

**Belleville Area District Library Board
Regular Meeting Agenda
March 10, 2026 at 7:30 PM**

The Belleville Area District Library Board will meet in person in the library's 2nd floor Conference Room.

Agenda:

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Swearing in of John Juriga to the Library Board
3. Roll Call: Cichewicz, Fleming, Jackson-Smith, Peters, Priest, Stoudemire
4. Approve Agenda
5. Approve February 10, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes
6. Public Comments
7. Landscape Maintenance Services
8. Committee Reports
 - A. Building-Cichewicz
 - B. Bylaws-Priest
 - C. Finance-Stoudemire
 - D. Outreach-Jackson-Smith
 - E. Personnel-Priest
 - F. Policy-Fleming
 - G. Art
9. Approve Accounts Payable
10. Director's Report/Comments/Communications
11. Trustee Comments
12. Chair Comments
13. Adjournment

Any citizen wishing to provide input or ask questions about any agenda item may speak during the meeting's Public Comments section or forward comments to the Library Director in advance by leaving a message at 734-699-3291 or via the Contact Information found at www.belleville.lib.mi.us. Any citizen requesting accommodation to attend this meeting may contact the library at least 24 hours prior to the meeting, using the above contact information.

Next Regular BADL Board Meeting: April 14, 2026, at 7:30 PM

**Belleville Area District Library
Meeting Minutes
Date: February 10, 2026**

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Sharon Peters called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.
2. **Roll Call:** The following board members were present: Joy Cichewicz, Dan Fleming, Maria Jackson-Smith, Sharon Peters, and Linda Priest.
Also present: Library Director Mary Jo Suchy, Library Assistant Nikki Pickeral.
Excused: Tanya Stoudemire.
3. **Approve Agenda:** Motion by Cichewicz, seconded by Priest, to approve the February 10, 2026, Agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.
4. **Approve January 13, 2026 Minutes:** Motion by Cichewicz, seconded by Jackson-Smith to approve the January 13, 2026, minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.
5. **Public Comments:** Rosemary Otzman shared information from the last school board meeting, where a planned student protest was discussed. The students will stay on school property instead of marching to the library.
6. **Committee Reports:**
 - A. **Building:** No Report
 - B. **Bylaws:**
 - a. **Resolution to Fill a Board Vacancy**
The bylaws committee met on January 27, 2026, to discuss the board vacancy due to the death of Alma Hughes-Grubbs. The committee proposes appointing former board member John Juriga to fill Hughes-Grubbs position until December 31. A new candidate will be elected in November for the remainder of her term (two-years). John Juriga, who was in the audience, expressed his willingness to be appointed.

Motion by Priest, seconded by Cichewicz, to accept Resolution No. 2026-1, appointing John Juriga, a resident of the district, to the Belleville Area District Library Board until December 31, 2026. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Cichewicz, Fleming, Jackson-Smith, Peters, and Priest. Nays: None. Absent: Stoudemire. The motion carried unanimously.

John Juriga will be sworn in at the March meeting. The bylaws committee will meet before the next board meeting to discuss proposed changes to the bylaws suggested by the library's attorney.
 - C. **Finance:** No Report
 - D. **Outreach:** No Report
 - E. **Personnel:** No Report

F. Policy: No Report

G. Art: No Report

Chair Peters proposed the following committee assignments for the year:

Building Committee: Cichewicz, chair; Fleming, and Priest.

Bylaws Committee: Priest, chair; Jackson-Smith.

Finance Committee: Stoudemire, chair; Cichewicz.

Outreach Committee: Jackson-Smith, chair; Cichewicz.

Personnel Committee: Priest, chair; Stoudemire.

Policy Committee: Fleming, chair; Juriga.

Art Committee: Michele Montour as non-board appointed chair and Jackson-Smith and Juriga as members.

7. **Approve Accounts Payable:** Motion by Cichewicz, seconded by Priest, to approve the accounts payable as presented. The motion carried unanimously.
8. **Director's Report:** See attached. *The Shared Harvest*, a program about community supported agriculture that is co-hosted by the library and the Belleville Rotary Club, will take place on February 24. On March 11, Nikki Pickeral will present *Sincerely Yours, Local History Through Letters*.
9. **Trustee Comments:**
 - Jackson-Smith:** Had a wonderful time at the Friends of the Belleville Area District Library Annual Meeting that took place on Saturday, January 31, 2026. Loved the bee pin that she received and noted that the staff thank you video to the Friends was perfect.
 - Priest:** Attended the gardening workshop and enjoyed all the information. She can't wait for the next one.
 - Cichewicz:** Unfortunately, lost her bees this winter and will be trying a new hive system to try to get a hive to survive the winter.
 - Fleming:** Expressed sympathy for the loss of Alma Hughes-Grubbs and thanked John Juriga for filling in.
10. **Chair Comments:** Feels Alma's absence deeply, and was gratified to see the delegation of current and past board members who attended her funeral. It is very fitting to have John Juriga fill in for Alma, considering the love Alma had for John. Thank you to Rosemary Otzman for printing the front-page article about Alma, it was lovely. Peters gave the family a copy of the paper during the funeral.
11. **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn by Fleming, seconded by Priest. The meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE SERVICES

BELLEVILLE AREA DISTRICT LIBRARY

167 Fourth Street, Belleville, MI 48111

INTRODUCTION

This document sets forth the general specifications, requirements and responsibilities of a Landscape Maintenance Contractor, herein referenced as 'Contractor,' in providing landscape maintenance services for the Belleville Area District Library, Main Library, herein referenced as 'Library.'

GENERAL CONDITIONS AND SCOPE OF WORK

A. Qualifications

Contractor must be duly licensed in accordance with all Federal, State and local laws governing the landscape maintenance business and field operations, including licensed applicators for fertilizers and weed/pest control chemicals.

B. Quality

The Contractor shall provide and perform all landscape maintenance services in a professional and timely manner consistent with industry standard practices and as further described herein.

C. Scope

The Contractor is responsible for the care and maintenance of all lawns, planting beds, trees, shrubs and hedges, perennials, rain gardens, and other vegetation on the Property.

D. General Conditions

The Contractor will supply all labor, landscape maintenance equipment, and safety equipment in good working condition as to be able to perform all aspects of maintenance. Contractor's employees shall be trained and knowledgeable in the respective maintenance tasks being performed. Contractors with NALP LIC Certified personnel are preferred and may be given preference in evaluation of proposals.

Contractor shall ensure that all of its employees and agents abide by all safety rules and regulations, which may be promulgated from time to time by either party as they pertain to the Contractor's operations. All equipment shall have properly operating manufacturer safety devices, including safety guards, deflectors, cut-out switches, etc.

Contractor will be responsible for regularly informing its employees of all Federal, State and /or local safety regulations. Contractor shall ensure that its employees and agents conform to all Federal (OSHA), State and Municipal safety and health regulations, and shall assume full responsibility for any violations and/or non-compliance with such regulations.

Contractor shall hold and save harmless the Library from all claims by others whose personnel or property may be damaged or injured by Contractor, its employees or subcontractors including but not limited to the use of equipment or materials. Contractor shall make reasonable and prompt restitution by cash, replacement or repairs, subject to the approval of the Library, for any damages for which the Contractor is liable, of which the Library shall be sole judge.

Contractor shall comply, at all times with any and all local, State or Federal rules, regulations and laws regarding anti-discrimination and equal opportunity in employment.

Contractor shall assign employees who are sufficiently fluent in English: (1) to comprehend the instructions from Library staff; (2) to understand safety and operating instructions on any machinery used; (3) to understand instructions and warnings on any chemicals used; and (4) to communicate with Library personnel during emergencies.

Contractor shall at all times maintain good order among its employees and shall ensure compliance with Library rules and regulations.

Property inspections shall be made by the Contractor after each service and reviewed with a Library representative upon request.

Contractor shall not store any materials or equipment on Library property.

MAINTENANCE SPECIFICATIONS

These specifications include plans for maintenance and care of all exterior landscape areas. The type of maintenance and care defined in the following are designed to promote healthy growth.

A. Spring Clean-up:

1. Spring Clean-up shall be completed by a mutually agreed upon date between the Library and Contractor.
2. Contractor shall remove all winter debris, leaves, sticks and trash accumulated over the winter season by raking, blowing or sweeping debris from walks, building entrances, turf areas and beds.
3. Contractor shall remove all dead and broken branches from trees and bushes.
4. Contractor shall remove all weeds by the roots from plant beds and dispose of off the property.
5. Contractor shall cut and remove debris from all herbaceous plant material die-back, including ornamental grasses and perennials in all planting beds and within the parking lot raingarden.
6. Following removal of existing weeds and debris from hardwood mulch landscape beds, Contractor shall edge planting beds, roughen existing mulch, and install a 1" thick top-dressing of shredded hardwood bark mulch. New mulch shall be freshly shredded and be natural color, free of dyes.

B. Mowing and Lawn Care:

1. Contractor shall "police" the grounds and shall remove all refuse prior to performing services.
2. Turf shall be cut once per week, or more often if required, at a height of 2.5" to 3" as conditions dictate throughout the growing season (April 1 through November 15). This schedule may be altered by the Library based on extreme heat, drought, or wet weather conditions. Mowing equipment shall be employed to permit recycling of clippings where possible and mowing patterns shall be utilized to present a neat appearance. Blades on all equipment shall be sharp to prevent tearing of the grass blades.
3. Curbs, gutters, walks, driveways, and landscape beds shall be left in a clean condition after mowing. Contractor shall provide sweeping or blowing of cut grass and/or leaves from all areas including entrances after mowing. It is not acceptable to leave grass clumps on site.

