



Library Advisory Board Meeting Monday, January 12, 2026 12:30 pm Via zoom

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85948600690?pwd=1326mAtyXfrLnHjBtxLZLrU1aWLITc.1>

District 1-Fischer (President)	District 4- Howells (Vice-President)	District 7- Aoh (Secretary)
District 2- vacant	District 5- Bennett	At-Large- vacant
District 3- Kubiak	District 6- Grove	At-Large- Groves

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Approval of Minutes – December 15, 2025**
3. **Public Comment- (limit to 15 minutes)**
4. **Library Reports**
 - a. Report of the Director- Jessica Spitulski
 - b. Staff Reports- Casey Velko, Alyssa Johnson
 - c. Review of Financial Report-
 - d. Statistical and Other Reports-
 - e. Report of District Consultant-Jessica Church
 - f. Report of County Council Liaison-
 - g. Report of Friends of the Library- Karen Miller
 - h. Report of Erie Regional Library Foundation-
5. **Unfinished Business-**
 - a. Board workshop -confirmation
6. **New Business-**
 - a. None
7. **Adjournment**
8. **Appendix**
 - a. Announcements
 - b. News Articles

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of Minutes – December 15, 2025

3. Public Comment- (limit to 15 minutes)

4. Library Reports

a. Report of the Director- Jessica Spitulski

- Upcoming Library Closures
Monday, January 19 (Martin Luther King Jr Day)
- Construction Updates
Crosswalk signal was installed on Front Street
- Children’s Renovation Update
Construction documents are being finalized, public information session in discussion.
- HIRT Grant Application – Received only 10% of ask.
- Strategic Planning Process
Internal process underway. Staff, partners and public input to begin near future.
- Staffing Updates-
Literacy Librarian- post came down 1/9, reviewing applications
Part-Time Clerk positions- reviewing applications to fill 3 part time clerks
Part-Time Floater position posted
Library Assistant- posting in-process

b. Staff Reports- Casey Velko, Alyssa Johnson

Circulation Manager introduction
Outreach report – America 250, PA250

c. Review of Financial Report-

November financials distributed. December/ Year-end financials will not be available until end of February.

d. Statistical and Other Reports-

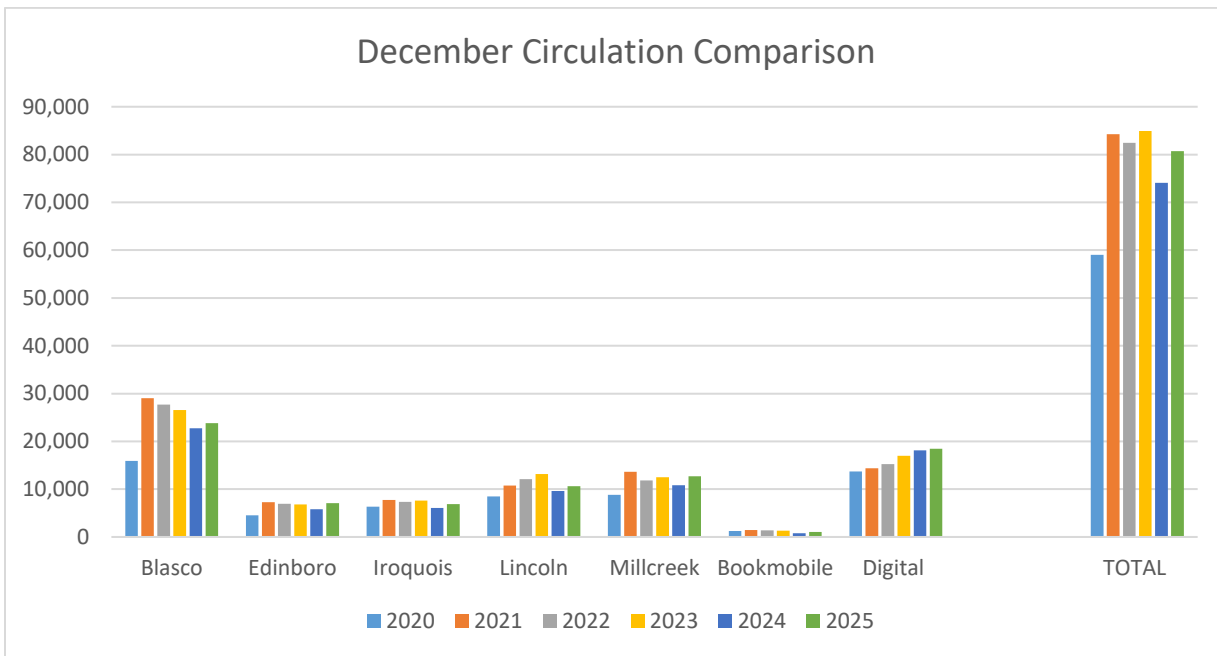
December 2025 Statistics

Numbers Snapshot

- 503 new cards issued, including **160 new school cards**
- 2562 WiFi logins, 2410 public PC logins across locations ↑21% from 2024
- Patron visits – Currently unavailable.
- **147 programs, 4 Outreach programs 2124 attendees.**

