time we decided to make our new goals from census data, a survey, our own statistics, and observations by the director and assistant director.

Our goals had been updated in 2017, so we reviewed them, updated them , and added to them to make them acceptable for accreditation.

Our last survey did not receive a lot of responses. In that survey it showed the most used items in the library were books, DVDs, and computers/internet. As far as programs, Summer Reading was the most popular, followed by after-school programs and movie nights. (However, movie night likes did not correspond to movie night attendance.)

Observations

Children's programming is very successful. We are actually afraid to advertise anymore because of the large response we have. We are operating near capacity. One of

the reasons for this success is the partnership we have with the local daycare. We often have 110 children show up weekly for our Summer Reading programs. This is from a total of 161 children shown on the census data.

Adult programing has not been successful. We do have a great book club that has consistent membership. We have had some success with a cribbage group that meets in the winter. Other programing only works if the director begs all of her friends to attend and promises refreshments. We have tried doing programs suggested by patrons and often the person requesting the program doesn't even show. Very frustrating!

Our census data shows 178 people in the 60 and over age group. Of these, 36 are in the local nursing home (which has just closed down), so we are looking at a group of 142 people we would be trying to reach. We find that the younger adults are so busy with work, commuting, and childcare that they are only likely to attend family events.

The library is currently working at capacity with the budget and labor we have. Our problem is that what we have been doing is working very well and any new goals we would like to achieve will have to be done by cutting current programs or adding staff. Our new goals, therefore, are not goals that will require a lot of man-hours to do. Our entire county is receiving a 30% cut in county money over the next 5 years, so any additional funding we are able to get from our city will just be replacing money we are losing from the county.

Baxter Public Library
Five-Year Goals
2020 – 2024

Motto: Read - Learn - Grow

Mission Statement: The library is a place for people to come together to learn and grow. It is a place for all patrons to have access to print and digital resources.

Goal: Stimulate Imagination: Reading, Viewing and Listening for Pleasure

Residents' lives will be enhanced through a well-developed library collection.

1. Stimulate and promote public interest in books, reading and literacy.
 - a. Draw in readers to different genres from what they currently read by advertising in the school newsletter, website, Facebook and post office signs.
 - i. We will have a genre talk at least once a year in the newsletter.
 - ii. We will have the book club read different genres several times a year.
 2. Make choosing books easier.
 - a. Make reader advisory sheets to help readers find books they may like.
 - i. We will make shelf talker signs to put next to popular authors listing other authors who are similar. We will do at least one author a month.
 - b. Make book reviews by the librarian and readers.
 - i. We will start with book reviews about books the book club reads.
 - ii. We will encourage readers to write a short book review of books they really love.
 - c. Promote our downloadable books.
 - i. We will do this by an article in the newsletter once a year, Facebook posts, and with signs around town.
 3. We will maintain a book club.
 - ii. We will promote our book club to add new members.
 1. We will attempt to add a new member each year.

Goal: Create Young Readers

Parents will receive information and tools to help prepare their children for school by getting them ready to learn, read, write and listen.

1. Develop theme packets for check out.
 - a. Research what types of themes to use for packets.
 - i. Talk to other libraries and our patrons.
 - b. Research what to put in theme packets, provide a combination of fiction and nonfiction titles.
 - c. Promote packets to parents.
 - i. Talk to parents about the packets and have signs for checkouts.
 - d. We will add one new packet every year

2. Continue all programs for young children.
 - d. Story times for local preschool groups
 - e. Book boxes to local daycare providers
 - f. Early literacy information for parents
 - g. 1000 Books before Kindergarten
 - h. A summer reading program to keep children reading in the summer
 - i. Secure funding to support this program.
 1. We will contact local businesses to ask about sponsoring our entertainment and rewards.
 2. We will evaluate ways to improve our rewards program.
 - a. Survey and talk to parents.
 - b. Talk to our children.
 - i. STEAM activities for elementary children.
 - i. We will have STEAM supplies available to children for regular use.
 - ii. We will have STEAM activities at the library.
 1. We will have an activity once a month during the school year.
 2. We will have an activity twice every week during the summer.
 - j. Keep new book titles on the story walk.
 - i. We will change the book every 6 weeks from March-October.
 - ii. We will change the book every 8 weeks from November-February.
 - k. Maintain a welcoming atmosphere in the library.
 - l. All of the above will be continued and expanded, as they are our most attended events at the library.
 - i. As children age out of the current programs, we will strive to maintain the high level of participation we currently enjoy.

Goal: Lifelong Learning

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

1. Provide more adult programs at the library.
 - a. We would like to get more interest groups meeting at the library.
 - i. Talk to residents about their interests.
 - ii. Include adult interests on our survey.
 - b. We would like to have two guest speakers a year for adults.
 - i. Keep a list of adult speakers recommended by other libraries on the list serve.
2. Have an area in the library to help people know what is going on.
 - a. Keep a list of community events.
 - i. Talk with community members to achieve this goal.
 - ii. Monitor Facebook for events and community groups.
 - b. Maintain a list of current clubs with their contact people.
 - i. Talk with community members to achieve this goal.

Goal: Community Preservation

Residents will have access to Baxter's local history.

1. The library will maintain and expand a collection of Baxter history.
 - a. Improve our Baxter history display cases.
 - i. We will recruit volunteers to improve our display cases.
 - ii. We will add to our display cases by advertising and promoting our display cases as a place to preserve our history.
 - iii. We will advertise our history display at least once a year.
 - iv. We will host an open house to highlight them once a year.

The Board will review these goals twice a year.

Board president signature _____ Date _____