

# Trustee Training and Certification

Well-informed, knowledgeable public library trustees help create better libraries. Trustees hold a position of trust and are responsible for financial oversight of the library, hiring and evaluating the library director, representing the best interests of their community, and complying with and upholding library law. These are serious responsibilities that the North Suburban Library System (NSLS) would like to help prepare you to perform. Working with a task force of trustees and directors, NSLS has designed a core curriculum and certification program. Trustees will gain the knowledge they need to effectively do their jobs and be acknowledged for their efforts. The true reward will be outstanding libraries providing excellent service to their communities.

## CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Before trustees can be considered for certification, they **must have a current library card** from the institution which they serve. Individuals as well as entire boards may work toward a level of accreditation, based on the following criteria:

### Bronze Level

**Individual** Attend all Core Training Courses

**Board** Fifty percent of all board members have attained bronze level certification.

### Silver Level

**Individual** Attend all Core Training Courses and participate in three Core Activities.

**Board** All board members have attained silver level certification.

### Gold Level

**Individual** Attend all six Core Training Courses and participate in all five Core Activities.

**Board** All board members have attained gold level certification.

## CORE ACTIVITIES

Participation in the online and video courses, state and national conferences, and other activities listed below provide unique instructional content and essential networking opportunities. The wide varieties of activities are included to broaden your vision and expertise.

### **WebJunction Classes**

Complete two Web-based classes (<http://il.webjunction.org/home>) that were developed by the Illinois State Library, Illinois Library Systems, and librarians from across Illinois, and designed to be of particular use to trustees.

### **Board Brief Videos**

View two brief videos, either online (<http://il.webjunction.org/home/-/articles/content/2868360>) or ask your library director for the DVD. These videos were created with grant funding and are designed to provide trustees with an overview of the Open Meetings Act and the Model Ethics Ordinance.

### **Library Visit**

Arrange one “behind the scenes” tour of your own or another library. This tour should include a visit to briefly observe the daily functions of each department in the library. A list of NSLS libraries with their phone numbers and addresses can be found at [www.nsls.info/members](http://www.nsls.info/members). The best way to find out how other libraries do things is to have library staff and trustees host a detailed tour.

### **Library Promotion**

Write an article or create a presentation about your library. Another option is to participate in a trustee meet and greet session in your library. Some helpful tips can be found at [www.nsls.info/marketing](http://www.nsls.info/marketing). Learning to “tell your library’s story” is an essential skill for trustees in regards to raising awareness of the library with community members, legislators, and local officials.

### **Library Events**

Attend at least three of the following meetings and conferences at the local, state, and national level:

- **NSLS Legislative Breakfast**  
[www.nsls.info/breakfast](http://www.nsls.info/breakfast)
- **NSLS Board Meeting**  
[www.nsls.info/about/board](http://www.nsls.info/about/board)
- **Board Meeting of another library**  
[www.nsls.info/members](http://www.nsls.info/members)
- **Illinois Library Association Annual Conference**  
[www.ila.org](http://www.ila.org)
- **Illinois Library Day (Springfield)**  
[www.ila.org](http://www.ila.org)
- **American Library Association Annual Conference**  
[www.ala.org/annual](http://www.ala.org/annual)
- **National Library Legislative Day (Washington D.C.)**  
[www.ala.org/nlld](http://www.ala.org/nlld)
- **Public Library Association Annual Conference**  
[www.ala.org/pla](http://www.ala.org/pla)

## **CORE TRAINING CLASSES**

### **Library Trustee Basics & Upholding Library Standards**

Understanding the duties, actions, and skills required of the position is vital to functioning as an effective trustee. An overview of what is expected of the public library trustee will be provided, as well as instruction on how to utilize the book *Serving Our Public* as a starting point to understanding the value of standards and what it takes to create policies and procedures.

### **Conducting Effective Meetings**

Understanding the duties, actions, and skills required of the position is vital to functioning as an effective trustee. An overview of what is expected of the public library trustee will be provided, as will an introduction to philosophical issues such as intellectual freedom and the patron's right to privacy.

### **Creating an Effective Relationship between the Trustee and the Library Director**

Understanding the duties, actions, and skills required of the position is vital to functioning as an effective trustee. An overview of what is expected of the public library trustee will be provided, as will an introduction to philosophical issues such as intellectual freedom and the patron's right to privacy.

### **Basic Library Law and Unraveling the Mysteries of the Open Meetings Act, Model Ethics Ordinance, and Freedom of Information Act**

Conforming to the laws governing public libraries in the Illinois State Statutes assures good governance. Complying with the Model Ethics Ordinance and Open Meetings and Freedom of Information Acts is a legal requirement for trustees. Guiding you through the legal basics and a working knowledge of these acts, the speakers will provide an overview and understanding of library law and help you determine when to consult a professional.

### **Deciphering the Library Budget and Unlocking the Puzzle of Tax Caps, Levies, and Referenda**

A firm grasp of public library finance and budgeting is essential to the trustee's role as shepherd of public funds. Navigating the library's budget through the tax process requires trustees to be knowledgeable about taxes, tax caps, levies, and referenda. An overview of the process and a description of the trustee's role and responsibilities will be provided.

### **Advocating for Your Library**

Representing, promoting, and advocating for the public library is a crucial component of being a library trustee. This program will familiarize participants with the rationale for library advocacy, provide an understanding of what it means to represent the library, and outline methods for being a library supporter.

**For program dates, presenters, and to register for classes visit the Library Learning (L2) Calendar: [www.librarylearning.info](http://www.librarylearning.info)**