

# MVLS Board of Trustees

## **Ethics Statement**

MVLS Trustees are accountable for the resources and mission of the Mohawk Valley Library System, working to see that MVLS provides the best possible service to its community.

MVLS Trustees' first responsibility is to the Mohawk Valley Library System as a whole, not to any personal interest or particular library. In every decision, trustees should be sensitive to even the appearance of impropriety. Every trustee makes a commitment to contribute the time and energy to faithfully carry out his/her duties and responsibilities effectively and with absolute truth, honor, and integrity.

All MVLS trustees affirm these principles:

1. Trustees shall comply with all the laws, rules and regulations that apply to them and to their service as MVLS trustees.
2. Trustees will listen to their colleagues and not be dismissive nor disrespectful when they disagree.
3. Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of MVLS, acknowledging and conducting themselves in accordance with the formal position of the Board even if they disagree.
4. Trustees, in fulfilling their responsibilities, shall not be swayed by partisan interests, public pressure or fear of criticism.
5. Trustees shall not use their position to gain unwarranted privileges or advantages for themselves or others, from MVLS or from those who do business with MVLS.
6. Trustees shall not engage in illegal discrimination of any kind and shall uphold library patrons' rights to privacy in the use of library and library system resources.
7. Trustees must respect the confidential nature of library user records and not improperly disclose such information. Trustees must also be aware of and in compliance with Freedom of Information laws. Trustees must ensure MVLS upholds intellectual freedom, the ALA Freedom to Read statement, and other laws and regulations assuring the freedom to read.
8. Trustees shall not speak on behalf of MVLS or the board of trustees unless specifically authorized to do so.
9. Trustees must disclose and take active steps to avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained as a result of their position or access to privileged library system information, for either themselves or others.
10. Trustees shall act in accordance with the Conflict-of-Interest Policy of MVLS and take care to disclose potential conflicts of interest as soon as possible.
11. Trustees shall timely arrive at board meetings prepared to address the items on the agenda.

Approved July 17, 2025