- Desk questions

Month	Type	Directions	Collection	Electronic	Program	Research	Total
Dec	In person	714	951	449	361	351	2826
Dec	Online	1	0	2	0	1	4
Dec	phone	396	378	203	189	280	1446
		1111	1329	654	550	632	4276



* 9/2/25 Bayfront Road closure.

December Circulation Statistics

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Blasco	15,909	29,008	27,702	26,532	22,756	23,813
Edinboro	4,538	7,295	6,917	6,820	5,820	7,107
Iroquois	6,330	7,727	7,358	7,626	6,102	6,878
Lincoln	8,473	10,788	12,077	13,162	9,646	10,654
Millcreek	8,808	13,614	11,825	12,508	10,847	12,699
Bookmobile	1,252	1,444	1,354	1,311	799	1,070
Digital	13,718	14,369	15,250	16,962	18,126	18,477
TOTAL	59,028	84,245	82,483	84,921	74,096	80,698

e. Report of District Consultant-Jessica Church

District Services Report as of January 7, 2025
Updates for ECPL LAB Report
Submitted by Jessica Church, District Consultant

Updates from the Office of Commonwealth Libraries (OCL)

With the upcoming retirement of Susan Banks in June, the Pennsylvania Department of Education seeks candidates for the position of State Librarian, Deputy Secretary for Libraries (Commissioner for Libraries). More information can be found at: <https://compendium.ocl-pa.org/position-posted-state-librarian-deputy-secretary-for-libraries-commissioner-for-libraries/>

District Updates

Member libraries are preparing to submit their FY2025 data for annual reports, which are due for local review by March 2. Libraries must submit these reports in order for OCL to determine if standards have been met, which can impact State aid allocations.

The District Consultant is creating a new process to assist with orienting new executive directors at member libraries. In the last quarter of 2025, there were four director transitions or departures, and another is planning for retirement in March. (That's over ¼ turnover of executive directors among our District's member libraries.) While the District Consultant does not orient new directors on day-to-day operations, we do help with providing an overview of services and resources available at the county, regional, and state levels, provide information on library laws and standards, and other guiding information to help them succeed in their new role.

District Services continue refine processes for the rotating large print and Playaway/Wonderbook collections as well as interlibrary loan delivery.

Public Libraries of Erie County (PLEC) and County Coordination Aid (subset of State Aid)

The District Consultant is working with the ECPL team on the Polaris migration as it relates to the independent libraries.

- f. Report of County Council Liaison-
- g. Report of Friends of the Library- Karen Miller
- h. Report of Erie Regional Library Foundation-

5. Unfinished Business-

- a. Board workshop -confirmation

Friday, January 30 1-4pm Blasco Admiral Room.

6. New Business-

- a. None

7. Adjournment

8. Appendix

a. Announcements

The next board meeting will be Monday, February 19, 2026, at 12:30pm via zoom.

b. News Articles

Wave goodbye to 2025, say hello to 2026 with New Year's events in Erie

December 13, 2025 | Erie Times-News: Web Edition Articles (PA)

Author/Byline: Dana Massing, Erie Times-News | Section: Entertainment

429 Words | Readability: Lexile: 1200, grade level(s): 10 11-12

New Year's Eve/Dec. 31

Noon Year's Eve: The Experience Children's Museum will drop balloons at noon and 4 p.m. on Dec. 31 to celebrate the end of 2025. Separate sessions will run from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2 to 5 p.m. at the museum, 420 French St. The party will include music, bubbles and more for kids and families. Admission is \$15 for ages 1 and older and registration is available online.

Noon Year's Eve Party: Blasco Memorial Library will host this party for those who don't want to stay up late to celebrate a new year. Fancy snacks, games and a balloon drop are scheduled between 11 a.m. and noon in the Children's Story Time Room at the library, 160 E. Front St. Organizers said guests are welcome to wear their party clothes or put on their pajamas for this free event.

Gannon-Blasco lawsuit - Case ends with shorter lease, tighter oversight

December 31, 2025 | Erie Times-News (PA)

Author/Byline: A.J. Rao; Erie Times-News | Page: A1 | Section: News

956 Words | Readability: Lexile: 1380, grade level(s): >12

[Read News Document](#)

A lawsuit over Gannon University's new education and research center at Blasco Memorial Library has ended in a settlement — the center will stay open, but the lease will be shortened, the center will no longer use shared library spaces and public oversight will be strengthened.

