



Van Buren District Library announces director departure

Van Buren District Library (VBDL) and Executive Director Dan Hutchins have mutually agreed to conclude his tenure after nine years of valuable service. The VBDL thanks Dan for his leadership and recognizes his contributions to the library and the communities it serves.

Since joining VBDL in 2017, Dan has helped strengthen a seven-branch Library District serving 16 municipalities, leading successful millage efforts that secured lasting public support for library services, including the first ballot proposal in its history to pass on the initial attempt. He also oversaw the retirement of the library's outstanding pension liability ahead of schedule.

One of Dan's accomplishments was the creation and expansion of VBDL's mobile Internet hotspot lending program. Launched with \$53,000 from the Federal Communications Commission's Emergency Connectivity Fund, the program subsequently grew from 210 to 420 devices. Patrons borrowed hotspots 6,761 times in 2025, an increase of nearly 59% over 2024. The service has helped residents connect to school, work, healthcare, and everyday necessities from home.

Dan also made reaching more residents a priority. Under his leadership, VBDL broadened library card eligibility, removed overdue fines on traditional library materials, and deepened its outreach to the Hispanic community. That work included Spanish-language events and classes, a Spanish-language library card application, participation in community celebrations, and a renewed Spanish-language collection developed with support from the Covert Community Foundation.

His tenure also brought greater investment in public programming, the creation of a District Program Coordinator position, and improvements to library facilities, including the renovation of a VBDL Library branch, supported by a state arts grant. In addition, Dan guided the VBDL through the COVID-19 pandemic and helped expand access to online resources and outdoor Wi-Fi.

The VBDL appreciates Dan's work, which has made a lasting difference in the services the VBDL provides to the residents who use them. We thank Dan for nine years of dedicated service and wish him continued success and happiness.