



OAK BLUFFS
PUBLIC LIBRARY

2025 - 2030

**STRATEGIC
PLAN**

PREPARED BY
ALLYSON E. MALIK
LIBRARY DIRECTOR

IN COLLABORATION WITH
LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES &
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE



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Moving Forward Together

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Libraries are not just keepers of the past; they're engines of progress. In the face of change, we will adapt to be a place where curiosity, learning, and community will be our bright navigational beacons, no matter the fog of challenges ahead.



Preparing for the Unknown by Creating Connections

The library is rooted in an evolving island community that values its spirit of welcome and inclusivity, even as it wrestles with sustainability. Housing insecurities, changing economic opportunities, and the pressing realities of climate change weigh heavily on our aging population, who are often left to navigate these complexities as younger generations seek affordable lives elsewhere.

At the library, we believe that no one should face these challenges alone. By bringing together islanders and visitors, visionaries and changemakers, island leaders and everyday citizens, we aim to spark conversations and connections that reframe how these pressing issues can be dismantled and tackled in stages. The library becomes a space where new perspectives take shape—where the power of shared voices and collective creativity makes it possible to explore and effectuate solutions.

The problems ahead are too big for any one of us to solve alone, but together, we can discover new ways forward. The library is here to hold space for those conversations, those connections, and the creation of a stronger, more sustainable future for our island.

Allyson E. Malik
Library Director

2025 - 2030

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

LIBRARY MISSION

The Oak Bluffs Public library fosters connectedness by providing collections, programs, and technology to promote literacy and an informed citizenry through open and equal access to cultural, intellectual, recreational and community resources.



FEBRUARY 2024

The Library Director facilitated the first of two community listening sessions

APRIL 2024

The User Needs Assessment survey instrument was launched in-person at the Annual Town Meeting, then later digitally

SEPTEMBER 2024

The Library Director facilitated the second of two community listening sessions and hosted two staff visioning sessions

OCTOBER 2024

The Strategic Planning Committee reviewed the data, assessed the community's needs for the library, and drafted a plan for Trustee review

NOVEMBER 2024

The Library Board of Trustees met on November 14, 2024 and unanimously voted to approve the 2025 -2030 Strategic Plan.

USER NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The library launched a campaign to collect responses to its User Needs Assessment Survey (see Appendix). The survey was handed out in-person at various library programs, non-library programs (e.g., the 2024 Annual Town Meeting), and digitally on its website. The library collected survey responses until October 5, 2024.

LISTENING SESSIONS

The library hosted two community listening sessions facilitated by the Library Director, who led the group of library stakeholders through various prompts to solicit their vision for the library over the next five years.

2025 - 2030

PLANNING PARTICIPANTS

Patrons

Linda
Susan
Moira
Muriel
Sheila
Navenka
Bonnie Stacy *
Mark Gauthier *

Library Board of Trustees

Marney Toole, Board Chair
Kathy Taylor
Steve Auerbach
Peter Lyons *
Lewis Laskaris
Emily Cavanagh

Library Staff

Allyson Malik, Director *
Edil Junior Barbosa
Michelle Lynch *
Marco Daniels
Shivonne Schofield
Mary Jane Aldrich-Moodie
Jonathan Burke
Anna Marie D'Addarie
Shylo Elliott

Library Friends of Oak Bluffs

el edwards
Alison Cohen *

*Strategic Planning Committee Member



2025 - 2030

MANDATE STATEMENT

While the Strategic Plan outlines priority areas for growth and innovation, it is important to emphasize that these goals represent our "reach" initiatives—strategic efforts to expand services to address current and emerging needs. These areas do not replace the core functions that remain central to our mission.

The library will continue to:

- Build and maintain a robust collection of materials that inform, educate, and entertain our community.
- Support early literacy initiatives through engaging youth services, including storytimes, reading programs, and partnerships with local schools.
- Provide free access to information in all formats, ensuring equitable opportunities for learning and discovery.
- Protect intellectual freedom by upholding the right to access information without censorship or restriction.
- Ensure our programs, services, and collections are relevant to our community's needs.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our strategic priorities foster a supportive environment that empowers individuals, enhances access to resources, and ensures that all voices are valued in our diverse community. The Oak Bluffs Library has an essential role in fostering learning, connection, and wellness in our community. Each initiative addresses a key priority to meet the evolving needs of our residents and the increasing vulnerability of our island home.



