

Burlingame Public Library Children's Services Report September 2025

The Burlingame Library Children's Services team has four full-time staff members committed to creating joy in reading and learning for children in this community and increasing the likelihood of them becoming lifelong readers and library patrons. We strive to present excellent collections, services, and a wide variety of programming for all ages from babies through age 18. The department is supported by 10 on-call children's librarians who help staff at the busy Children's Desk as we are open seven days a week.



Children's Staff Jennifer Bousquet, Kathy von Mayrhauser, Kelly Grima, and Sarah Tinkham at the Summer Reading Challenge Kickoff of *Make Your Summer Legendary* in May 2025

Kathy von Mayrhauser is the manager for Children's Services and the Easton Branch Library. This year she celebrated 24 years with the Burlingame Public Library. She particularly finds working with elementary age students most rewarding and enjoys the book clubs she initiated – *Book Club Fun* for second and third grade students and *Food & Fiction* for fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students. Seeing families enjoy our seven weeks of Family Fun Nights during Summer Reading Challenge each summer is also a favorite.

This year, **Jennifer Bousquet** celebrated her fifth anniversary as a Children's Department Librarian at BPL. She is passionate about collaborating with her team to create engaging, imaginative programs that spark curiosity in children and bring families together. Jennifer coordinates the monthly guest-led programs *BPL Music Party!* and *Sign Language Storytime*, and she also leads *Baby Storytime* and *All Ages Storytime* each week. In addition to her programming work, she is a regular presence at the customer service desk, where she enjoys connecting with library families.

Kelly Grima loves spending time with the little ones who visit the library. She leads weekly storytimes and recently hosted a wildly popular Peppa Pig special event, with an exciting Dinovember event coming up soon. Kelly also enjoys organizing the bi-monthly Scavenger Hunts in the Children's Room and at the Easton Branch. She takes great pride in decorating and keeping the space cheerful and welcoming. Living by the motto, "Love what you do, and you never work a day in your life," Kelly's passion truly shines through in everything she does.

Sarah Tinkham is the newest member of the Children's Team and first started as a Library Assistant here at Burlingame Public Library back in 2017. As a Teen and Children's librarian, she is passionate about building a lifelong love of reading and helping kids grow into the leaders and creators of tomorrow. She loves helping our teen volunteers build skills serving our community and collaborating with our Teen Advisory Board to get fresh user input and develop new programming. Sarah believes libraries evolve alongside their communities, and as a librarian, figuring out how to better serve her community every day is both an honor and an adventure!

This highlight report will focus on the fiscal year July 2024-June 2025 and spotlight a sampling of the many programs we were able to present because of the generous support of the Burlingame Library Foundation.

Spotlights of the Year:

Young Children

STORYTIMES – Regular storytimes are presented five times each week and bring in large crowds of children, parents, and caregivers. This year we offered 208 storytimes at the Main and Easton serving 14,172 patrons. We offer *storytime kits* to those attending on Thursday and Friday storytimes and songs are incorporated into the storytimes using the bell, shaker egg, and scarf at each storytime. We distributed 513 *storytime kits* this year.

SPECIAL STORYTIMES & PROGRAMS – We offered **special storytimes** for Sign Language, Mandarin Language, Grandparents' Day, Special Summer storytimes in a variety of languages, Autumn Moon storytime, and Native American Heritage storytime offering 27 special storytime programs serving 1,727 patrons. One of our most popular new programs of the year was a Peppa Pig Party for preschool children with 80 in attendance. Our December Santa program (Santa played by BPL Trustee Mark Lucchesi) is wildly popular and brought in 260 participants in December 2024.

IN LIBRARY SCAVENGER HUNTS – We provide every-other-month **scavenger hunts** in the Children's Room and at the Easton Branch Library during the year and they continue to be extremely popular with children asking in the off month when the next scavenger hunt will be! This year we offered eight scavenger hunts at each library for a total of 16 scavenger hunts serving 3,642 patrons at the Main Library and 1,114 patrons at the Easton Branch.

OUR LARGEST CIRCULATING COLLECTION IS PICTURE BOOKS – In this fiscal year, we circulated 35,432 picture books at the Main Library and 6,997 picture books at the Easton Branch Library.