4. All planting beds, curbs, light poles, hydrants, areas along all building foundations, signs, parking areas, walkways and trees shall be trimmed the same day that mowing occurs.
5. All walkways shall have the edging maintained with a straight and neat edge with the edging work performed at least four times per season or as needed. The initial edging will be completed as part of the Spring Clean-up.
6. All lawn areas adjacent to beds shall be edged during Spring Clean-up and one more time mid-season to prevent encroachment of turf and to maintain an attractive presentation throughout the growing season.

C. Lawn Fertilization / Weed Control:

1. Fertilization and weed control shall be applied in a typical 4-step program. This includes weed and grub control (if necessary).
 - a. Spring – fertilization and pre-emergent weed and crabgrass control.
 - b. Early summer – fertilization and pre-emergent weed and crabgrass control.
 - c. Late summer – fertilization.
 - d. Fall – fertilization and broadleaf weed control.
 - e. Grub control as necessary.
2. Proper caution signs will be placed in sufficient locations to notify patrons and employees of the application of chemicals.

D. Plant Beds & Parking Lot Raingarden:

1. All beds shall be maintained to present a neat and weed-free appearance by cultivating or weeding during regular visits to maintain an attractive presentation throughout the growing season.
2. All shrubs, evergreens, trees, and ornamental grasses shall be pruned to remove dead or damaged branches and to contain the size in order to maintain the natural form of the plant, to maintain an "air" space between the plant and building, and to eliminate any branches which hang too low (below 10') over walkways or parking areas.
3. All tree and shrub beds will be edged and maintained with the edging work completed at least four times per season. All planting beds will be kept clean of debris.
4. Fertilization and weed control shall be applied in tree, shrub, perennial, and groundcover beds (no treatment is to be applied in raingarden) in a typical 4-step program. This includes fertilizer, pre-emergent weed control, and post-emergent weed control. Proper caution signs will be placed in sufficient locations to notify patrons and employees of the application of chemicals to the lawns and/or beds.
 - a. Spring – fertilization, pre-emergent weed control, and liquid post-emergent weed control as necessary.
 - b. Early summer – pre-emergent weed control, and liquid post-emergent weed control as necessary.
 - c. Late summer – pre-emergent weed control, and liquid post-emergent weed control as necessary.
 - d. Fall – fertilization and liquid post-emergent weed control as necessary.
5. Contractor shall monitor plantings for insect and fungal damage and, if necessary, provide corrective treatments. All treatment methods shall be pre-approved by the Library.
6. Parking lot raingarden shall be monitored for invasive species twice per month during the growing season and, if found, manually removed. Use of herbicides will not be permitted within the raingarden unless specifically approved by the Library.

E. Pruning – Tree and Shrub Services:

1. Pruning and removal of dead wood of all trees and shrubs is to be completed with generally accepted practices to ensure all ornamental trees and shrubs remain healthy and maintain an aesthetically attractive appearance.
2. Pruning activities are to occur at appropriate seasonal times consistent with generally accepted practices for the various individual types of trees and shrubs.
3. Pruning shall be performed such that trees and shrubs maintain their natural form and habit. Formal clipping or shearing techniques will not be permitted.

F. Fall Clean-up:

1. Leaf and debris removal from the turf and beds in autumn shall be performed weekly. The continuous removal of all fallen leaves, twigs and branches from the property is to be performed as necessary whether or not "Fall Clean-up" has commenced.

G. Miscellaneous:

1. On each visit, Contractor must perform a complete policing of all trafficked areas including lawn, landscape beds, pathways and walkways.
2. Curbs and cracks in pavement shall be sprayed with an herbicide to control weeds as needed. Care should be taken to avoid herbicide application or overspray near the parking lot raingarden.
3. Due to on-site apiculture, liquid herbicides for weed control in lawns or planting beds shall only be used for spot-applications when necessary and only with specific permission from Library.
4. Library recognizes that unforeseen and unpredictable items occur and must be addressed. It is the Contractor's responsibility to bring these items to the attention of the Library.
5. All plant, shrub, flower, ground cover, and tree removal or replacement shall be accomplished only with the approval of the Library. Contractor will perform additional work when the Library authorizes such work with a purchase order.
6. Raingarden maintenance and weeding shall be performed by Contractor personnel trained and knowledgeable in raingardens and native species. Personnel shall be capable of identifying native species from invasive or other undesirable species.

H. General:

1. All work shall be performed by properly supervised, trained personnel in accordance with accepted horticultural practices. Chemicals will be applied by properly certified personnel.
2. Materials shall be applied in accordance with manufacturer's directions. Where alternate products are available, the environmental impact of the product shall govern which product is used.
3. Adequate personnel and equipment shall be provided to permit the timely completion of all operations.
4. Landscape debris shall be removed from the Library property at the end of each work day at no additional charge. Contractor shall not place debris in Library's dumpster.
5. Contractor shall carry appropriate coverage for Worker's Compensation Insurance, Employer's Liability Insurance, General Liability, Bodily Injury and Property Damage, and Comprehensive Automobile Liability. Proof of coverage will be included in submitted estimate.

6. Contractor will inspect the Library property for pre-existing damage and submit a report detailing all pre-existing damage prior to beginning the contract period. Library will review this report with Contractor. Any subsequent damage to the Library property (i.e., signs, light poles, trees, concrete, curbing, plants and grass) resulting from Contractor's services shall be the responsibility of the Contractor. The Contractor shall report all damages to the Library in writing within seventy-two (72) hours of each occurrence. Contractor is required to make arrangements satisfactory to the Library to repair damage to the Library property.
7. Contractor shall provide emergency telephone numbers that will be answered by the Contractor, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

STANDARDS AND OTHER CONDITIONS

A. Independent Contractor

The Contractor agrees to perform the work described in the quotation as an independent contractor and not as a subcontractor, agent, or employee of the Belleville Area District Library.

B. Assignment and subcontracting

The contract shall not be assigned or subcontracted by the Contractor without the Library's prior written consent, which may be withheld at the Library's sole discretion.

C. Revisions to original contract

The Library shall have the right to make any changes in or delete services from the work described in the contract and may direct the Contractor to perform extra work. The Contractor shall expediently implement such changes. The Library shall be notified in advance if any such change impacts cost or affects the amount or character of services required in the contract. The amount of increase or decrease, if any, in the price shall be determined by agreement between the Contractor and the Library.

D. Standards of work – general

All services shall be performed to the highest standard and in accordance with all Federal, State and local laws. The Contractor will be responsible for ensuring that its staff is familiar with and accomplishes the functions and tasks as outlined in the Maintenance Specifications.

E. Conditions for Work

The Contractor shall inspect site prior to submission of a Landscape Maintenance proposal. Submission of a proposal constitutes agreement that the Contractor is familiar with all physical and other conditions existing at the Library and all other matters in connection with the work to be performed under this contract.

F. Storage of Equipment and Supplies

The Contractor shall have full responsibility for storing equipment and supplies used in connection with the work. No storage space will be provided by the Library.

G. Inspection

Upon Library request, the Contractor hereby agrees to a thorough inspection by the Library of all work and equipment furnished under this contract.

H. Health and safety

The Contractor shall observe all Federal, State, and local laws and regulations pertaining to health and safety. The Contractor shall take all precautions necessary and shall be responsible for the safety of all work to be performed by Contractor's employees. The Contractor shall not require any person employed by the Contractor to work in surroundings or under working

conditions which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to his health or safety as determined under safety and health standards promulgated by the U.S. Secretary of Labor. The importance of safety of all workers shall be recognized and accident prevention shall be an integral part of the Contractor's operations. The Contractor shall conduct the work in a safe and practical manner, in conformance with the safety and health standards made applicable to the work by the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act.

I. Training

The Contractor will be solely responsible for ensuring that its employees are trained and competent in the performance of their duties as outlined in the Maintenance Specifications.

J. Billing

Maintenance services will be priced on an annual basis and shall include all equipment and supplies needed to perform the contract. All contractors are required to complete and submit the Proposal Form (Attachment A).

The Contractor shall submit invoices according to the schedule provided on the Proposal Form. Payments for approved invoices shall be made by the Library within 30 days following the billing date of such invoice. Should the Library dispute the contractor's invoice the Library shall advise the Contractor in writing of the disputed invoice and withhold payment until the dispute is settled by both parties.

K. Equipment

The Contractor shall provide all equipment necessary for the effective and efficient maintenance services on the Library property in accordance with the intent of the Maintenance Specifications. All maintenance equipment shall be state-of-the-art and consistent with good work practices. All equipment shall be kept in working order at all times, including safety controls.

L. References

Proposal Form shall provide at least three client references whose properties are comparable in size, profile and services to the Library. The information that is to be included for each reference: the property description and address, the Contractor's length of service at the location, and a contact name with job title and telephone number.

M. Insurance and indemnity

The Contractor shall provide a Certificate of Insurance with coverage limits acceptable to the Library, and with Belleville Area District Library named as Additional Insureds. Refer to attached requirements. The Contractor shall not alter or terminate the insurance coverage without obtaining the Library's written consent at least thirty (30) days prior to such alteration or termination.