COMMUNITY

Building connections strengthens our community



LEARNING

Learning fosters growth, wellness and resilience



TECHNOLOGY

Accessing new skills and equipment inspires ideas



INCLUSION

The library belongs to all, and all belong at the library

INITIATIVE 1



GOAL 1.1

COMMUNITY STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

A strong, connected community fosters resilience and a sense of belonging.

Celebrate Art & Heritage

Action: Facilitate local art, music, literature and heritage programs each month that engage the community with Martha's Vineyard history and culture.

Timeline: Begin January 2025 and continue monthly.

Success Measures:

- At least 12 events per year with 10+ attendees each in 2025, to grow by 10% each year thereafter.
- Community feedback indicates increased knowledge of local history and culture.

GOAL 1.2

Host Civic Engagement Forums

Action: Hold monthly discussion forums on current events, activism issues, and / or local interests.

Timeline: Launch March 2025, ongoing.

Success Measures:

- Consistent participation from 10+ attendees per session in 2025, to grow by 10% each year thereafter.
- New community partnerships resulting from forum discussions.

GOAL 1.3

Facilitate Social Interest Groups

Action: Launch ongoing social engagement groups each centered on a common interest (reading, crafting, music, gaming, etc.) to foster connections among residents.

Timeline: Pilot 3 groups by June 2025; expand to 6 by December 2026.

Success Measures:

- 50% of attendees report feeling more connected to the community.
- At least three groups become self-sustaining.

INITIATIVE 2



GOAL 2.1

LEARNING PROMOTE SKILL-BUILDING & WELLNESS

Supporting practical skill-building and well-being enriches individual lives and strengthens the community.

Host Health & Wellness Programs

Action: Develop and maintain a series of health and wellness programs, including nutrition workshops, cooking classes and fitness programs, such as yoga, walking, Tai Chi, etc.

Timeline: Start at least one fitness program by February 2025 and begin nutrition and cooking classes by October 2025.

Success Measures:

- 100 participants enrolled across all fitness programs by the end of 2025 with an increase of 10% in each year thereafter.
- Participant surveys show 50% improved health literacy.

GOAL 2.2

Launch Educational Skill-Building Workshops

Action: Provide a range of educational programs that promote practical skill-building (technology classes, creative workshops, financial planning, health education, etc.) for all ages.

Timeline: Launch initial classes in April 2025, with quarterly updates.

Success Measures:

- At least 50 residents complete skill-building workshops annually.
- 80% report improved skills and confidence.

GOAL 2.3

Partner for Wellness

Action: Collaborate with local organizations to co-host and facilitate wellness events and services.

Timeline: Develop partnerships by September 2025; co-host 4 events annually starting 2026.

Success Measures:

- 5+ community partners engaged in annual events.
- Positive feedback from partners on collaborative programs and shared resources.

INITIATIVE 3



GOAL 3.1

TECHNOLOGY IMPROVE TECHNOLOGY ACCESS & LITERACY

Equitable access to technology enables full participation in society and promotes digital literacy.

Expand Technology Training

Action: Offer more tech classes, from basic computer skills to emerging technology developments as well as device troubleshooting.

Timeline: Begin January 2025 with an assessment every six months.

Success Measures:

- 100 attendees participate in tech classes by the end of 2025 with an increase of 10% in each year thereafter.
- 80% report improved digital skills.

GOAL 3.2

Improve WiFi Access

Action: Increase WiFi coverage within the library and offer more WiFi hotspots for lending.

Timeline: Add 10 hotspots by December 2025, extend WiFi range December 2027.

Success Measures:

- WiFi usage data shows a 30% increase.
- 75% of hotspot borrowers report improved connectivity.