School Age Children

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP -- CLASS VISITS AT THE LIBRARY, LIBRARY CARD DRIVES & ZOOM AUTHOR EVENTS FOR ELEMENTARY AGE CHILDREN– 170 Kindergarten students received their first library card during our 14th annual Kindergarten Library Card Drive. 62 elementary school classes came to the Main Library Children's Room or Easton Branch for a special class visit during the school year with 1,872 students visiting. Each year in May and June the librarians visit all 10 elementary schools in Burlingame and Hillsborough and go classroom-to-classroom to tell the students about the Summer Reading Challenge. This year we visited 123 elementary classrooms for a total of 3,010 students. Our teen librarian also visited both Crocker School and Burlingame Intermediate School for a total of 44 classrooms and 1,044 students. Three special Zoom author events allowed teachers to bring their classes to hear an author speak and introduce their class to a book ahead of time. 1,403 students enjoyed these three events this year.

HOMEWORK CENTER – We continue to offer a **Homework Center** at the library two days a week in the Fall and Spring semesters. These sessions provide homework assistance by honor students from local high schools for students in kindergarten through eighth grade. Over this year we provided 43 homework sessions with 355 students attending.

WINTER & SUMMER READING – Our two-month **Winter Reading program** for December 2024/January 2025 had 445 children and 45 teens complete the reading log.

Summer Reading Challenge 2025 was our biggest ever! Summer Reading Challenge had 1,243 finishers of the program – 900 elementary age, 148 babies and toddlers, and 195 teens. **We thank the Burlingame Library Foundation for raising a special \$30,000 just to support our book prize giveaway this year.**

SPECIAL BOOK DISCUSSION GROUPS – Two book discussion groups are offered each month during the year. **Book Club Fun** is a monthly program for second and third grade students in which we read a book, discuss it, and then make a fun project that relates to the book. **Food & Fiction** is a monthly discussion group for fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students and features a cooking project after each month's book discussion.

SEWING FOR CHILDREN – Our very popular **Learn to Sew for Kids** continued this year. We offered nine sessions for children age 10 and up in which they were offered a new and exciting sewing project each month.

Teens (Grades 7-12)

TEEN ADVISORY BOARD -- The **Teen Advisory Board** is a panel of high-achieving teens who are passionate about library services. Every month, they meet with the Teen Librarian to help plan library programs, volunteer, contribute to Library social media accounts, and overall provide creativity and user input to help the library better serve its teen community.

BPL HOMEWORK CENTER -- We offer the **BPL Homework Center** on Mondays and Tuesdays during the school year with the help of high-achieving students from area high schools. They apply for this volunteer position and must show proof of a 3.5 GPA or higher in their grades at school.

BURLINGAME-HILLSBOROUGH YOUTH POET LAUREATE – In its fourth year, the **Burlingame-Hillsborough Youth Poet Laureate** is a prestigious position awarded by a panel of librarian and poet judges every National Poetry Month. Candidates are chosen both for their portfolio of poetry, and for their civic engagement. The Burlingame-Hillsborough Youth Poet Laureate serves as an ambassador of both young people and the arts, and hosts several poetry workshops at the library during the school year.

TEEN PROGRAMMING – We offer regular monthly programs for teens during the school year as well as a special series of programs for teens during the summer. Highlights of teen programs this year include a very popular Teen Boba event as well as a wide variety of craft programs including Day of the Dead crafts, teen macrame, cookie decorating in December, and lost art of letter writing during the month of February.

TEEN FINALS CAFE – We offer the **BPL Teen Finals Cafe** in December and May each year to offer a vital space for teens to study and receive snacks and drinks as they prepare for their final exams. 375 teens took advantage of this extra space and sustenance in the December 2024 and May 2025 cafes.

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP – The teen librarian visited 44 classes at Burlingame Intermediate School and Crocker Middle School in May and June 2025 to promote the Summer Reading Challenge and let the middle school students know about the services we offer at the public library. We also do a Student Success Initiative each September to make library cards for all incoming freshmen at Burlingame High School.



Events from this year featured Burlingame Library Trustee Mark Lucchesi starring as Santa and Easter Bunny and reading stories to the children at Grandparents' Storytime (BLF Member Audrey Bojack also joined Mark at that special storytime).