N. Contract provisions

It is the intention of the Library to execute a 2-year contract. The Library may terminate Contractor with 48 hours' notice if Contractor fails or refuses to perform services as described in the Quotation Package.

The desired contract commencement date is April 1, 2026.

O. Rejection of Quotation

The award will be made to the responsible vendor whose quotation, conforming to this Request for Quotation, will be most advantageous to the Library, price and other factors considered. The Belleville Area District Library Board reserves the right to reject any and all responses to this Request for Quotation, in whole or in part, and to waive informalities and minor irregularities in quotations received.

P. Award

It is the Library's intent and preference to award the full scope of work to a single contractor. However, the Library reserves the right to separately award lawn care and planting bed maintenance services if deemed in the best interest of the Library.

Q. Minimum Quotation response

By **2:00 PM on Friday March 6, 2026**, the Contractor shall remit two (2) originals of its Quotation response to:

Mary Jo Suchy, Director
Belleville Area District Library
167 Fourth Street
Belleville, MI 48111

No email or fax copies will be accepted.

The Quotation Response must include Attachments A along with a current insurance certificate and list of references as described above.

Questions regarding this Request for Quotation should be directed to Brian Barrick, Beckett & Raeder, [REDACTED], before **Friday, February 27, 2026**.

Attachment A

**PROPOSAL FORM
2026-2027 LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE SERVICES**

Property : Belleville Area District Library
167 Fourth Street
Belleville, MI 48111

Bidder: _____

Address: _____

Contact Person: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Pricing Schedule

Year 1 Lawn Care Annual Fee (4/1/2026 – 11/15/2026) \$ _____

To be invoiced in eight (8) equal installments \$ _____ /month

Year 2 Lawn Care Annual Fee (4/1/2027 – 11/15/2027) \$ _____

To be invoiced in eight (8) equal installments \$ _____ /month

Year 1 Plant Care Annual Fee (4/1/2026 – 11/15/2026) \$ _____

To be invoiced in eight (8) equal installments \$ _____ /month

Year 2 Plant Care Annual Fee (4/1/2027 – 11/15/2027) \$ _____

To be invoiced in eight (8) equal installments \$ _____ /month

Assumptions / Deviations / Exclusions

List any assumptions, deviations, or exclusions made in preparation of this proposal that clarify or differ from the required specifications (attach additional pages if needed):

Bid Certification

Submitted by (Company): _____

Authorized Signature: _____

Printed Name / Title: _____

Date Submitted: _____

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

The Contractor, and all subcontractors, shall not commence work under this contract until they have obtained the insurance required under this paragraph, and shall keep such insurance in force during the entire life of this contract. All coverage shall be with insurance companies licensed and admitted to do business in the State of Michigan and acceptable to Library. The requirements below should not be interpreted to limit the liability of the Contractor. All deductibles and SIRs are the responsibility of the Contractor.

The Contractor shall procure and maintain the following insurance coverage:

1. **Workers' Compensation Insurance**, including Employers' Liability Coverage, in accordance with all applicable statutes of the State of Michigan.
2. **Commercial General Liability Insurance** on an "Occurrence Basis" with limits of liability not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence and aggregate.
3. **Automobile Liability**, including Michigan No-Fault Coverages, with limits of liability not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence combined single limit for Bodily Injury, and Property Damage. Coverage shall include all owned vehicles, all non-owned vehicles, and all hired vehicles.
4. **Additional Insured:** The Library, all elected and appointed officials, all employees and volunteers, agents, all boards, commissions, and/or authorities and board members, including employees and volunteers thereof shall be named as **Additional Insureds** on an endorsement form of the Commercial General Liability Insurance policy with respect to liability arising out of work or operations performed by or on behalf of Contractor.
5. **Primary Coverage:** Insurance as required herein shall be primary and non-contributory, and any other insurance the Library may have in effect shall be considered secondary and/or excess.
6. **Cancellation Notice:** Policy(ies), as described above, shall be endorsed to provide that Thirty (30) days, Ten (10) days for non-payment of premium, Advance Written Notice of Cancellation or Non-Renewal shall be sent to the Library, Attention: Director, 167 Forth Street, Belleville, MI 48111).
7. **Proof of Insurance Coverage:** The Contractor shall provide the Library at the time the contracts are returned for execution a Certificate of Insurance as well as the required endorsements. In lieu of required endorsements, a copy of the policy sections, where coverage is provided for additional insured and cancellation notice, may be acceptable.
8. If any of the above coverages expire during the term of this contract, the Contractor shall deliver renewal certificates, endorsements, and/or policies to Library at least ten (10) days prior to the expiration date.

BELLEVILLE AREA DISTRICT LIBRARY LANDSCAPE SERVICE PROPOSALS

3/6/2026

DC Lawn & Snow

Carleton, MI

Year 1 = \$5,600

Year 2 = \$5,920

References:

Belleville United Methodist Church

Green Acres Fertilizer

Belleville Arby's

DJ's Landscape Management

Romulus, MI

Year 1 = \$8,283

Year 2 = \$8,531.49

References:

Coleman A. Young Municipal Building

Detroit Public Library (Main and all Branches)

Ann Arbor Public Libraries

St. Francis of Assissi Church

**Belleville Area District Library
Budgetary Comparison Schedule
General Fund
For the Six Months Ended Decembr 31, 2025**

<u>Account</u>	<u>Revenues</u>	2025-2026 <u>Budget</u>	6 Months 2025-2026 <u>Budget</u>	6 Months <u>Actual</u>	Variance Favorable <u>(Unfavorable)</u>
403.000	Current Taxes less chg backs	\$ 2,800,000	\$ 1,400,000	\$ 1,400,000 *	\$ -
	Total Current Taxes	<u>2,800,000</u>	<u>1,400,000</u>	<u>1,400,000</u>	<u>-</u>
502.000	Grant Revenue	7,000	3,500	-	(3,500)
665.000	Interest Income	25,000	12,500	167	(12,333)
575.000	State Aid	47,000	23,500	24,230	730
	Library Fines and Fees				
659.000	Late Fees	1,000	500	1,475	975
658.000	Penal Fines	40,000	20,000	-	(20,000)
677.000	Lost Book Fees	1,300	650	31	(619)
	Total Fines and Fees	<u>42,300</u>	<u>21,150</u>	<u>1,506</u>	<u>(19,644)</u>
674.000	Contributions and Donations	1,000	500	3,335	2,835
674.002	Contributions New Library	-	-	-	-
	Miscellaneous Income				
680.000	Miscellaneous				
630.000	Copies				
631.000	Fax Fees				
647.000	Newspaper Sales				
	Total Miscellaneous	<u>24,000</u>	<u>12,000</u>	<u>15,970</u>	<u>3,970</u>
	Grand Total Revenues	<u>\$ 2,946,300</u>	<u>\$ 1,473,150</u>	<u>\$ 1,445,209</u>	<u>\$ (27,941)</u>
	<u>Expenditures</u>				
	Salaries				
702.000	Salary- Librarians				
705.000	Salary- Library Aides				
	Total Salaries	<u>\$ 1,292,000</u>	<u>\$ 646,000</u>	<u>\$ 566,107</u>	<u>\$ 79,893</u>
	Benefits and FICA				
715.000	FICA/ Medicare	98,838	49,419	43,308	6,111
716.000	Employee Health Insurance	268,000	134,000	118,212	15,788
718.000	Retirement (MERS)	85,000	42,500	40,107	2,393
	Total Benefits and FICA	<u>451,838</u>	<u>225,919</u>	<u>201,628</u>	<u>24,291</u>
981.000	Books and Acquisitions	285,000	142,500	81,482	61,018
809.002	Contracted Services-Acq.	24,000	12,000	3,095	8,905
	Supplies				
730.000	Office Supplies				
775.000	Supplies- Maintenance				
950.002	Library Programs Supplies				
	Total Supplies	<u>55,000</u>	<u>27,500</u>	<u>21,719</u>	<u>5,781</u>

* Actual taxes collected to date \$46,836.79

**Belleville Area District Library
Budgetary Comparison Schedule
General Fund
For the Three Months Ended September 30, 2025**

<u>Account</u>	<u>2025-2026 Budget</u>	<u>6 Months 2025-2026 Budget</u>	<u>6 Months Actual</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>
Professional Fees				
804.000	\$ 10,000	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ 5,000
805.000	15,000	7,500	7,463	38
801.001	7,000	3,500	3,043	457
801.002	-	-	-	-
807.000	10,000	5,000	-	5,000
806.000	10,000	5,000	550	4,450
	<u>52,000</u>	<u>26,000</u>	<u>11,056</u>	<u>14,945</u>
815.000	2,000	1,000	532	468
808.000	5,000	2,500	1,240	1,260
Contracted Services				
809.001	28,000	14,000	11,995	2,005
809.005	6,000	3,000	3,495	(495)
720.000	15,000	7,500	5,973	1,527
809.003&4	45,000	22,500	20,479	2,021
809.007	20,000	10,000	2,876	7,124
	<u>114,000</u>	<u>57,000</u>	<u>44,818</u>	<u>12,182</u>
Telephones & Telecommunications				
851.000	15,000	7,500	3,764	3,736
851.002	16,000	8,000	3,833	4,167
	<u>31,000</u>	<u>15,500</u>	<u>7,597</u>	<u>7,903</u>
Insurance				
	Building Insurance			
810.000	Liability Insurance			
811.000	Worker's Comp. Insurance			
	<u>38,000</u>	<u>19,000</u>	<u>23,787</u>	<u>(4,787)</u>
Utilities				
921.000	Heat			
922.000	Electrical			
923.000	Water and Sewer			
	<u>70,000</u>	<u>35,000</u>	<u>31,298</u>	<u>3,702</u>
931.000	Repairs and Maintenance	150,000	75,000	58,417
	<u>150,000</u>	<u>75,000</u>	<u>58,417</u>	<u>16,583</u>
Printing and Publications				
901.002&5	Printing			
901.004	Publications- Newspapers			
	<u>20,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>5,228</u>	<u>4,772</u>
727.002&3	Postage	10,000	5,000	4,237
820.000	Computer Hardware/ Software			
982.000	Computer Repair & Maintenance			
982.000	Hardware and Software			
	<u>120,000</u>	<u>60,000</u>	<u>28,393</u>	<u>31,607</u>