GOAL 3.3

Enhance the STEM Lab

Action: Improve the STEM Lab resources and offer hands-on STEM workshops for all ages using lab tools such as 3D printers, coding kits, and robotics.

Timeline: Begin workshops by March 2025; schedule quarterly sessions.

Success Measures:

- At least 50 participants in STEM workshops each year.
- 70% of attendees report increased STEM skills and interest.

INITIATIVE 4



GOAL 4.1

INCLUSION

FOSTER INCLUSION FOR OUR DIVERSE COMMUNITY

A diverse, inclusive library ensures that every resident feels valued and supported.

GOAL 4.2

Support Portuguese-Speaking Community

Action: Develop ELL classes and cultural events for Portuguese-speaking community members.

Timeline: Launch first programs by February 2026; expand offerings annually.

Success Measures:

- 100 residents complete ELL classes within two years.
- Cultural events attract 15+ attendees per session.

GOAL 4.3

Provide Outreach to Vulnerable Residents

Action: Collaborate with social service providers to offer outreach programs and improved accessibility for underserved residents, including people with disabilities, those who are unhoused, and low-income community members.

Timeline: Begin outreach partnerships by January 2025; ongoing.

Success Measures:

- 3+ partnerships formed to enhance outreach by December 2026.
- 80% of program participants report improved access to essential services.

Support Intergenerational Family Events

Action: Host or participate in events designed to bring together different generations, fostering shared experiences within family units as well as across diverse groups.

Timeline: Expand hosted programs by December 2025

Success Measures:

- Event attendance reaches 20+ participants per session by the end of 2025 with an increase of 10% in each year thereafter.
- 50% of attendees report positive intergenerational interactions.

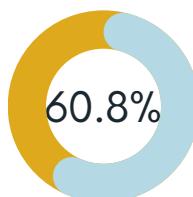
USER-NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY



The survey was provided to library patrons with both paper and online options from April 2024 to October 2024.

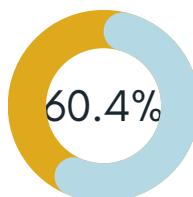
Three Biggest Needs

Based on the library's survey instrument, there were three main user needs that each garnered over 50% of respondents' interest. These three main interests – local history, local culture, and creativity interest groups – highly informed the library's strategic initiatives.



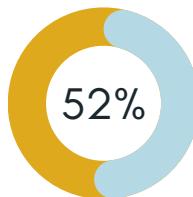
VINEYARD HISTORY

Connection to Oak Bluffs/Martha's Vineyard history



VINEYARD CULTURE

Connection to Martha's Vineyard art / culture



CREATIVITY GROUPS

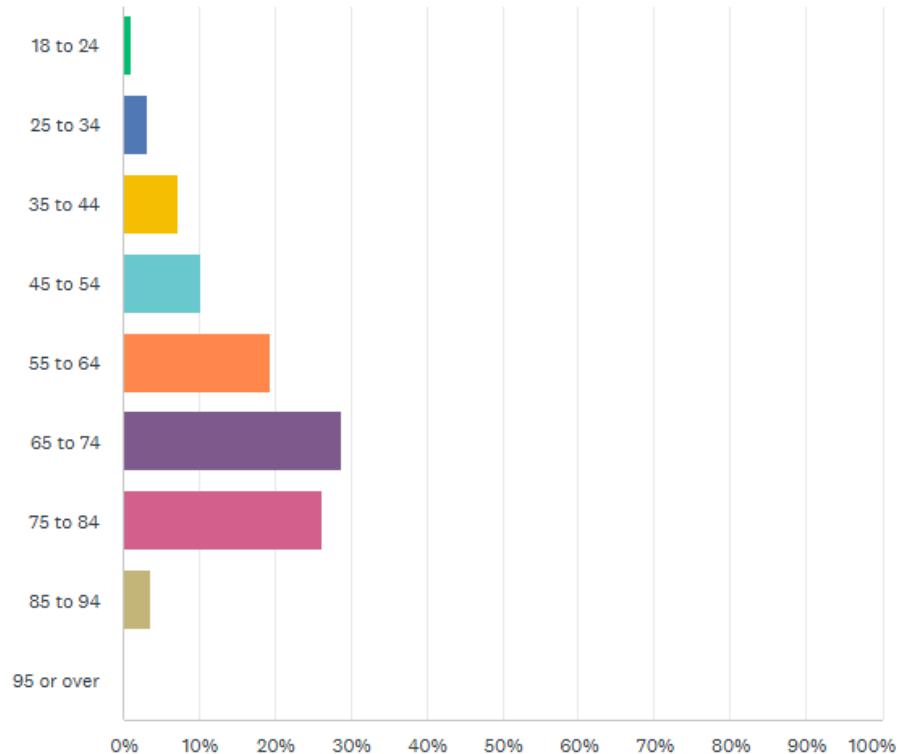
Ability to participate in artistic and creative learning groups