The settlement, outlined in a Dec. 24 consent order, shortens the center's initial 25-year lease to 10 years. Gannon retains the option to extend the lease through four additional five-year terms. But extensions will require county approval and rental rates will be adjusted based on changes in the Consumer Price Index.

The agreement removes Gannon's access to the library's Idea Lab and classrooms. It also requires all lease revenue to be used solely for library purposes. Gannon currently pays a rental rate of \$22,956 per year, or \$1,913 per month, or \$7 a square foot.

The settlement also requires that any future lease, amendment, sale or disposition of library property go to the all-volunteer Library Advisory Board at least 30 days before Erie County Council takes action, giving the public a formal role in oversight.

Under a memorandum of understanding attached to the consent order, Gannon will collect visitor data and

feedback to share with the library's executive director and the Library Advisory Board. Gannon will also collaborate with library staff on annual membership drives and other educational projects. Public library members will also have free access to Gannon's Nash Library resources.

The consent order was approved Dec. 24 by Clarion County Judge James Arner, who presided over the case after all Erie County judges recused themselves.

Keep Our Library Public, former library director call deal a 'win'

A Dec. 24 statement from Keep Our Library Public, the plaintiffs, said the settlement "sets guardrails as to what elected officials can do with library assets and ensures fulfillment of Dr. Blasco's vision for his bequest to Erie County."

"This was never about KOLP or about politics as some may have portrayed it; it was all about Blasco Library," the statement read. "In that sense, we believe this is a win for the library and for Erie County taxpayers. We are glad to see this amicable resolution. We look forward to seeing how the MOU will benefit and grow the Erie County Library for all residents of Erie County."

Mary Rennie, a member of Keep Our Library Public and a former director of the Erie County Public Library, also called the settlement a victory, insisting "the people have spoken and they have finally been heard."

"A large portion of the most valuable public property owned by taxpayers is not being given away like a leftover from some bargain basement sale," she said. "Gannon's footprint within the library has been reduced by a factor of almost 10. The amended lease terms are much more reasonable for Erie County taxpayers. The rent won't remain at \$7 per square foot for the next generation, certainly."

She added, "Perhaps most encouraging to me, however, is that Gannon is willing to work cooperatively to help reverse the damage done over the past four years to our libraries, which has been considerable. Starting almost immediately we will work together as one to marshal our resources and build upon success that is shared."

Keep Our Library Public is now fundraising to pay off legal expenses of the case, Rennie said.

County, Gannon respond favorably to settlement

County Solicitor Bill Speros, on behalf of the county, said "we are pleased to see that the outcome of the lawsuit keeps Gannon University's water research laboratory in the Blasco Library where it belongs."

"The real winners of this lawsuit are the citizens of Erie County and its visitors who get to enjoy this fantastic educational facility free of charge," he told the Erie Times-News.

In a statement, Gannon President Walter Iwanenko reiterated that the center is a "community asset and good match for the Blasco Library."

"With this settlement, it is reassuring to know that even those who opposed this project in the beginning support the additional Gannon programming agreed to in the settlement in the end," he said.

The Center for Lake Erie Education and Research, which opened in October, is a 3,280-square-foot facility on the first floor of Blasco Library. It features interactive exhibits, a NOAA Science on a Sphere and a research and wet lab. The center is part of Gannon's \$24 million Project NePTWNE, a multi-phase water quality initiative.

Since the center's opening, there have been nearly 5,000 visitors to the center, according to the Gannon statement.

"Already the community is embracing this project," Iwanenko said. "We are proud of CLEER, and we are not surprised so many have taken time to experience it. We expect that to only grow. With the lawsuit settled, we hope we can now focus on the center's original intent – educating the public about the wonder of the Great Lakes and the issues that threaten that ecosystem."

What was the lawsuit about?

In June 2024, a citizen group called Keep Our Library Public filed a lawsuit against Erie County, Gannon and later Erie County Council. The group argued that the county negotiated a lease with Gannon that allowed the university to build a center inside Blasco Library, effectively giving space in a public library to a private, religiously affiliated university. The center opened on Oct. 4.

The group argued the Blasco property was donated to the county to serve as a public library and that the lease violates Pennsylvania's Dedicated or Donated Property Act. They also contend that Erie County Executive Brenton Davis negotiated the agreement at below-market rates, disadvantaging taxpayers and violating the Erie County Home Rule Charter — a breach of fiduciary duty they attribute to Davis.

In September, Arner encouraged all parties to reach a settlement and postponed a trial that was set for Dec. 1.

Contact A.J. Rao at arao@gannett.com or 814-440-5080.