**Belleville Area District Library
 Budgetary Comparison Schedule
 General Fund
 For the Three Months Ended September 30, 2025**

<u>Account</u>	2025-2026 <u>Budget</u>	6 Months 2025-2026 <u>Budget</u>	6 Months <u>Actual</u>	Variance Favorable <u>(Unfavorable)</u>
Miscellaneous				
863.000 Travel and Meetings	\$ 8,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,954	\$ 46
950.001 Miscellaneous (Programming)	18,000	9,000	7,685	1,315
983.001 New Equip/ Office Furniture	25,000	12,500	7,959	4,541
Wayne County Penal Fines	40,000	20,000	-	
Other	4,000	2,000	943	1,057
Total Miscellaneous	<u>95,000</u>	<u>47,500</u>	<u>20,541</u>	<u>26,959</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>\$ 2,814,838</u>	<u>\$ 1,407,419</u>	<u>\$ 1,111,174</u>	<u>\$ 296,245</u>
Current Year	<u>\$ 131,462</u>	<u>\$ 65,731</u>	<u>\$ 334,035</u>	<u>\$ 268,304</u>

02/28/2026

CHECK DISBURSEMENT REPORT FOR BELLEVILLE AREA DISTRICT LIBRARY
CHECK DATE 01/28/2026 - 02/28/2026

Check Date	Payee	Description	Account	Amount
02/10/2026	ALLIANCE HEALTH AND LIFE	EMP. HEALTH INS	716.000	18,740.28
02/10/2026	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	PROGRAM SUPPLIES	950.002	269.70
		BOOKS/MATLS, BLDG SUPPLIES	981.000	56.42
		BOOKS/MATLS, BLDG SUPPLIES	775.000	183.92
		BOOKS & MATLS	981.000	178.10
		PROGRAM SUPPLIES	950.002	13.99
		BLDG SUPPLIES	775.000	26.14
		PROGRAM SUPPLIES	950.002	110.83
		PROGRAM SUPPLIES	950.002	42.06
		BOOKS & MATLS	981.000	209.64
		BOOKS AND MATERIALS	981.000	39.42
		PROGRAM SUPPLIES	950.002	40.68
		BOOKS & MATLS, BLDG SUPP	981.000	241.13
		BOOKS & MATLS, BLDG SUPP	775.000	7.30
		BOOKS & MATLS, BLDG SUPP	730.000	0.00
		PROGRAM SUPPLIES	950.002	70.42
				1,489.75
02/10/2026	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	BOOKS & MATLS	981.000	71.87
		COMP HARD/SOFTWARE MAINT	820.000	50.00
		COMP HARD/SOFTWARE MAINT	820.000	8.11
		COMP HARD/SOFTWARE MAINT	820.000	8.98
		BOOKS & MATLS	981.000	146.08
		PROGRAM SUPPLIES	950.002	296.35
		PROGRAM SUPPLIES	950.002	80.60
		BOOKS & MATLS	981.000	224.75
		PROGRAM SUPPLIES	950.002	10.70
		PROGRAM SUPPLIES	950.002	57.27
		BOOKS & MATLS	981.000	63.00
		BLDG SUPP, CREDIT MEMO->1NL6-4K37-RPX6	775.000	(34.44)
				983.27
02/10/2026	ANDREW KERCHER	MACKINAC STRAITS HISTORY PROGRAM	950.001	250.00
02/10/2026	APPLIED INNOVATION	PRINTER SERV	809.001	1,188.54
02/10/2026	AWE ACQUISITION, INC.	AWE LEARNING YOUTH PCS, CUST: BADL	820.000	18,105.00
02/10/2026	CHASE CARDMEMBER SERVICE	PROG, OFFICE, BLDG SUPP	730.000	59.24
		PROG, OFFICE, BLDG SUPP	775.000	266.72
		PROG, OFFICE, BLDG SUPP	950.002	914.10
				1,240.06
02/10/2026	DC LAWN & SNOW	SNOW REMOVAL/SALT	809.007	6,375.00
02/10/2026	DEMCO	OFFICE SUPPLIES	730.000	99.89
02/10/2026	DTE ENERGY	4TH STREET ELECTRIC	922.000	3,020.84
02/10/2026	DTE ENERGY	SUMPTER GAS & ELECTRIC	921.000	154.52
		SUMPTER GAS & ELECTRIC	922.000	105.40
				259.92
02/10/2026	FOSTER, SWIFT, COLLINS & SMITH	LEGAL SERVICES	801.001	25.50

02/10/2026	FRIENDS OF THE BELLEVILLE AREA	DECEMBER 2025 PAYOUT	252.001	523.60
		DECEMBER 2025 PAYOUT	252.002	1,887.65
		DECEMBER 2025 PAYOUT	252.003	46.00
		DECEMBER 2025 PAYOUT	252.004	31.75
				2,489.00
02/10/2026	GARNETT, CHERYL	TELLING YOUR STORIES PROGRAM	950.001	100.00
02/10/2026	GEORGE, FELICIA	WHEN DETROIT PLAYED THE NUMBERS PROGRAM	950.001	250.00
02/10/2026	INTELLISTACK, LLC	FORMSITE ANNUAL CHARGE	820.000	436.77
02/10/2026	MCLS	TALK TEXTS SUB. SERVICE	981.000	160.00
02/10/2026	METERNALLY, LLC	BOOKS & MATLS	981.000	112.98
02/10/2026	ODP BUSINESS SOLUTIONS LLC	OFFICE SUPPLIES	730.000	206.80
		OFFICE & BLDG SUPPLIES	730.000	76.45
		OFFICE & BLDG SUPPLIES	775.000	191.28
		BLDG SUPPLIES	950.002	15.36
		BLDG SUPPLIES	775.000	161.13
		BLDG SUPPLIES	775.000	4.95
		BLDG SUPPLIES	775.000	99.30
				755.27
02/10/2026	PREFERRED DATA SYSTEMS LLC	INTERNET SECURITY SOFTWARE	820.000	6,970.19
02/10/2026	THE LIBRARY NETWORK	RING CENTRAL - JAN, BELL20	851.000	508.91
				508.91
02/10/2026	UNIQUE MANAGEMENT SERVICES INC	JANUARY PLACEMENTS	809.001	97.20
02/10/2026	VIGILANTE SECURITY	SUMPTER SECURITY ALARM	809.001	184.08
02/10/2026	WARREN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY	OBSERVING THE NIGHT SKY PROGRAM	950.001	150.00
02/10/2026	WASTE MANAGEMENT OF MI, INC	FEB DUMPSTER SERV	809.001	527.08
02/10/2026	WINBORN, OMER JEAN	TELLING YOUR STORIES PROGRAM	950.001	100.00
02/24/2026	A PRODUCTION BUILDING SOLUTION	FEB 2026 BUILDING CLEANING, UPKEEP	931.000	3,920.00
02/24/2026	ALLIANCE HEALTH AND LIFE	EMP. HEALTH INS	716.000	37,480.56
02/24/2026	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	BOOKS AND MATLS	981.000	392.61
		BOOKS & MATLS	981.000	22.07
		BOOKS & MATLS	981.000	120.20
		BOOKS & MATLS	981.000	352.28
		BOOKS AND MATLS	981.000	14.99
		BOOKS & MATLS	981.000	50.59
		LIB OF THINGS, OFF SUPP	981.000	72.73
		LIB OF THINGS, OFF SUPP	730.000	30.76
		PROG/OFFICE SUPP, LOT	950.002	9.67
		PROG/OFFICE SUPP, LOT	981.000	101.91
		PROG/OFFICE SUPP, LOT	730.000	13.85
		PROGRAM SUPPLIES	950.002	34.68
		PROGRAM SUPPLIES	950.002	65.26
		BLDG SUPPLIES	775.000	56.45
		COMP HARD/SOFTWARE MAINT	820.000	189.99
				1,528.04
02/24/2026	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	PROG SUPPLIES	950.002	84.98
		BOOKS & MATLS	981.000	265.89
				350.87
02/24/2026	BELLEVILLE AREA INDEPENDENT	1/4 PAGE ADVERT, COLOR	901.004	648.00