Data Collection

USER-NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

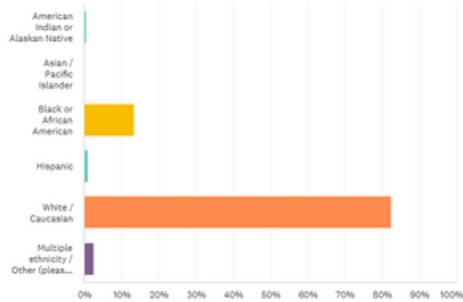
Please indicate your age group.

Answered: 274 Skipped: 0



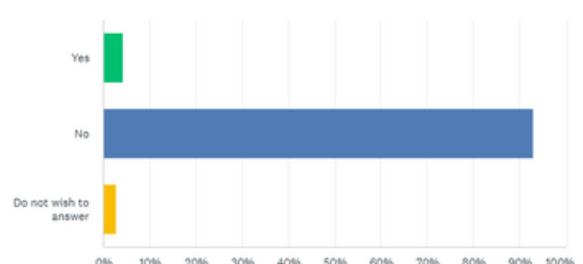
Which race/ethnicity best describes you? (Please choose only one.)

Answered: 268 Skipped: 6



Are you of Spanish, Hispanic or Latino origin or descent?

Answered: 215 Skipped: 59

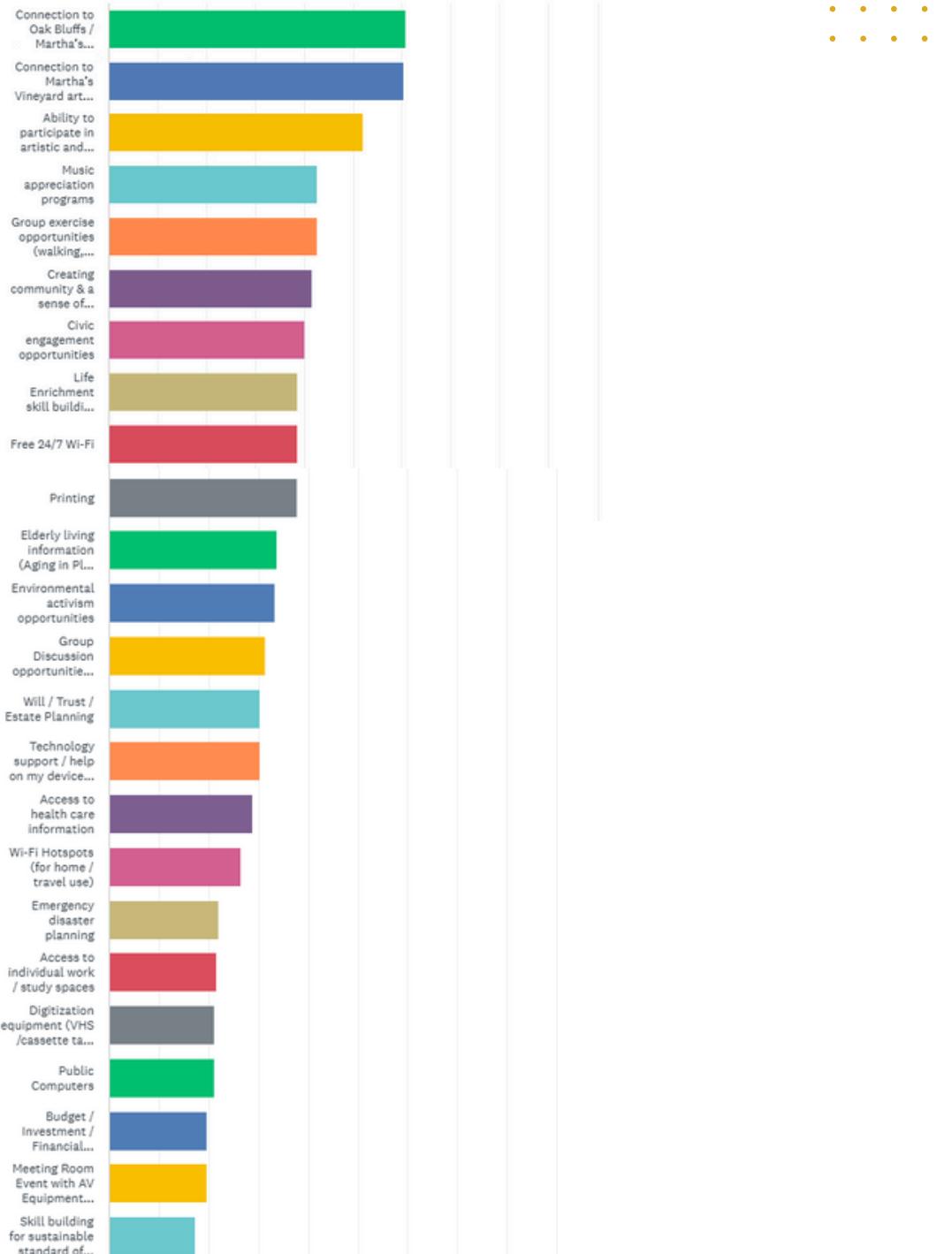


Data Collection

USER-NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Which of these library services would you or your household use in the next year? (check all that apply)

Answered: 265 Skipped: 9



Data Collection

USER-NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Connection to Oak Bluffs / Martha's Vineyard history	60.75%	161
▼ Connection to Martha's Vineyard art / culture	60.38%	160
▼ Ability to participate in artistic and creative learning groups	52.08%	138
▼ Music appreciation programs	42.64%	113
▼ Group exercise opportunities (walking, dancing, etc.)	42.64%	113
▼ Creating community & a sense of belonging	41.51%	110
▼ Civic engagement opportunities	40.00%	106
▼ Life Enrichment skill building (cooking, writing, crafting, etc.)	38.49%	102
▼ Free 24/7 Wi-Fi	38.49%	102
▼ Printing	37.74%	100
▼ Elderly living information (Aging in Place / Long Term Care Options)	33.58%	89
▼ Environmental activism opportunities	33.21%	88
▼ Group Discussion opportunities (coffee corners, current events, etc.)	31.32%	83
