

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## Overview

Your “community” is integral to any decision you make concerning library operations. Libraries and communities have an interdependent relationship. Our communities provide us with our funding, with opportunities to collaborate, and advocates. A library contributes to the economic health of the community, collects the memories of the community, and provides a place where people can explore, get access to resources, share ideas, and be transformed. The library is also an asset that can be of great value while addressing other community-wide problems.

The Library Governing Authority and staff search for opportunities to cooperate with other community organizations including public libraries, other types of libraries, other governmental agencies, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector in order to embed ourselves in the community and ensure healthy communities that understand the value of our libraries.

The library uses many means to reach out and cooperate with the community in order to stay knowledgeable about their needs. In addition, opportunities for community involvement within the library are also made available to volunteers. Cooperation may include sharing of resources, staff expertise, training opportunities, or other joint activities. Staff representation in other community organizations is essential in complying with this standard.

The library has a Friends group and/or a Foundation that assists the library in fundraising, advocacy and reaching out to the community. Resources from these organizations are not used to replace the operating budget.

## Community Engagement Checklist

- ☐ **1. Understand the importance of community-wide connections by supporting and meeting with local groups.**
- ☐ **2. Establish cooperative agreements between the library and other local governmental agencies for shared services.**
- ☐ **3. Collect, organize, and provide information about community organizations and issues.**
- ☐ **4. Participate in cooperative planning and programming with community agencies and share associated costs.**
- ☐ **5. Participate as both active members and leaders of community organizations and groups.**
- ☐ **6. Welcome community volunteers as defined by a written volunteer policy.**
- ☐ **7. Ensure that there is a staff person who is responsible for volunteer coordination and training.**
- ☐ **8. Maintain a formal Friends or Foundation group that meets on a regular basis with a staff liaison present.**
- ☐ **9. Library staff, Friends and the community are involved in cooperative long range plans and fundraising activities.**
- ☐ **10. Account for Friends fundraising separately, and do not use those funds for normal operating expenses.**
- ☐ **11. Make clear distinctions about the responsibilities of a Friends group and a Foundation.**
- ☐ **12. Collect statistics and conduct output measures, customer surveys, community studies, citizen surveys, and other means appropriate to the service program and resources of the library in order to remain relevant to the community.**
- ☐ **13. Build “social capital” through civic engagement of other means.**