

Public Library Standards Road Map

Laws and Governance

Our community members have access to libraries and boards that are transparent and follow local, state, and federal laws.

Essential	Excellent	Cooperative
The library is established per Title 7, Title 22, or through the legal process practiced by a Tribal Council.	Library boards and directors evaluate their current governance model to make sure it meets their needs. If necessary, the group explores different governance models that can increase reliable revenue sources and improve services for residents.	Libraries explore collaborative governance models such as regional independent library districts that can increase reliable revenue sources and improve services to residents.
The Board meets at least 6 times a year and complies with Montana’s Open Meeting Laws when meeting.		

Board education and recruitment

Our community members see themselves reflected in the makeup of the board and benefit from boards that implement practices that encourage learning and effective board practices.

Essential	Excellent	Cooperative
Board members learn about the services the library provides to users, the role of the board in providing administrative and financial oversight, and the role of the board in planning for new services for users.	The Board has a formal process for welcoming and educating new board members.	Boards within a federation learn about new and different library services and service models as well as different governing and funding models and evaluate which models might best serve their communities.
The Board receives at least 3 hours of continuing education each year.	The Board receives at least 6 hours of continuing education every year.	Boards within a federation work together to identify and participate in regional continuing education opportunities that benefit the boards in that federation.
	At least 1 board member is certified by the Montana State Library	Libraries within a federation encourage and attempt to have at least 25% of their board members become certified.
	The Board has a process for identifying what skills are needed on the board and seeks new board members that can fill those needs.	Board members within federations provide assistance to one another by loaning their skillsets or knowledge to another board within the federation.
	The Board evaluates their work annually.	

Public Library Standards Road Map

Revenue

Our community members receive library services sufficient unto their needs because the library is well-funded and managed by the board and director.

Essential	Excellent	Cooperative
The Board understands the revenue sources that fund the library and the budgeting process and adopts a budget for the library accordingly.	Board members are strong library advocates and receive training about advocacy at least every year.	Boards within a federation work together to identify additional funding sources that would benefit libraries in the region.
For a library created under Title 7 or Title 22 at least 70% of the revenue of a library is from local tax revenues. Grants, donations, and other revenue sources supplement but do not supplant local tax support. If a tribal college library serves tribal members, the Tribal Council recognizes and supports the efforts of the library to obtain funding.	90% of local tax revenue funds support the services and personnel necessary to achieve the essential standards. Grants, private funds, supplement and help libraries meet the excellent standards. If a tribal college library serves tribal members, the Tribal Council recognizes and supports the efforts of the library to obtain funding.	The Library leverages local revenue by participating in regional and statewide collaborative library services.
The library budget shows year-to-year growth reflecting the needs of the community. If the library board and director are unable to reflect the growth necessary to keep up with the needs of the community, they document that they have made their local government officials aware of the fact that the library budget is not keeping up with costs.	Every five years the library board seeks additional mills for the library to sustain and grow services for the community.	Libraries evaluate whether or not regional library districts may provide more services and stable funding.
If the library is a department of local government, the library receives equitable support for its budget when compared to other departments in local government. If the library receives less funding and support as compared to other departments, the library director and Board document that they have made local government officials aware of this fact.		Boards and directors work together across the state to advocate for increased funding for all libraries.

Public Library Standards Road Map

Planning and Evaluation

Our community members receive library services sufficient unto their needs because the board and director make planning and evaluation a routine part of their work.

Essential	Excellent	Cooperative
The Board and Director identify in writing what they want to accomplish in the next 3-5 years, and that plan is focused on meeting community needs. The Board and Director annually review their plan and progress made.	The library evaluates the degree to which everyone in their community has access to library content and services, sufficient unto their needs. From this inclusive, ongoing individual-based discovery process, the library devises a community-based plan for addressing their community's needs. The plan is reviewed annually and updated, as needed.	Boards and directors within a federation work together to identify and create collaborative goals that improve services for residents within the federation boundaries. Directors and/or their designees are responsible for implementing those goals.
The Board adopts emergency response plans that ensure the safety of the public and staff as the primary priority.	The Board and Director can succinctly communicate to the public about the library's long-range plan - specifically what is in the plan and progress on achieving the plan.	Board and directors across the state work with other libraries to identify statewide initiatives that will improve services to all Montanans. Directors and/or their designees are responsible for the logistics related to participation in statewide initiatives.
The Director or designee submits the Montana Public Library Annual Statistical Report to the Montana State Library. The Board and Director annually review public library statistics.	The Board and Director are data-inspired when planning, evaluating and communicating about library services.	
Library board and director review the most current Public Library Standards Road Map maintained by the Montana State Library.		

Policy

Our community members have access to library services sufficient unto their needs because the Board and Director regularly review and adopt policies for library services.

Essential	Excellent	Cooperative
The Board adopts and regularly reviews policies that reflect the mission and goals of the library. The policies govern use of the library, its materials, and services. No single policy goes more than 4 years without review.	The Board and Director review library policies to identify and remove potential barriers to use that may exist for all members - including marginalized members of the community.	Library boards work with other nearby libraries to create seamless library experiences for the patron through joint library policy development.