▼ Will / Trust / Estate Planning	30.19%	80
▼ Technology support / help on my device or public computer	30.19%	80
▼ Access to health care information	28.68%	76
▼ Wi-Fi Hotspots (for home / travel use)	26.42%	70
▼ Emergency disaster planning	21.89%	58
▼ Access to individual work / study spaces	21.51%	57
▼ Digitization equipment (VHS /cassette tapes to digital files, e.g.)	21.13%	56
▼ Public Computers	21.13%	56
▼ Budget / Investment / Financial Planning	19.62%	52
▼ Meeting Room Event with AV Equipment (e.g., microphones, projector, etc.)	19.62%	52
▼ Skill building for sustainable standard of living on Martha's Vineyard	17.36%	46
▼ Retirement Planning	15.09%	40
▼ Information Literacy workshops (identifying fake AI images, news, propaganda, etc.)	14.72%	39
▼ Fax Machine	13.96%	37
▼ Laptops / Chromebooks (for home / travel use)	11.70%	31
▼ List other services, if not listed above:	Responses	11.32%
▼ Connection to tax assistance		10.94%
▼ Hybrid Meeting Equipment (e.g., laptop, microphones, cameras, etc.)		10.57%
▼ Access to early childhood educational resources		10.19%
▼ Mental Health Resources / substance abuse resources		10.19%
▼ College Admission / FAFSA Assistance		9.43%
▼ Entrepreneurial skill building		9.43%
▼ Small Business Skill Building		7.92%
▼ Connection to housing assistance		6.79%
▼ Parenting skill building		6.04%
▼ Job Skills Training		4.91%
▼ Leadership training		4.53%
Total Respondents: 265		12

