



NORTH COUNTRY LIBRARY SYSTEM

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Director: Stephen B. Bolton

January 15, 2014

In October, 2012 the North Country Public Library Directors Organization elected a System Services Advisory Committee. The committee's charge was to provide more direct participation in planning cooperative services, to give opinions to the NCLS Director and Board of Trustees, and to help build plans for productive interaction among the NCLS member libraries.

The first step for the Committee was to conduct a survey that asked members about NCLS services. The survey results are available on the NCLS web site here:

<http://ncls.northcountrylibraries.org/node/256>

The committee decided that its second task was to detail the relationship between NCLS and the member libraries, and the responsibilities that are necessary for public library service to progress in our quickly changing information environment. It is common for public library systems in New York State to have a Document of Understanding with the members, and the committee felt it was time to do something similar in our system. The NCLS Board of Trustees first received the Document of Understanding at their August 2013 meeting. It has gone through several revisions. The NCLS Board of Trustees voted at their December 2013 meeting to send the Document of Understanding to the member libraries for approval. If this is approved by a majority of the member libraries, the NCLS Board will adopt the Document of Understanding as one of their policies.

The attached Document of Understanding has four sections.

- The NCLS Core Services section outlines the functions required by NY State, plus delivery. Delivery is not a required function but the Committee decided to include it in this section.
- The NCLS Shared Services section contains services that NCLS has implemented and has always tried to improve, but, at times, may require more direct support from the members for the service to be maintained or expanded.
- The member library Requirements section lists those items that are needed for the cooperative to function efficiently, or at all.
- The member library Responsibilities section includes items for which members should always strive to meet in order to advance library services in the region.

The Document of Understanding contains well-established, traditional practices. It is a statement of principles, and strives to recognize where this cooperative stands now, and delineates the understanding that must be in place for us to meet the challenges of our rapidly changing information environment.

Libraries are a vital and necessary service in our communities. In order for libraries in our four counties to remain a relevant, dynamic and positive force, we must act in a cooperative manner. The NCLS Board of Trustees and the System Services Advisory Committee believes that this Document of Understanding is a step in that direction and urges your Board to approve it.

Please return the attached signature document by Friday April 11, 2014. Please do not hesitate to contact me with questions or comments. I am always happy to attend your Board meeting to talk about items of interest or concern.

Sincerely,



Stephen B. Bolton

The North Country Public Libraries Directors Organization's System Services Advisory Committee:

Stephen Bolton,	Director, NCLS
Sally Brown,	Director, Lowville Free Library
Dennis Eickhoff,	Director, Hepburn Library, Colton
Carol Ferlito,	Director, Oswego School District Public Library
Sandra Lamb,	Director, Sally Ploof Hunter Memorial Library, Black River
Wayne Miller,	Director, Ogdensburg Public Library
Dawn Myers,	Assistant Director, Lowville Free Library
Noreen Patterson,	Director, Phoenix Public Library
Barbara Wheeler,	Director, Roswell P. Flower Memorial Library, Watertown