02/24/2026	BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MICH	DENTAL	716.000	794.22
02/24/2026	CITY OF BELLEVILLE	4TH ST WATER	923.000	312.23
02/24/2026	CLEAR RATE COMMUNICATIONS	TELEPHONES	851.000	445.36
02/24/2026	DEMCO	OFFICE SUPPLIES	730.000	125.40
02/24/2026	DTE ENERGY	4TH STREET GAS	921.000	1,623.22
		4TH STREET GAS	922.000	0.00
				1,623.22
02/24/2026	FRIENDS OF THE BELLEVILLE AREA	JANUARY 2026 PAYOUT	252.001	587.00
		JANUARY 2026 PAYOUT	252.002	183.00
		JANUARY 2026 PAYOUT	252.004	3.50
				773.50
02/24/2026	KJ ART LLC	FACE PAINTING DEPOSIT FOR 6/26/26	950.001	150.00
02/24/2026	MCLS	TALK SUB JULY 26-JUNE 27	981.000	318.27
02/24/2026	ODP BUSINESS SOLUTIONS LLC	BLDG SUPPLIES	775.000	354.55
		OFFICE SUPPLIES	730.000	63.87
		OFFICE SUPPLIES	730.000	652.61
		BLDG SUPPLIES	775.000	58.24
				1,129.27
02/24/2026	OTIS ELEVATOR COMPANY	ELEVATOR MAINT	931.000	1,402.05
02/24/2026	PRINCIPAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPA	MARCH 2026 LIFE INSURANCE	716.000	601.56
02/24/2026	SHARON DUCKWORTH, CPA	ACCT SERVICES - FEB 2026	805.000	1,125.00
02/24/2026	SPRINGSHARE LLC	EMAIL NEWS/MKTING PROG SERV	820.000	6,000.00
02/24/2026	WESTLAND FIRE EXTINGUISHER INC	FIRE EXTINGUISHER INSPECTIONS	931.000	90.00
Total For Fund:				123,437.08
Report Total:				123,437.08

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

March 2026

LIBRARY PROGRAMS

February: Adults: 30 Youth: 18

	2025/26	2024/25	% change
LIBRARY VISITS			
February	10,484	9,396	11.58%
Fiscal Year	89,775	99,704	-9.96%
TOTAL CIRC			
February	18,789	18,382	2.21%
Fiscal Year	157,110	163,868	-4.12%
ADULT PROGRAMMING			
February	308	209	81.82%
Fiscal Year	2,031	1,382	46.96%
YOUTH/TEEN PROGRAMMING			
February	352	245	43.67%
Fiscal Year	3,728	3,197	16.61%
REF. QUESTIONS			
February	1,762	1,653	6.59%
Fiscal Year	12,533	13,125	-4.51%
INTERNET USE			
February	911	853	6.80%
Fiscal Year	8,104	7,580	6.91%
YOUTH/TEEN INTERNET			
February	317	195	62.56%
Fiscal Year	2,496	2,008	24.30%

BUILDING: We have requested proposals for landscape maintenance services including spring clean-up, mowing and lawn care, lawn fertilization, plant beds, parking lot bioswale, tree and shrub pruning, and fall clean-up. I notified Otis Elevator to terminate our maintenance contract effective June 1, and I am securing maintenance quotes from two other elevator companies.

FINANCE: S&P Global Ratings conducted a ratings review of our library regarding our general obligation debt. Hilary and I met with S&P along with our financial consultants at PFM. I am pleased to announce that S&P has upgraded our rating to AA- based upon our surpluses, reserves, and stable outlook.

STAFF: Incoming staff: Librarian substitute Mary Garboden. Outgoing staff: Librarian Intern Maria Barbato.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY: I believe that it has been at least 20 years, if not longer, since the Friends have raised the prices of the used books that they sell. They are still working out the details, but plan to implement a new price schedule soon.

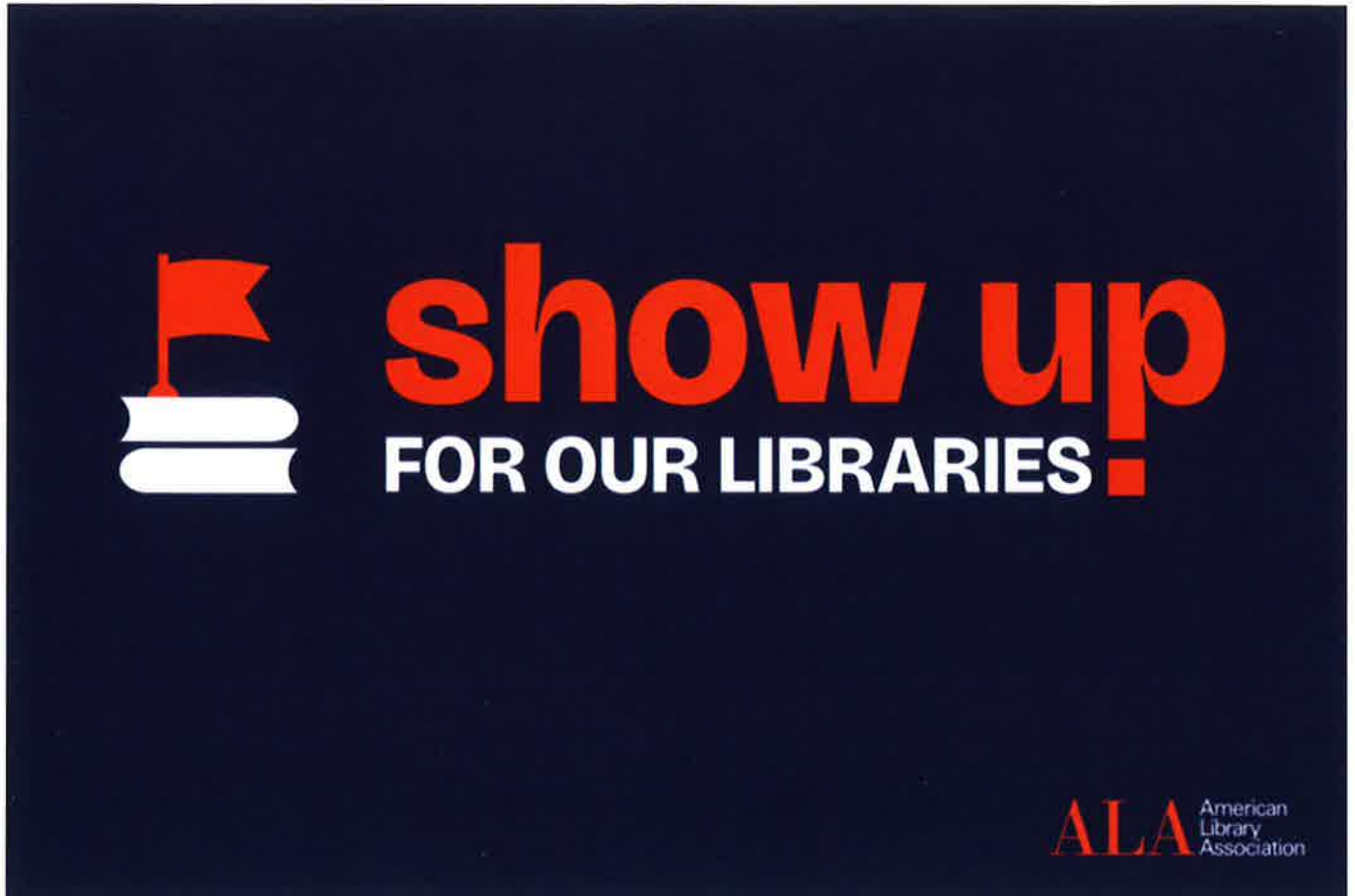
PROGRAMMING: The March 12 Classic Movie Night feature film is *Sunset Boulevard*. The library will hold a youth Mini Art Workshop on Saturday, March 14 from 2-4 pm. Kids can make art on a mini canvas, and the art will be on display at the library in April. Jazz Night returns on March 25 at 7 pm, featuring Trio Escobar.

Last week the kids had a stuffy sleepover and pajama storytime. After the storytime the kids left their favorite stuffed animals at the library for an overnight sleepover. The stuffies had a great time at the library, and we have the pictures to prove it!



Federal Funding for Libraries Prevails | American Libraries Magazine

Greg Landgraf



After the threats to federal library funding in the past year, the fiscal year (FY) 2026 appropriations bills signed by President Trump on February 3 included an *increase* in federal funding for libraries.

Less than a year ago, an [executive order](#) threatened to dismantle the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the only source of federal funding dedicated to libraries. Then, the White House proposed just enough funding in FY2026 to shut down the agency for good.

Thanks to advocates, IMLS still exists today. Library grants are intact. And, rejecting the administration's call to eliminate IMLS, Congress just passed a \$1.4 million increase for library programs run by IMLS through the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), bringing LSTA funding to \$212.5 million for FY2026. Congress also provided level funding of \$30 million for the school library-focused Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) program.

These library wins are not the result of good luck. In the worst climate in recent memory, libraries succeeded because advocates showed up. In response to ALA's calls to action, advocates sent emails, made phone calls, and invited elected officials to visit their libraries. And that advocacy produced results that are more than line items on a spreadsheet: They include young people learning to read, research, and write; job seekers finding work; workers filing taxes online; veterans accessing benefits; seniors attending telehealth appointments; and communities thriving.

