

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SALARY: \$100,505 TO \$130,520

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

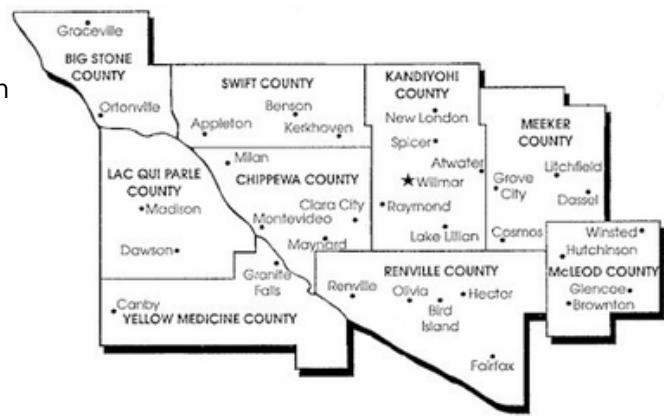
Service Area and Communities Served

Pioneerland Library System (PLS) is a well-run and stable consolidated regional public library system serving approximately 165,000 residents across nine counties in west-central Minnesota. Organized under Minnesota's regional public library statutes, the joint powers structure allows participating communities to share resources, reduce duplication, and provide broader access to library services than any single library could offer independently.

Headquartered in Willmar, Minnesota, Pioneerland coordinates and supports 32 member libraries located in Big Stone, Chippewa, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, McLeod, Meeker, Renville, Swift, and Yellow Medicine Counties. Willmar, with a population of approximately 20,000, offers a rural Minnesota lifestyle with lakes, outdoor recreation, and a strong sense of community, while remaining within reasonable access of the Twin Cities.

Member libraries (alphabetical) include:

- Appleton
- Atwater
- Benson
- Bird Island
- Brownton
- Canby
- Clara City
- Cosmos
- Dassel
- Dawson
- Fairfax
- Glencoe
- Graceville
- Granite Falls
- Grove City
- Hector
- Hutchinson
- Kerkhoven
- Lake Lillian
- Litchfield
- Madison
- Milan
- Montevideo
- New London
- Olivia
- Ortonville
- Raymond
- Renville
- Spicer
- Willmar
- Winsted

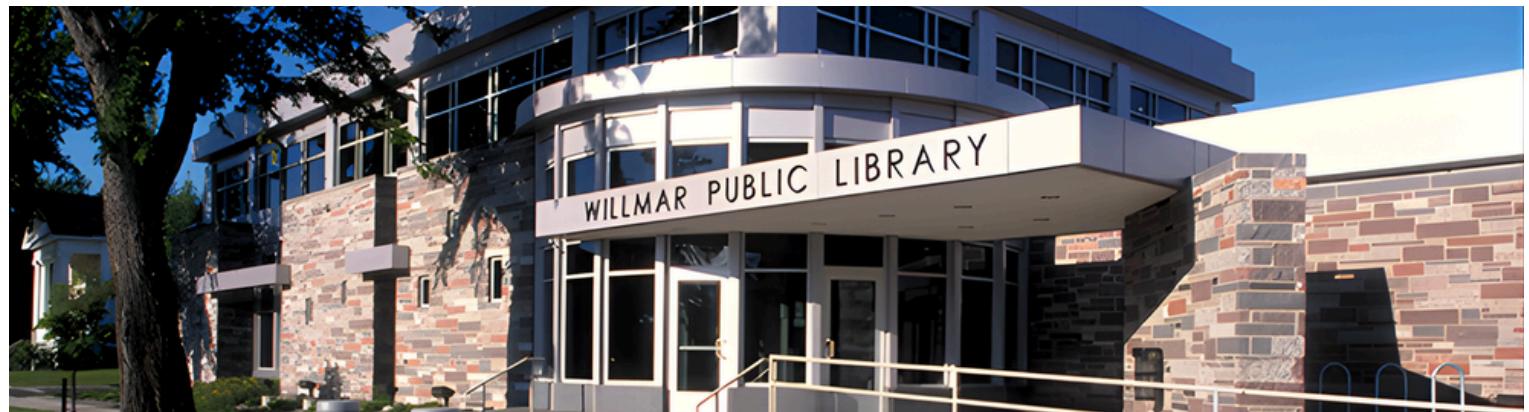


Governance, Structure, and Operations

Pioneerland Library System operates under a joint powers agreement in which nine counties and eighteen cities participate and appoint a 35-member governing board. The Pioneerland Library System Board includes city and county officials as well as library users and is responsible for system policy, budget approval, and overall oversight of operations, personnel, and finances for the system's 32 member libraries.

