
Board Policy



Board Policy on Trustee Ethics, Conduct and Responsibility

Policy Statement

Libraries are foundational to democratic self governance and a free society. Oversight of the Pierce County Library System (PCLS) is a privilege and a public trust which carries with it certain responsibilities. Board members must demonstrate individually and collectively the highest standards of honor and integrity to maintain citizens' trust in the Library as an institution of self governance. Conduct which contravenes that public trust is grounds for recommending to the Pierce County Council removal from the Board of Trustees.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set forth minimum standards of ethical conduct and responsibilities not enumerated in the PCLS By-laws or in other Board policies.

Policy

1. Trustees shall uphold the mission of the Library to provide access to everyone to information, ideas, programs, facilities and resources without bias or discrimination.
2. Trustees shall uphold patrons' rights guaranteed in the United States Constitution, including rights to privacy and free speech.
3. Trustees shall give fair hearing to comments and concerns expressed by members of the public, and shall allow Library staff ample opportunity to address such comments and concerns before acting on them at a meeting of the Board.
4. Trustees shall attend Board meetings regularly, prepared to participate constructively, and shall engage in the Board's decision-making process.
5. Trustees have a responsibility to express their unique viewpoint and draw from their personal expertise when deliberating business before the Board.
6. Trustees shall respect the opinions of their fellow trustees and conduct themselves with respect and decorum when they disagree or oppose a viewpoint different from their own.
7. Trustees shall acknowledge and support the formal position of the Board after the Board has engaged in a full and open discussion, which may include casting of dissenting votes.
8. Trustees must distinguish clearly between their personal philosophies, opinions and positions and those of the Library, acknowledging and supporting the formal position of the Board, even if they disagree.
9. Trustees shall recognize the authority delegated to the Executive Director and shall not interfere in the management and day-to-day operations of the Library.
10. Trustees must abide by the Board policy on Conflict of Interest.
11. Trustees shall not disclose confidential information gained while serving as a Trustee, nor use such information for personal gain.
12. Trustees shall pursue opportunities to improve their knowledge and understanding of PCLS, libraries in general, and changing conditions which may impact the way the Library provides service to citizens.

Adopted by the Pierce County Rural Library District Board of Trustees, February 11, 2015.