The final FY2026 budget is not perfect for libraries. For the IAL program, day-to-day operations will move from the Department of Education to the Department of Labor, [a development that worries ALA](#) and our partners in education. And while LSTA funding increased, IMLS overall saw a slight decrease, largely reflecting the reduction in staffing at the agency (a smaller IMLS staff will administer the increased grant funding).

Still, Congress has signaled that library funding is a national priority. We need to celebrate this win—and keep that signal strong.

The next advocacy cycle

The FY2027 federal budget cycle begins when the White House releases a budget proposal sometime after the February 24 State of the Union address. As Congress then begins work on appropriations, ALA will launch the FY2027 Fund Libraries campaign, continuing its tradition of issuing the first and most influential nationwide library advocacy action on the federal budget of the year.

We expect the administration to propose deep cuts to library funding next year. Library supporters must double down on our advocacy at every

level of government to maintain—let alone increase—congressional support for library funding. ALA is encouraging advocates to prepare for FY2027 by sharing appreciation for library funding with their congressmembers in FY2026. We can all express gratitude for federal funding for libraries. Even though it was a tumultuous process, the final outcome was a big, important win for libraries and our communities. We want our gratitude to be fresh when we ask our congressmembers to fund libraries in FY2027.

The fight to protect IMLS is far from finished. ALA's lawsuit against the administration (*ALA v. Sonderling*), which helped prevent mass layoffs of IMLS staff last May, is pending. A federal court ruling in a parallel lawsuit brought by 21 states' attorneys general (*Rhode Island v. Trump*) nullified the administration's actions to dismantle IMLS and prohibited the administration from taking such actions in the future. But the administration has appealed the federal judge's decision in the *Rhode Island* case. ALA will closely monitor that appeal and, if it proceeds, we'll ensure that libraries' perspectives are heard.

In addition, ALA is closely monitoring potential changes to IMLS grant terms. The priorities for IMLS grant programs are established by law, and we expect IMLS to issue funding in compliance with statutory priorities and congressional direction. Nevertheless, potential applicants should closely review the Notices of Funding Opportunity—and other changes in federal grant law and policy over the past year—with legal counsel before undertaking grant applications.

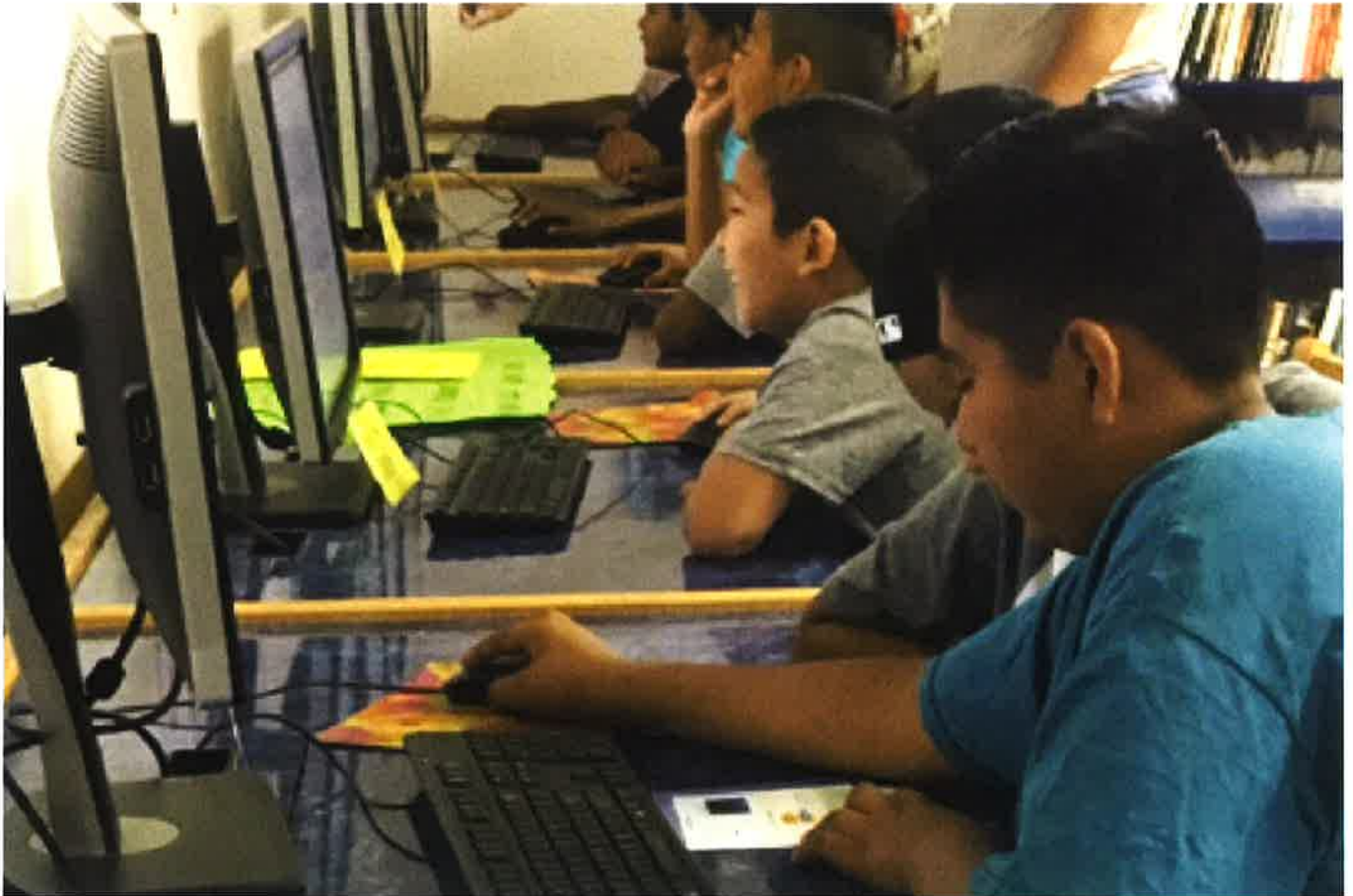
Threats to E-Rate

Another critical form of government support for libraries continues to face challenges: the federal E-Rate program, which provides libraries and schools billions of dollars each year for broadband access and connectivity. Last June in *FCC v. Consumers' Research*, the Supreme Court upheld the Universal Service Fund (USF), the system of telecommunications subsidies administered by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that includes E-Rate. Consumers' Research filed another petition in September alleging that E-Rate and other USF programs are unconstitutional. ALA and our coalition partners are strategizing how to best address this new threat.

It has never been so critical for supporters to show up for our libraries. Thanks to advocates, Congress is funding libraries. It is no exaggeration to say that IMLS would not exist now except for our members and the community that fought to protect the agency on every front. For updates on federal support for libraries and timely opportunities to advocate for them, sign up to be part of ALA's advocacy network. The only way to preserve support for libraries is together.

30 Years of E-Rate | American Libraries Magazine

Greg Landgraf



Young patrons accessing E-Rate-supported internet at a library in the Middle Rio Grande Pueblo Tribal Consortium in New Mexico.

The 30th anniversary of the E-Rate program is a time to both celebrate what it has achieved for libraries and focus our work to preserve its future.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996, signed into law on February 8, expanded the definition of essential communications services to include telecommunications and high-speed internet. It established the [E-Rate program](#), which provides schools and libraries with discounts on internet and other telecommunications services and the equipment they need to use them. Today, virtually all public libraries in the United States offer internet access. About 73% of all public libraries and more than 96% of public schools in the United States [receive E-Rate discounts](#), totaling more than [\\$2 billion per year](#), to enable this access.

While library services made possible by E-Rate provide important benefits everywhere, people in rural and tribal areas often have the greatest need for improved connectivity. In Nenana, Alaska, for example, library internet is a critical link to employment opportunities, according to a [2018 ALA report](#). Most jobs are in Fairbanks, 55 miles away, so the ability to apply for work online via the library helps save residents unnecessary travel time and expense.

But the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) [Universal Service Fund](#) (USF), which includes E-Rate and three other communications programs, is facing challenges, in part because of how it is funded. The USF is supported by mandatory contributions from telecommunications providers currently totaling about \$8 billion, calculated using a formula based [on interstate and international telephone revenue](#).

But telecommunications services have evolved significantly since 1996 when that formula was created. Telecommunications providers now generate most of their revenue from services like broadband and cable or satellite TV, which don't contribute to the USF. Revenues from telephone services that do contribute to the USF have dropped from \$75 billion in 2007 to \$35 billion in 2022. An increasing percentage of these telephone revenues have funded the USF, [growing from 5.5% in 2000 to 34.4% in 2024](#).

This has led to [calls from many industry groups and advocates](#) to reform how the USF is funded, as well as challenges to the funding mechanism itself.

Most significantly, in 2023 the nonprofit Consumers' Research sued the FCC, arguing that the way the USF is funded is unconstitutional, as only Congress has the authority to levy fees. While the US [Supreme Court ruled](#) against Consumer's Research in June 2025, it is clear that the USF's outdated contribution model is not sustainable. Consequently, several proposals for USF funding reform are on the table, all of which

have implications for E-Rate, and libraries.

Advocating for library interests

For three decades, the American Library Association (ALA) has worked closely with the FCC to strengthen E-Rate, remove obstacles for library applicants, and ensure the program continues to support the changing technology and access needs of library users. In the past two years alone, ALA's Public Policy and Advocacy Office has successfully advocated for the inclusion of [tribal libraries in E-Rate](#), [encouraged the Supreme Court](#) to support the USF, and fought for E-Rate hotspot funding. Given the high stakes for libraries in the current debate about funding, ALA has been following USF reform closely.

