

KDLA October 2012 Trustee Tip of the Month

Trustee Continuing Education: KDLA Resources

A well-rounded board has diverse members from all parts of the community and with a variety of life-skills and knowledge which they use in serving on the board. This pool of knowledge allows the board to operate effectively in pursuing the goal of providing the best possible library service to the community. Governing libraries, however, is a bit different than running a business in that there are special laws that apply to how library business is conducted and, because you are entrusted with public funds there is a need to ensure transparency in how you handle fiscal responsibilities and how you operate. Because of these special concerns, the most effective boards have trustees who spend some time in continuing education to expand their knowledge of library-specific information and practices.

KDLA assists trustees in expanding their knowledge of library governance and evolving library services. For a new trustee, the first step is the trustee orientation provided by your library director and your regional librarian. The library director will ensure that you have a tour of the library and introduce you to the staff and the current programs and services available. In addition, you will be provided with important library documents, such as the board's bylaws, the library's strategic plan, policies, and other important documents that will give you important background information. Your KDLA regional librarian will arrange to meet with you to provide an orientation that will introduce you to the basics of library governance and KDLA services.

Once you have completed your orientation, you can participate in the KDLA Trustee Certification program. To achieve Certification, the library director will apply for a Temporary Certificate for you and then you can take the 5 prescribed, one-hour courses that are available on the KDLA website at: <http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/trustees/Pages/TrusteeCertification.aspx>. Upon completion of these courses, the trustee receives a certificate that is good for 4 years.

Once you are certified, any training received on any of the Public Library Trustee Core Skills will count toward renewal of your certification. These Core Skills include: The Board and the Director's Position (roles and responsibilities); Effective Board Organization; Budget and Finance; Creating Effective Library Policies; Planning and Advocacy.

Trustee certification is voluntary and making continuing education a priority demonstrates to the public, legislators, and other officials, the board's commitment to maintaining a high degree of knowledge in the intricacies of library operations, governance, and fiscal responsibility.

KDLA also provides a monthly report and *Trustee Tip* to supply information on current events and on issues you will encounter as a library board trustee. Archived issues of the *Trustee Tip* are available at: <http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/trustees/Pages/TrusteeTips.aspx>.

Also available is the Kentucky Library News Digest. This is sent out via e-mail 4-5 times a week and contains abstracts of articles about library events and issues of interest. It is a great resource to keep up-to-date with library-related ideas and issues, both in Kentucky and elsewhere. To receive the Digest, just e-mail your request to Nikole.Wolfe@ky.gov.

KDLA also provides a calendar with online training opportunities and most of these are available at no charge to library personnel and trustees. You can find and register for upcoming webinars and other online training events at: <http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/staffdevelopment/Pages/ContinuingEducationCalendar.aspx>.

Next month we'll share some additional resources for continuing education.