

Executive Summary: Fundraising Culture Survey. Washington District Libraries.

The District's January 2019 Fundraising Culture Assessment was taken from the Board Source booklet: [Fearless Fundraising for Non-profit Boards](#) by Dave Sternberg. (Professional Collection)

The top three responsibilities of the non-profit, library board are:

1. Secure adequate funding;
2. Hire a qualified Executive Director to manage the day-to-day operations;
3. Set library policies.

State Aid ranks 7th in the nation; but, local government funding for libraries ranks **49th**! Advocacy and building/maintaining relationships within your communities and with your local municipalities should be a priority and a key part of your board's annual calendar of events.

Out of the almost 300 board members emailed, the survey received 59 board member responses. (The survey was emailed twice by the District Services Manager and Directors were asked to remind their boards.)

Results that raise concerns:

1. 50.72% indicated that their board does not have an annual Board Member Agreement.
2. Of those that have a Board Member Agreement, 23.19% indicated that personal giving and fundraising are NOT included in that agreement.
3. Only 26.03% indicated that all board members make an annual donation to their library.

Every non-profit board should have a board member job description and an annual Board Member Agreement that outlines the expectations for every member for the upcoming year. Board Members who are fully committed to their roles and responsibilities will appreciate the guidance and the assurance that all members are on the same page. Sample board member job descriptions and agreements can be found within the PANO resources (each District Library is a member). Examples can also be found online. Your District Library Consultant can also provide you with examples.

Annual giving by library board members should be 100%. **WHAT** you give is not as important as **THAT** you give. A board member that doesn't give, has no credibility when asking others to give. If you don't care enough to give, why should they. "In-kind" contributions of time and talent are incredibly important, but do not pay the utility bills. Your connections within the community and your tireless advocacy are essential to the sustainability and continued success of your community's library.

Foundations will reject applications from non-profits who can't claim 100% giving from their boards.

4. 51.35% surveyed do not have a fundraising committee;
5. 53.42% do not have a fundraising plan or calendar.

It is not the responsibility of the Executive Director to raise the funds to operate the library. Each board member plays a role in advocating, developing relationships and asking for sustainable local government funding. In November of each year, when the board is developing next year's budget, an advocacy and fundraising plan should be crafted. Part of that plan includes an annual calendar of municipal meetings, community events and stakeholder meetings with clear board member roles and expectations. Yes, your Executive Director is building relationships within the community and is the "face" of the library, but the long-term stewardship and cultivation responsibilities belong to the board.

Securing sustainable funding to provide excellent library and information services is the role of the board.