In September 2025, the bipartisan, bicameral [USF Working Group](#) sought stakeholder input on USF reforms. ALA provided the following key recommendations:

1. *Funding must be sustainable and predictable.*
 - The USF should be funded by a long-term, reliable mechanism that is not subject to annual congressional appropriations.
 - The contribution base from which USF fees are drawn should be broadened to lower the contribution factor (the percentage burden on payers) and make funding less volatile.
2. *E-Rate works but needs targeted improvements.*
 - The E-Rate program is highly successful in maintaining and expanding broadband access for schools and libraries. It provides essential support for libraries to upgrade their broadband service to adapt to the changing needs of the technology marketplace and their communities.
 - However, gaps remain, particularly for small, rural, and tribal libraries, both in terms of E-Rate application rate and in access to broadband speeds that are adequate to meet community needs.
3. *Avoid overhaul that burdens underserved entities.*
 - Reforms must ensure that efforts to improve efficiency and safeguard program integrity do not impose excessive administrative burdens on small, under-resourced libraries.
 - Simplifying the application, procurement, and compliance processes is particularly important for these libraries.
4. *Provide timely, relevant data.*
 - Open data, clear metrics, and public maps all help ensure programs are doing what they're supposed to, and that funding is reaching those most in need.
 - To make USF data more relevant and useful, we must improve disaggregation in E-Rate data (to distinguish between library and consortia data), improve the interface and usability of publicly available data, and include libraries (not just households) in broadband mapping.
5. *Modernization must be built in.*
 - As technology advances (artificial intelligence, the internet of things, and increasing cyber threats), E-Rate and the USF should be forward-looking in statutory authority and eligible services, so libraries aren't left behind.
 - Today, Congress should ensure that Wi-Fi hotspot lending is supported by the E-Rate program (as was established in 2024 [but overturned in 2025](#)), and should make careful investments in cybersecurity tools so that libraries and schools can protect their sensitive data.

Looking to the future

As technology evolves and the demand for faster, more secure connectivity grows, a sustainable and responsive E-Rate program will be vital to maintaining universal telecommunications access. Continued investment in E-Rate will empower libraries to maintain, upgrade, and secure their broadband networks, expand access to emerging technologies, and continue serving as trusted centers for digital inclusion and lifelong learning—ensuring that every community, regardless of geography or income, can fully participate in society.

[The 2026 application window for E-Rate funding is open through April 1.](#)

‘We’re losing accessibility’: America says goodbye to the mass-market paperback

David Smith

[Shelly Romero](#) has early memories of going to her local supermarket and picking pulp fiction off the shelves. “We were very working class; my mom was working two jobs sometimes,” she recalls. “The appeal of books being cheaper and smaller and able to be carried around was definitely a thing.”

For generations of readers, the gateway to literature was not a hushed library or a polished hardback but a wire spinner rack in a supermarket, pharmacy or railway station. There, amid chewing gum and cigarettes, sat the mass-market paperback: squat, roughly 4in by 7in and cheap enough to be bought on a whim.

But the era of the “pocket book” [is drawing to a close](#). ReaderLink, the biggest book distributor in the US, announced recently that it would stop distributing mass-market paperbacks. The decision follows years of plummeting sales, from 131m units in 2004 to 21m in 2024, and marks the end of a format that once democratized reading for the working class.

Romero, who grew up in the working-class, Latino and industrial city of [Hialeah, Florida](#), says: “I don’t remember a bookstore. I had the library in Miami Springs across the bridge but in Hialeah around us, what was in walking distance because we didn’t have a car, was the Publix [supermarket] and sometimes we would get books from Goodwill [thrift store] as well.

“They had that democratic aspect to them where you can just find them anywhere and it always felt like it was the pick ‘n’ mix candy-type store where there is something here for everyone, whether it’s the [Harlequin romance novel](#) or something very pulpy like a sci-fi or horror novel that you could quickly get.”



📷 The Harlequin romance novel section of a bookstore in New York. Photograph: Richard Levine/Alamy

Now a New York-based literary agent, Romero owns an [Amazon Kindle](#), which is roughly the same size as a mass-market paperback but can store thousands of books rather than one. Still, she feels that something is being lost. “Whether it was the ink or the paper, they had a certain smell and it’s very nostalgic to me and many others.

“We’re definitely losing accessibility and that’s a huge thing right now, especially in this country, whether it’s libraries being defunded, book bannings happening, one person saying let’s get rid of 200 books because I don’t want my child to read diverse authors.

“At the same time when you’re looking, for example, at kid lit, a 14- or 15-year-old is not going to be able to buy maybe a \$19.99 or \$21.99 hardcover YA book, especially if they’re working a minimum-wage or babysitting job, so it becomes fully inaccessible whereas they could have just gone and picked something up like a mass-market paperback. That affordability was huge. It’s sad to see.”

While paperback books existed earlier, the revolution truly began in 1935 with [Allen Lane’s Penguin Books](#) in Britain, purportedly inspired by his frustration at finding nothing decent to read at a railway station. He introduced colour-coded genres such as orange for fiction, green for crime and sold them through non-bookstore outlets like WH Smith newsstands and tobacco shops.

The format migrated to the US in 1939 with Pocket Books, and took off during the second world war when the US military distributed millions of “[Armed Services Editions](#)” to troops. This programme fostered a massive increase in literacy and an appetite for the format among returning veterans. Postwar paperbacks, often called “pulp”, were known for their lurid, racy cover art to attract commuters and casual shoppers.

[Paula Rabinowitz](#), a professor emerita of English at the University of Minnesota and the author of *American Pulp*, argues the format’s genius was its physical intimacy and portability.

“It generated a new technological explosion of this form of mass reading,” she says. “The whole idea was to make the books no more expensive than a package of cigarettes at 25 cents and they were often sold outside of bookstores. I consider it one of the significant technological interventions, certainly of the 20th century.

“It’s not like the atomic bomb but it was about accessible, democratising technology that was portable, that was ownable, so for the first time working people could have their own libraries, and that was transferable because since it only cost a quarter, you might give a book to a friend and pass it on. It was something that was open to anybody because young people had a quarter; almost anybody had an extra quarter.”



📷 Paperback books in the window of a drugstore in New York City, circa 1961.
Photograph: Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images

The distribution model was key. Unlike hardcovers, which lived in bookstores, mass-market paperbacks were treated like magazines. They were stocked by wholesalers who replenished racks in tens of thousands of non-book outlets. This ubiquity meant that books were suddenly available to people who might never cross the threshold of a literary establishment.

This accessibility fuelled the golden age of the 1960s and 70s, creating cultural phenomena that are difficult to imagine in today's fragmented media landscape. Works such as *Jaws* (boosted by [a Hollywood film adaptation](#)), *Valley of the Dolls* and the novels of Stephen King sold many millions of copies. But then came the decades of decline.

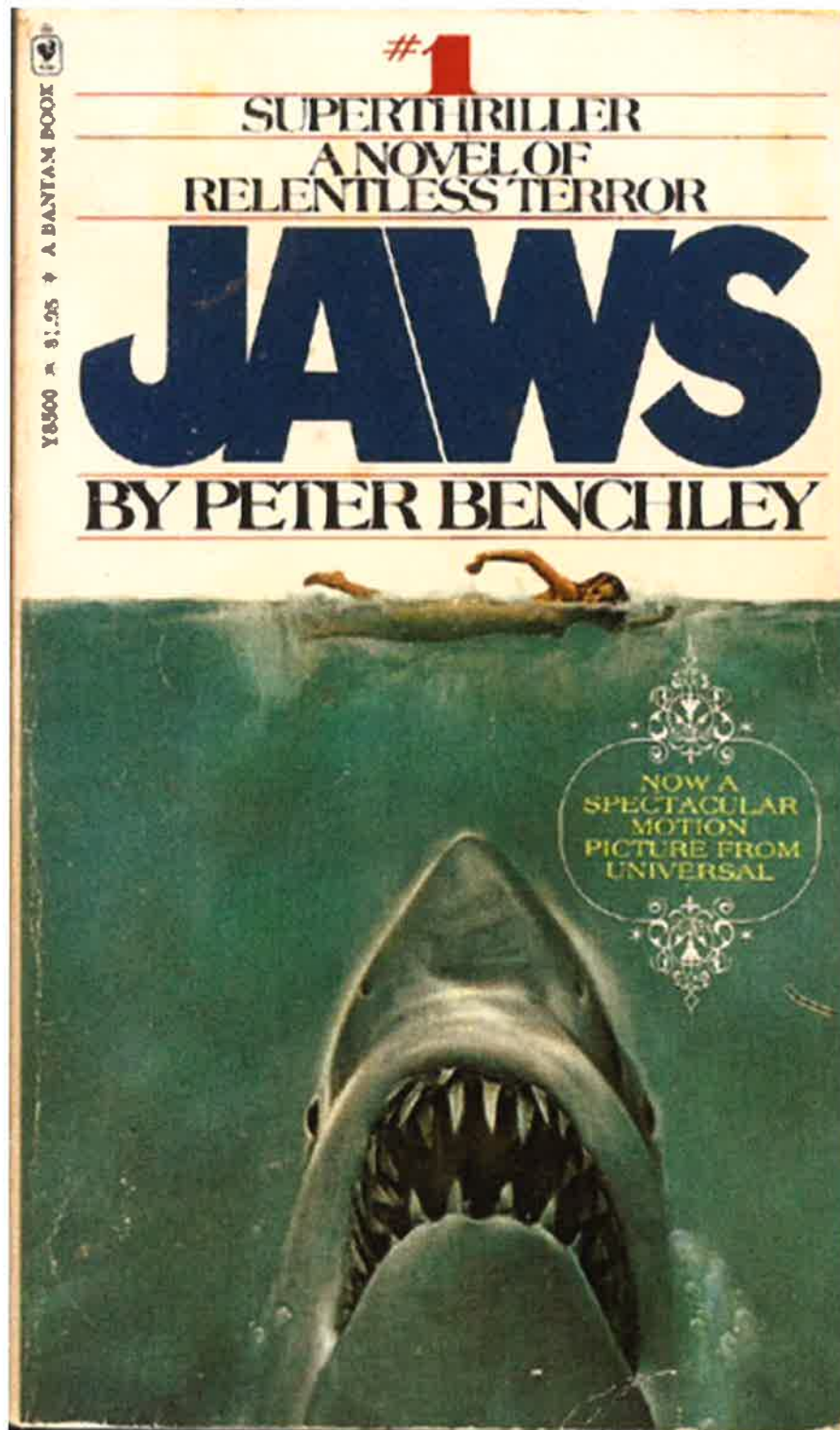
The causes are manifold: the rise of the “trade paperback” (bigger, higher quality, and more profitable), the consolidation of distributors and the digital revolution. The smartphone has replaced the paperback as the default time-killer in airport lounges, and the e-reader offers a library in a pocket without the physical bulk.

