

## **ZION BENTON AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY:**

### **Equal Access Policy**

Library Board adopted 3/15/2018

The Zion Benton Public Library District is a member Zion Benton Coalition for Healthy Communities where one of the core beliefs is that equal opportunities for housing, employment, recreation, fitness, wellness, education and leisure should be available for everyone in our community. We aspire to create a community without barriers. Our goal is for people of widely differing backgrounds to do more than live next to one another, but to aid in creating a mutually respectful, multi-cultural environment in our community. We believe that the diversity in our community is part of what makes it unique, that everyone in our community has something important to say, and they deserve to be listened to with respect.

The Zion Benton Public Library District seeks to encourage the contributions of all people, regardless of race, color, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital and/or familial status, mental and/or physical impairment and/or disability, military status, economic status, political affiliation, or any of the other distinguishing characteristics that all too often divide people in society. We believe that our community works best when everyone is empowered and is an active participant. Through interaction, we believe we can reconcile the apparent paradox of appreciating and even celebrating our differences while at the same time developing consensus on a shared vision for the future.

The Zion Benton Public Library District has committed to serving our district by providing equal access to education resources, literacy programs and resources, leisure materials, and lifelong learning opportunities. The Zion Benton Public Library District has also determined to play a crucial role in supporting and enriching our diverse community through library materials, services, programs, and employment. The Library aspires to reflect the traditions and values of Zion Benton community in our relationship to the residents of Zion Benton area and the staff of the Library.