

Ontario Library Service Board

Composition of the Board

The Ontario Library Service is governed by a 13-member volunteer board. Board members are drawn from the boards of our client libraries, elected from the nine Board Assemblies. Four members are appointed by the Ontario Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. The Board serves without remuneration. The next term runs from June 2024 until June 2028. Elections will be held at the Spring 2024 Board Assembly meetings. To be eligible to run for election, one must be appointed to the Board Assembly by a library board. The board member shall hold office until the end of the term as above, or until they resign.

Role of the Board

The board, on behalf of the people of Ontario as represented by the Minister with jurisdiction for public libraries, will govern Ontario Library Service with a strategic perspective.

The board will govern with a style that emphasizes:

- A provincial vision, rather than a local focus
- Commitment to diversity and respecting different viewpoints
- Governance and strategic leadership
- The future, while considering past and present
- Collaboration

As a member of the OLS board, your duty will be to act with honesty and good faith and in the best interest of all provincial libraries. Individuals interested in serving on the Board should be forward thinking and openminded, aware of library issues, focused on improving library services, and tolerant of different styles. This board is not about local library issues, rather services to libraries at the provincial level.

Board Job Description

According to the Policy Governance Model, the work of the board is to represent its ownership in determining and challenging appropriate organizational performance. To distinguish the board's own unique role from the jobs of its staff, the board will concentrate its efforts on the following outputs:

1. The link between the organization and its ownership with the appropriate ministry.
2. Written governing policies which address:
 - a. Ends: Organizational products, impacts, benefits, outcomes, recipients, and their relative worth (what process for which needs at what cost).
 - b. Executive Limitations: Constraints on executive authority which establish the prudence and ethics boundaries within which all executive activity and decisions must take place.
 - c. Governance Process: Specification of how the board conceives, achieves, and monitors its own tasks.

- d. Board-CEO Relationship: How power is delegated, and its proper use monitored; the CEO role authority and accountability.
3. The assurance of CEO performance.
4. The assurance of funding through:
 - a. Advocating and promoting for optimal funding from the provincial government.
 - b. Pursuing a variety of funding and resource development activities that support OLS priorities.

Board Meetings

There are three board meetings a year - October, February and June which is followed by an Annual General Meeting. Currently, the board meets on Saturday, but the schedule may change. Board meetings are held virtually.

Board meetings are structured as follows:

- Discussions under Linkage Development typically address plans for contacts with the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport, MPPs, and our client libraries. The Board's ownership policy describes our ownership as "the people of Ontario as represented by the Minister with jurisdiction for public libraries".
- The Board follows a cycle of policy review so that all policies are addressed, at a minimum, once every four years.
- Funding has two main sources - the provincial government which is the primary OLS funder, and individual donors.
- The CEO's performance is assured through a cycle of monitoring reports which address compliance with policies. There is also an annual formal review.
- The Board also evaluates its own performance on an annual basis.

Work between meetings tends to focus on linkage development and assurance of funding. Typically, board members will be involved in advocacy, reporting at Board Assembly meetings and fundraising.

Board Assemblies

- Agendas are created and the meeting led by OLS consultants. They include information sharing and updates on various issues of concern to public library boards, and updates from representatives of OLBA and FOPL.
- When choosing a nomination for the OLS board, each library is entitled to only one vote in its assigned Board Assembly by the officially designated library board representative.
- Library boards are welcome to send additional board members to Board Assembly meetings, and to attend meetings other than their assigned Board Assembly.
- Board Assembly members are encouraged to suggest topics of interest for agendas.