

Slide 1

Trustee Topics 19
Library Director Certification

Slide 2

Background

- The Wisconsin Legislature has declared that it is the policy of the state to provide laws for the development and improvement of public libraries. Librarian certification has been part of Wisconsin law since 1921, when the legislature, at the urging of the Wisconsin Library Association, passed the first comprehensive state public librarian certification law.
- Wisconsin's current public librarian certification law reflects a continuing interest in ensuring that qualified personnel direct Wisconsin's public libraries. The law requires a broad educational background, as well as coursework designed to focus on the issues and concerns relevant in a public library setting. The law also recognizes the need for public librarians to increase their skills and knowledge and be prepared for the challenges and responsibilities.

Slide 3

Library Board Responsibilities

- Public library boards are required to hire library directors who are currently either appropriately certified or eligible for certification. Only libraries with properly certified library directors can be members of a library system.
- A regular certificate signifies that the holder meets all of the general education and library education requirements for the grade level. A temporary certificate signifies that the holder meets all of the general education requirements but not all of the library education requirements for the grade level. Temporary certificates are valid for only a limited time period before they must be replaced with regular certificates. An uncertified new library director needing a temporary certificate must apply for it within three months of the date of hire

Slide 4

Summary of Certification Requirements

- Grade I: Administrators of municipal, joint, and county public libraries with a municipal, joint municipal, or county population of 6,000 or more, and administrators of public library systems are required to hold grade I certificates. Educational requirements: Bachelor's Degree from a college or university approved by an accrediting association of more than statewide standing and a Master's Degree from a library school program accredited by the American Library Association (ALA) or a Master's Degree from an unaccredited library school program if the division is satisfied that the program leading to that degree is substantially equivalent and the applicant's professional experience is demonstrative of the ability to provide professional library services.

Slide 5

Summary of Certification Requirements

- Grade II: Administrators of municipal, joint, and county public libraries with a municipal, joint municipal or county population between 3,000 and 5,999 are required to hold at least grade II certificates. Educational requirements: Bachelor's Degree from a college or university approved by an accrediting association of more than statewide standing, including or supplemented by twelve semester credits for the following courses: Basic Public Library Administration, Advanced Public Library Administration, Organization and Management of Collections, Public and Community Services OR Bachelor's Degree with a minor in Library Science and completion of Advanced Public Library Administration.

Slide 6

Summary of Certification Requirements

- Grade III: Administrators of municipal, joint, and county public libraries with a municipal, joint municipal or county population representing a population under 3,000 are required to hold at least grade III certificates. Educational requirements: For initial certification, 54 college semester credits (including at least 27 in the liberal arts and sciences) at a college or university approved by an accrediting association of more than statewide standing, including or supplemented by 12 semester credits of coursework or the equivalent, approved by the Division, in the following areas: Basic Public Library Administration, Advanced Public Library Administration, Organization and Management of Collections, Public and Community Services.

Slide 7

Continuing Education

- Library directors are required to participate in continuing education activities in order to maintain their certification. These activities may be library system workshops, college courses, Wisconsin Library Association general and unit conferences, or a variety of other educational programs — as long as the activities are directly related to the individuals' position or will permit advancement in the profession.
- Every year, librarians should report their continuing education activities to their library system continuing education validator. Every five years, as part of the recertification process, librarians must report their participation in continuing education activities. Library directors in all grades must participate in 100 hours of continuing education including at least 10 hours of technology training over the five-year period.

Slide 8