

Board Discussion Starter

**Board Development and Evaluation**

Trustees bring a diversity of experiences, skills, knowledge, and questions to public library board work. Board policies and practices vary across the province and BCLTA is focused on common issues of common concern for board development. Your board chair, your library director, and BCLTA all have a role in helping you find further resources specific to your needs. The Libraries Branch staff are available for all questions regarding the Library Act.

Your board development and evaluation discussions might cover a wide range of topics such as:

* Identifying the role and responsibilities of the board, of individual trustees, of the board chair and of the library director for successful governance.
* Reviewing strategic directions, policies, and legislative framework (starting with the Library Act) for governance context and for identifying upcoming board development needs.
* Articulating desired and necessary board competencies.
* Creating a board development plan for your library type, size, and location.
* Making sense of evaluation tools and results.
* Recognizing and articulating the important role of your library director in board development.

**Resources**

**Board Roles and Responsibilities**

[*Duties and Responsibilities of the Library Board*](https://nvdpl.ca/sites/default/files/BG-GOV-01.4_DutiesAndResponsibilitiesOfTheBoard.pdf), North Vancouver District Public Library, 2016.

* Concise, easy to digest document.
* Provides a guiding principle approach to establishing the boards governance and oversight roles and responsibilities and the library director’s operational management role and responsibilities.

[“Ontario Public Library Governance at a Glance”](http://accessola.com/olba/pdf/cut_to_the_chase.pdf), *Cut to the Chase*. Ontario Library Board Association, 2007.

* Highly accessible, useful and applicable information regarding the role and responsibilities of the board.
* Explicit and useful points for clarifying governance versus operations. For example board financial oversight does mean ensuring that financial policies are in place and does not mean challenging a miniscule amount on a budget line.

**Board Development**

[BCLTA Trustee Orientation Checklist](https://www.bclta.ca/trustee-education/trustee-orientation-checklist/)

[BCLTA Trustee Orientation Program](https://www.bclta.ca/trustee-education/what-is-top/)

[*Library Board Development Kit*](https://www.sols.org/files/docs/develop/publications/current/Kit2014-full_document-Final.pdf), Southern Ontario Library Services (Province of Ontario funded Agency), 2014.

* Due to the level of detail in this document, please use carefully as it very much reflects the *Ontario Library Act*, which has key differences from the *BC Library Act*.

[Building Your Board Development Committee](https://www.thevantagepoint.ca/resources/building-your-board-development-committee), Vantage Point, 2016.

* Freely available downloadable toolkit that will support your board in creating a board development committee.

[The best board member orientation: How to set your new directors immediately up for success](https://charityvillage.com/cms/content/topic/the_best_board_member_orientation_how_to_set_your_new_directors_immediately_up_for_success/last/161#.XEencC0ZPdd)

* Susan Fish, October 5, 2016, Charity Village

Imagine Canada

* [Board Development](http://sectorsource.ca/standards-community/standards-reference-guide/standard-a23-board-development)
* [Board Development Explained](http://sectorsource.ca/resource/glossary/standard-a23-explained)
* While this is not directly applicable to BC public library boards, which operate according the BC Library Act, there are important points made regarding the need for a board development plan that is aligned with organizational priorities, supports individual trustee development and board success, and is purposeful in the use of organizational funds for board expenses.

**Evaluation**

Vancouver Public Library Board Self-Evaluation Tool (2016)

* This useful tool was shared out to the public library boards and library directors through the ABCPLD listserv. Please ask your library director for a copy.

[A Library Board’s Practical Guide to Board Self-Evaluation](http://www.ala.org/united/sites/ala.org.united/files/content/training/trustee_academy/board-self-evaluation.pdf). United for Libraries (American Library Association), 2008.

* Use with caution; this resource is dated and has a US focus, but is highly adaptable to the common needs of BC public library boards.
* Useful for discussing the purpose of evaluations, board competencies, and areas for evaluation.

[Toronto Public Library Board, Self-Evaluation, 2017 Results](https://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/about-the-library/pdfs/board/meetings/2018/jan29/16-tplb-self-evaluation-2017-results-combined.pdf).

* January 29, 2018 board report which includes an “Issue Background” for the reasoning for board evaluation along with the board evaluation tool and results.

[Best Practices for Board Evaluation](https://www.boardeffect.com/blog/best-practices-for-board-evaluations/), Board Effect (2016)

Contact BCLTA to add your resources, templates, or policies to this Discussion Starter.