[Brenna Connor](#), director and book industry analyst for US books at Circana, points out that the very utility of the format – portability – has been usurped. “These smaller pocket-size formats made them inexpensive and they also made them portable, so ideal for people who were commuting and also ideal for soldiers during wartime.

“When you think about the needs of what brought the mass-market paperback book to the market and then fast-forward to 2026 and where we’re living in an age where it’s no longer as relevant today and that’s contributing to their demise.”

Connor adds: “Thinking about how a mass-market paperback was easily portable and could fit in your pocket, well, we also have an infinite bookshelf that can now fit in our pocket with our

cellphone, whether that's accessing ebooks to read or even audiobooks to listen to. This digital shift is certainly impacting the overall decline in the mass-market paperback format.”



📷A paperback of Jaws. Photograph: Alamy

There is also a shift in the book as an object. In the age of “BookTok” (the bookish community on TikTok), readers increasingly prize books as aesthetic artifacts –hardcovers with sprayed edges and foil stamping – rather than disposable, yellowing paperbacks.

[Bethanne Patrick](#), a book critic at the Los Angeles Times newspaper, notes that the economic logic of the mass-market format has simply evaporated. She says: “Now, there isn’t a need for the mass-

market paperback because it isn't that much cheaper to make than the trade paperback. That's something a lot of people are missing.

"I have seen comments on various social media sites and posts from librarians saying: 'Look, you don't understand. We know our patrons love them, but it actually isn't cheaper for libraries to buy mass-market editions.' They're trying to get their patrons used to the trade paperbacks and it's not always easy. Mass-market paperbacks have a huge nostalgia and convenience factor going for them."

But having grown up in the mass-market paperback generation, a time when "you could find great literature right next to a potboiler", Patrick is aware of the cultural loss.

"We all knew that the general public had a certain interest or some skin in the game for what was going on in books and reading and now we've lost some of that to people who are watching videos or gaming. I don't know how to win them back to the printed page. I wish that I did. However, I do know that they're not going to be coming back to mass-market printed pages. It's a shame because it was so easy. If you lost one, you didn't mind too much."

The writing is on the wall. The airport retail company Hudson began phasing out mass-market books from its convenience stores last year, limiting them only to a few dedicated bookstore locations. Even major properties such as the Bridgerton series are no longer being replenished in the mass-market format; once current stock is exhausted, they will only be available in trade paperback or hardcover form.

For Steve Zacharius, the chief executive of Kensington Publishing, the biggest independent publisher of the format in the US, the decline is not just about business. His father founded the company in 1974, initially publishing only mass-market titles.

Zacharius says: "When January came around, my production manager, who's been here 35 years, called me and said: 'This is sad, it's the first month we don't have a mass-market book ever.' When the company started, we were entirely mass market. We didn't have hardcover or trade paperback when my father started in '74; it was entirely mass market and the print runs for each book were enormous.

"I was looking over sales history at how the numbers kept declining from back in 1994 and then kept going down a little bit, a little bit, a little bit each year. The market spoke, consumers spoke that they wanted a change in format."

What's Happening at the BADL?

March

English Conversation
Practice for ESL Learners
Tuesdays @ 1:00 PM

Adult Beginner's
Painting Workshops
March 4th @ 11:00 AM

Mackinac Straits History
March 4th @ 6:30 PM

Sincerely Yours,
Local History Through Letters
March 11th @ 7:00 PM

Classic Movie Night
March 12th @ 6:30 PM

Legend of the Nain Rouge
March 18th @ 11:00 AM

Book Groups

Quiet Reading
March 2nd & March 16th @ 7:00 PM

The Evening Book Group
March 5th @ 6:00 PM

The Witching Hour
March 12th @ 6:30 PM

Other Book Group
March 19th @ 6:00 PM

African American Literature
March 26th @ 7:00 PM

Memory Cafe
March 18th @ 11:00 AM

Genealogy -
If It's Free It's For Me
March 21st @ 6:30 PM

Jazz Night with
Trio Escobar
March 25th @ 1:00 PM

Mahjong Meetup
Fridays @ 11:00 AM





BELLEVILLE AREA
DISTRICT LIBRARY

CLASSIC MOVIE NIGHT



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SUNSET

BOULEVARD

DIRECTED BY: BILL WILDER

STARRING: WILLIAM HOLDEN, GLORIA SWANSON, ERICH VON STROHEIM, NANCY OLSON, FRED CLARK

THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026

6:00 PM



PRESENTED BY

Friends of the
BELLEVILLE AREA
DISTRICT LIBRARY



Mini Art Workshop



**Saturday,
March 14
2-4 pm
Ages 6-18**



Make art on a mini canvas. Either attend the workshop and paint in the library, or pick up a kit at the Youth Desk beginning March 14 (while supplies last).

Return your finished canvas by March 30 to be included in our

Mini Art Show
in April.

This is a drop in program.
Registration is not required.

Belleville Area District Library | 167 4th St. Belleville, MI 48111

SEWING WITH KIDS!



Children and teens aged 7-18 can sit down with an experienced member of the Western Wayne County Quilt Guild to complete their very own sewing project: a turtle bath mitt/foot mop!



SATURDAY, MARCH 14



ONE-HOUR TIME SLOTS! PLEASE REGISTER BY SCANNING A CODE



10:30-11:30



11:30-12:30



1:00-2:00



2:00-3:00



LEGEND OF THE NAIN ROUGE



**6:30 PM
WEDNESDAY**

18TH
March



**Paranormal researcher
John E.L. Tenney shares the story
of Detroit's infamous Red Dwarf**

This month's MEMORY CAFE*

transforms into



with hand drums and percussion toys!



WEDNESDAY,
MARCH 18TH
@ 11 AM

***A relaxed, informal, social gathering for people with memory difficulties and their caregivers**

A diagnosis is not required to attend.

MAIN LIBRARY
167 4th St.
Belleville, MI 48111
(734) 699-3291



BELLEVILLE AREA
DISTRICT LIBRARY

www.belleville.lib.mi.us

SUMPTER MEDIA CENTER
23465 Sumpter Rd.
Belleville, MI 48111
(734) 699-3291

JAZZ NIGHT AT THE LIBRARY

presents

TRIO ESCOBAR

7PM
MARCH 25

**Join us for
a vibrant
evening of
Latin music,
rhythm,
and soul**



 BELLEVILLE AREA
DISTRICT LIBRARY

Brought to you by the Friends of
the Belleville Area District Library





SPRING BREAK

March 30 -
April 4

FUN!

Monday

Build It: 10 am - 12 pm
Drop in and build with a variety of materials.

Family Storytime: 6:30 pm, All Ages

Tuesday

Toddler Storytime: 11 am, Ages 2-4



Wednesday

Craft-A-Palooza: 10 am - 12 pm
Drop in for fun crafting projects!



Thursday

Baby Storytime: 10 am or 11 am, Ages Birth -2

Kid Movie Matinee: 2 pm
A Minecraft Movie (PG). Movie, popcorn, crafts.



Friday

Game On at Your Library!:
2 pm, most games for ages 8 and up.
Learn a new board game from our collection. Please Register.



Saturday

K-Pop Demon Hunters: 3-5 pm, Ages 6 - 18
Huntrix and Saja Boys fans! Watch and sing along to music, and enjoy crafts and activities. Costumes welcome.



BELLEVILLE AREA
DISTRICT LIBRARY

Game On at your library!

APRIL 3RD 2 - 5 PM

167 4TH ST., BELLEVILLE, MI 48111

Socialize and strategize!

Learn a new board game from our collection!

MOST GAMES AGES 8+

Please register. Refreshments provided.