USER-NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY



Responses to “List other services, if not listed above”

- info on assistance programs for low income homeowners for needed home repairs
- You all are doing amazing work already! Would love to see librarians paid better!
- Evening and Sunday study hours year round
- I particularly appreciate the dance classes!
- Definitely more tech help and Zoom
- You offer great programs. I wish I had time to attend them all. Would love paper making/bookbinding workshop.
- Book group for summer reading, could have several kinds
- Live music, especially local
- Borrowing books
- Sewing
- 3d Printing
- Legal information For The elderly
- I mainly use the library to take out books.
- children's programs (with grandchildren)
- Travel info and trip presentations
- Roku stick with Netflix or Apple TV
- info on assistance programs for low income homeowners for needed home repairs

PUBLIC LISTENING SESSIONS



February 2024

- E-mail reminders for programs
- Kind of community?
- “Creative 2 Informative” (Putts & Pints mini golf given as example)
- Open 10 am – 10 pm all days and Christmas with eggnog
- Supply time and family that people are missing
- Location where you belong rather than sitting alone somewhere
- MV population is getting older, library provides a place to spend time and socialize
- Contact that library provides is important, especially to those who don't have family
- Oak Bluffs has a genuine population of people. (Implication that it's not just tourists, but an actual year round population.)
- Summer visitors choose Oak Bluffs because of the library
- More than community center – important and relevant center for society; new concepts and areas of concern
- People don't realize how much there is available at the library (more “Did You Know? Style ads)
- Open House all day, each hour a separate featured event
- More connection with media to cover what library does. Not just events, but articles about events, even past events. Talk to Conn at Times re: Library Events
- AI – hot topic
- Expanding size of library – any ideas

PUBLIC LISTENING SESSIONS



September 2024

New England

- Ties everything together
- Living in a big village where everyone knows everyone
- Welcoming community
- Diverse

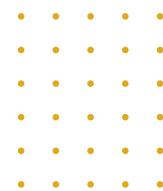
Important Issues

- Programming to get to center of the community
- How to get people here, entertained, and how to build relationships with organizations
- Cooperation with schools, museums, other libraries and build resilience
- Communicating what we have
- Changing technology – early adopters and reticent users
- Ask people what they need
- Sharing knowledge available at OBPL to beyond (e.g. whaling logs from MV Museum on Internet Archive)
- A LOT of writers on MV – need to figure out writing workshops

STAFF LISTENING SESSION

September 2024

The topic of this meeting was “How can we prepare OBPL to meet the challenges and demands in the next five years?” Each attendee was asked for their suggestions, and everyone present was given a green and red card to write down what the library should do (green) and should stop doing (red) in the next five years.



The goals suggested the most during the meeting were:

- Promoting health/nutrition and physical fitness
- Technology classes and support
- Making crafting projects accessible
- Supporting the unhoused and lower-income population on Martha’s Vineyard
- Supporting the Portuguese-speaking community on Martha’s Vineyard by offering programs in Portuguese, as well as classes for learning English

Specific ideas included:

- Tech literacy classes, especially basic computer classes
- Tech training for patrons and staff
- Collaboration with other organizations providing social services so OBPL doesn’t have to stretch thin (for example, OBPL might not be able to have a public shower, but other organizations might have one!)
- Programs completely in Portuguese
- Reaching out to and gaining trust with the Brazilian population, one way suggested was providing Portuguese board books to the hospital
- De-escalation training for staff
- Community building, neighborhood socials
- Field trips to Boston
- Overhauling the printing system to be easier