

Connecting with Local Government

Webinar Series Discussion Guide



Connecting with Local Government Officials

[Handbook](#)

[MSL Learn Course](#) (1 CE Credit – Library Administration)

[Local Government Webinar Series](#) – (up to 4.5 CE Credits – Library Administration)

How to Use the Discussion Guide

For Boards

Please review the questions before watching videos. The questions are designed to prompt discussion about what you learned and how to apply it.

For Directors

Please work with the board to decide on a process for viewing these videos. Share the questions prior to watching the videos. While you can view all of the videos in the series, it's okay to select one(s) that are most relevant to your library.

Record Completion for the Public Library Standards

If your Board Continuing Education plan includes all or some of the videos in this series, you can record completion toward fulfilling the 3-hour requirement in the Administrative Rules of Montana 10.102.1158 (4).

1. At the beginning of the fiscal year create a continuing education plan. Include topics, who will do the training, how and when the training will occur. [Sample Video Training Plan](#)
2. Adopt the plan as an agenda item at a regular meeting of the Board.
3. Including continuing education sessions in your public meeting notice and minutes is an easy way to document achieving the standard.

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Series Introduction

Join Tracy Cook, Lead Consulting Librarian, for this introduction to resources and an ongoing series of learning opportunities to help build communication strategies and understanding between libraries and local government officials.

33 minutes

[Video Link](#)

Before viewing the webinar

1. Why should the library invest in building relationships with local government?
2. Which government officials should the library build a relationship with over time?

After the webinar

1. What are some of the problems facing your city or county officials?
2. How might the library help with some of those issues?
3. Have your answers to the pre-webinar questions changed? How so?

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How Libraries Add Value

Join Tracy Cook, MSL Lead Consulting Librarian, and Dr. Gregory Gilpin, Montana State University Economist to learn about an economist's view of how libraries add value to their communities.

46 minutes, 3 seconds

[Video Link](#)

Before viewing the webinar

1. How does the library add value to the community?
2. What do community members gain as a result of having access to the library? What do they value?

After the webinar

1. When you look at your list of what the community values and what Dr. Gilpin mentioned, would you add something to the list? If so, what?
2. After hearing about the framework for talking to local government officials, what message would you like to relay to your local government officials?
3. What community value does the library help address? How does the library add value and what resources does the library need to meet that community need?

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Literacy and Libraries

Join State Librarian Jennie Stapp as she interviews Crosby Kemper, recently retired Institute of Museum and Library Services Director, about libraries, literacy, and how to join forces with local governments in solving issues around literacy in our communities.

59 minutes, 4 seconds

[Video Link](#)

Before viewing the webinar

1. What is literacy?
2. How does your library help with literacy?
3. Who else works on literacy in your community? Are you partnering with any of them?

After the webinar

1. What resonated with you? What did Crosby say that really made sense to you?
2. Was there anything you disagreed with, and if so, what?
3. After hearing Crosby speak, how would you answer the question about how your library helps with literacy? How does being literate help children, parents, and adults?
4. If your library hasn't focused much on literacy and it seems like a good fit, what ideas do you have for supporting literacy efforts in your community?

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Webinar Series Discussion Guide



Better Libraries, Better Achievement, Better Futures

Tracy Cook hosted Ezra Karger for a conversation about how investment in libraries contributes to education outcomes in communities. Learn about continuing research that connects academic achievement to the quality and quantity of investment in library programs for kids.

50 minutes, 57 seconds

[Video Link](#)

Before viewing the webinar

1. What do you know about literacy levels in your community?
2. How are children in your community doing – when it comes to reading scores? Check with your local schools or search the Office of Public Instructions' website for specific scores at your schools.

After the webinar

1. Were you surprised about what the data revealed about libraries, facilities, and test scores? Why or why not?
2. After watching the webinar how would you explain why investing in the library building would be a good thing for the community?
3. How could the library collect data that helps them show what children are gaining from attending library programs? Would this be valuable and worth the investment of time? Why or why not?

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Do Public Libraries Help Mitigate Crime?

Libraries provide physical and digital spaces where community members connect with one another, information, and ideas. The library's role in helping with literacy and success in school has been shared in previous webinars. In this installment of our webinar series, Tracy Cook and Dr. Amir B. Ferreira Neto will explore the idea of whether libraries help mitigate crime.

59 minutes, 7 seconds

[Video Link](#)

Before viewing the webinar

1. Do you think public libraries help mitigate crime? Why or why not?

After the webinar

1. What are some of the ways libraries help mitigate crime – both short-term and long-term?
2. How might you use the information you learned in this webinar?