Public Library Standards Road Map

Access to library services

Everyone has easy access to library services.

Essential	Excellent	Cooperative
The library is open convenient hours. At a minimum the library is open at least the following number of hours weekly: Less than 3,500 people Minimum: 15 hours Desirable: 25-40hours 3,501 – 9,999 people Minimum: 30 hours Desirable: 40-50 hours 10,000-24,999 people Minimum: 40 hours Desirable: 50-60 hours	Everyone has safe, comfortable and convenient access to community destinations and public places—whether walking, driving, bicycling, or taking public transportation through the work of the library and other local community organizations. Everyone is able to use library services because the library has adopted a fine free policy that balances personal responsibility with the recognition that overdue fines can be a barrier. Everyone feels welcome because library staff attend training that helps staff identify implicit bias and how to overcome that bias.	Everyone within a region is able to use libraries within that area because the libraries have agreed to provide services to anyone within that area. Everyone has seamless access to library services because libraries participating in sharing groups have agreed to take down the walls and act as one library.
Everyone has safe, comfortable, and convenient access to the library and its services.		

Collection

Everyone has access to resources sufficient unto their needs.

Essential	Excellent	Cooperative
Everyone has access to updated and regularly maintained physical and digital library content and services. Everyone can find library materials online.	Everyone has access to materials that reflect community culture and languages – both present and historical. Libraries provide mobile access for searching and retrieving library materials.	Everyone has access to a wide range of materials because the library participates in cooperative collection development. Libraries join shared integrated library systems to provide seamless access for everyone in the county or region.

Programming

Everyone has access to programming sufficient unto their needs.

Essential	Excellent	Cooperative
Everyone has access to virtual and face-to-face programming. Children and caregivers have access to early literacy programming and materials either through the library or by being directed to another community organization that specializes in early literacy.	Everyone has access to programming for all ages, ethnicities, income levels, and abilities. This programming reflects community needs and interests. Children and caregivers are offered early literacy programming through the library.	Libraries within a federation collaborate together to offer regional programming options for everyone within that federation.
	Everyone can create and develop content because of programming or technology offered by the library.	Everyone within a region has access to content creation technology and programming because libraries within a federation or region collaborate to purchase the technology and materials needed for more

Public Library Standards Road Map

Public Relations

Everyone is aware of library services.

Essential	Excellent	Cooperative
Everyone has access to information about library programs and services through internal and external marketing efforts of library staff.	Everyone is aware of library services because the library has access to a staff member or outside contractor with marketing experience.	Library staff participate in local, state, and national marketing/public relations efforts for the benefit of the library and potentially other libraries.
Everyone has access to a library website or social media site.	Library has a community support group such as a Friends or a Foundation to advocate for the library and provide funding.	
	Library cultivates donors.	
	Everyone advocates for the library.	
	Library staff support local businesses by purchasing items locally, when feasible.	

Resource Sharing

Everyone has access to resources sufficient unto their needs.

Essential	Excellent	Cooperative
Everyone can obtain materials and services from another library through interlibrary loan or sharing group services.		Everyone can access an increased number of materials because of the library's participation in a sharing group.

Technology

Everyone has access to technology sufficient unto their needs.

Essential	Excellent	Cooperative
Everyone has access to the Internet via a wired and WIFI connections.	Everyone has access to sufficiently reliable and speedy Internet at their library.	Libraries within a federation collaborate to purchase or contract for regional IT support that benefits all libraries in the region.
People with disabilities have access to technology and assistance with using that technology.	Everyone has access to Internet ready devices that can be used in the library or at home.	

Public Library Standards Road Map

Personnel

Our community members receive library services sufficient unto their needs because staff are trained and have the tools and support they need to succeed.

Essential	Excellent	Cooperative
Staff members are offered health insurance according to local policy.	All community members see themselves reflected in the staff, volunteers, or board because the library board and/or director make every effort to recruit and select staff, volunteers, and board members that represent community demographics, with emphasis on recruiting under-represented community groups.	
Staff members are offered retirement benefits according to local policy.	The Board reviews staff and director salaries to see if they are compensated at whichever rate is higher - the salaries of other city or county staff with similar jobs or other directors and staff of libraries with similar size staff and budgets.	
The Board adopts a sufficient budget for continuing education.		Libraries within a federation encourage and attempt to have at least 25% of their staff become certified.
During 90 % of open hours, paid staff are available to assist users.	During all open hours, paid staff are available to assist users.	Libraries within a federation share staff to encourage the exchange of ideas, learn more about other libraries, and to provide assistance when a library is in need.
Staff have the tools and training they need to perform their work.	Staff receive recognition when they certify and maintain their certification by the Montana State Library.	
The director is or will be certified by the Montana State Library within the required timeframe mandated by the certification program adopted by the Montana State Library Commission.	Directors of any size library have a college degree or equivalent experience.	
Directors of libraries that serve over 25,000 people have a Master of Library Science or equivalent degree.		