

# BadgerLink Advisory Group - May 2021

## Meeting Summary

### **BadgerLink Advisory Group Members Present:**

Karen L Howell, School District of Shell Lake  
Kay Koepsel-Benning, Elmbrook Schools  
Renee Laird-Adelon, Milwaukee Public Schools  
Zander Miller, Kenosha Public Library  
Julie Pohlman, University of Wisconsin System Administration  
Katie Roberts, Wisconsin Technical College System  
Julie Schultz, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin  
Julia Waggoner, Northland College

### **Not Present:**

Duong Duong, Hmong American Peace Academy  
Shahara Falk-LeFay, Marathon County Public Library, Athens Branch

### **DPI Staff Present:**

Martha Berninger  
Jen Champoux  
Ben Miller  
Elizabeth Neuman

The May 2021 BadgerLink Advisory Group meeting was held virtually, with the majority of members in attendance. Members shared their hopes for the coming year while reflecting on 2020, particularly how BadgerLink intersected with their worklife and professional learning.

## Group Check-in

Members shared their enthusiasm and expectations for the coming year. Many said they were looking forward to a “return,” whether that meant patrons and students returning to the library and classroom, or themselves returning to an office. Others spoke positively of the stability with this return, as well as a curiosity in seeing which of the past year’s changes would remain moving forward. Working in a new hybrid environment for programming and education was also mentioned as a way to ease into the new normal and reinforce stability over time.

Members also reflected on changes in their BadgerLink usage since joining the Advisory Group. Many spoke about how their increased awareness of all that is available has led to feeling more comfortable using resources themselves and sharing with colleagues, patrons, and students. Specific resources used regularly in 2020 included NoveList, TeachingBooks, and LearningExpress Library.

## DPI & Library Services Team Update

DPI staff presented updates as well, including the combining of Resources for Libraries and Lifelong Learning and the Public Library Development teams into one Library Services Team, and the move of half the team from offices at South Stoughton Road location to GEF3 in downtown Madison. DPI staff also shared the welcoming of Dr. Jill Underly as the new state superintendent in July, and the Library Services Team focus on equitable feedback loops and continuous improvement in the coming year's projects and programs.

## BadgerLink in 2020 Discussion

In addition to broader DPI updates, staff also shared information on statewide usage of BadgerLink in 2020. While collectively usage dropped, certain resources fared quite differently. Britannica and LearningExpress Library, resources used heavily by the K12 audience, saw a consistent decrease beginning in April which continued through the end of the year. EBSCO, which saw some fluctuations in the first three quarters, had a significant decrease from October to December which has carried into 2021, and staff is currently working on additional analysis.

Resources supporting readers saw large increases in usage in 2020 TeachingBooks averaged a 55% increase compared to 2019 and NoveList K-8 had an enormous increase in searches, specifically by public library users (both staff and patrons). Not surprisingly this data coincided with anecdotes from the community as well as the Advisory Group members themselves.

There was also an average increase in both newspaper databases that offer access to current local and national papers, contrasted with an average decrease in traditional genealogy databases including HeritageQuest Online and historic newspapers in Newspapers.com Library Edition - World Collection.

Changes in education and public libraries, lifestyle, and opportunities for access to resources beyond what was typically offered, played a role in the overall use of BadgerLink in 2020, but these events do not necessarily imply causation. The pandemic's impact on electronic resource usage won't truly be understood for years to come.

## User Testing of Library Staff Page

Advisory Group members participated in user testing of the new Library Staff webpage prior to the meeting, and key highlights from the sessions were presented. Overall members agreed the page was helpful, in both content and purpose. However, adjustments are still needed on section naming and navigational features prior to public release.

## Training Discussion

Staff provide both live (in-person and virtual) and asynchronous training, and improving the offerings is one of the BadgerLink 2021 strategic goals. Based on an internal content review and unexpected yet helpful feedback during the Library Staff user testing, focus will be placed first on updating existing handouts and videos. In order to help better understand the needs of library

staff and to prioritize the process, DPI staff developed a training needs survey. Advisory Group members were asked to review the survey for clarity and purpose, and suggested changes will be implemented before distribution to the wider library community.

## Procurement

Plans for the coming year's procurement of the three newspaper collections were shared. Members were asked to provide input on ways to reach the wider community to gather general feedback on desired features for the newspaper collections. There was general consensus that surveying would yield the best results, and suggestions revolved around survey design and specific groups or events to target.

## Next Steps

DPI staff intend to incorporate recommendations gathered during the meeting to make adjustments to the website, begin gathering community feedback around newspaper collections, and edit and share the training needs survey.