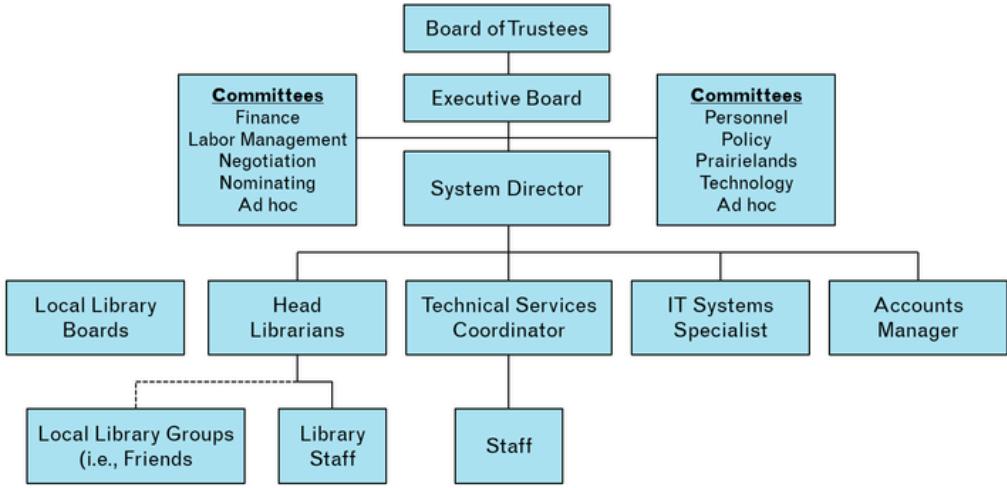
Pioneerland functions as a single, consolidated regional public library system rather than a loose consortium. Unlike federated systems, Pioneerland manages all staff centrally, allowing for consistent operations, coordinated services, and systemwide efficiencies. Minnesota has seven consolidated and six federated regional library systems, and Pioneerland is among the consolidated systems.

The system's financial reporting follows governmental accounting standards, with revenues derived primarily from member city and county contributions, state library aid and other operating grants, federal and Legacy funds, system service revenues, telecommunications income, and a small portion from charges for services and other miscellaneous sources.



Staffing and Community Engagement

Pioneerland employs approximately 170 full- and part-time staff, including 11 Head Librarians across 32 libraries, supported by a centralized administrative team of eight positions covering IT, accounting, and service center functions. The Librarians' union includes ten Head Librarians, requiring close collaboration and strong labor-management relationships by system leadership. Recent progress on interlibrary loan challenges and the completion of a wage comparison study demonstrate thoughtful management attention to service delivery and employee competitiveness.



Community engagement is a notable strength of the system. The Willmar Library hosts major author events that sell out quickly and generate approximately \$8,000, annually. Libraries across the system offer distinctive programming, including the Appleton Library's B-52 exhibit and Willmar's partnerships with Early Childhood and Family Education (ECFE). Friends of the Library groups are active and supportive throughout the system, contributing to programming, fundraising, and advocacy. Willmar also hosts "Rocking Robbins," a four-week summer concert series that draws families and community members.



Financial Overview

The organization operates on a stable \$5.1 million annual budget with balanced revenues and expenditures. Major expenditures include salaries and benefits (approximately \$3.5 million combined), library materials (about \$440,000), technology and automation services (approximately \$270,000), and telecommunications (\$370,000-\$384,000).

Pioneerland maintains a sufficient balance in designated working capital, providing long-term financial stability and flexibility to invest in systemwide improvements. Overall, the system is financially sound, operationally stable, and positioned to maintain the positive momentum already in place.

Systemwide Services and Offerings

Pioneerland's mission centers on making "the world of knowledge and ideas" accessible by supporting the educational, informational, cultural, and recreational needs of its communities in a safe and respectful environment. To accomplish this on a regional scale, the system provides:

Shared Catalog and Circulation System

A unified online catalog for all 32 libraries, with integrated account management for holds, renewals, and notifications.

Interlibrary Loan & Delivery

A coordinated delivery network that moves physical materials among Pioneerland libraries and connects patrons to other Minnesota library systems via the MNLINK statewide catalog. Local branches report twice-weekly deliveries and free interlibrary borrowing for patrons.



Digital Collections

Robust online access to eBooks and audiobooks through Libby/OverDrive, eBooks Minnesota, and digital magazines, as well as streaming children's books via TumbleBookLibrary and self-publishing/indie author platforms such as the Minnesota Libraries Publishing Project and BiblioBoard.



Research and Online Learning Tools

Systemwide subscriptions to statewide database suites (ELM/InfoTrac, EBSCO, ProQuest Newsstand) plus specialized tools like LearningExpress Library for test prep and skills development, and Britannica Online (multiple editions) for all ages.



Educational and Tutoring Services

Access to Brainfuse HelpNow, providing free online tutoring and homework help to Pioneerland cardholders.

Programming Support and Legacy/Arts Initiatives

Support for local library programs such as storytimes, summer reading, STEAM activities, arts and crafts programs, and Minnesota Legacy-funded cultural events, reflected in system financials under "Legacy Programs."



Technology and IT Infrastructure

Centralized automation and IT services (including the wide-area network connecting library sites), catalog and circulation systems, online resource access, and related technology support, represented in the system budget under Administration, Automation & IT, and Library Branches.

Through this regional model, Pioneerland provides a shared collection of over 600,000 physical items plus extensive digital resources, enabling residents of very small towns and larger communities alike to access the same rich array of library materials and services with a single library card.

ABOUT THE POSITION

Core Duties

- Provides leadership and guidance to all library staff in the operations and delivery of library services by developing short and long-term plans for the efficient operation of the library system.
- Researches and formulates recommended policies, rules, and procedures for Library Board consideration and approval.
- Plans for current and future technological improvements and expenditures for the Library System operations and service delivery.
- Responsible for overall financial management and control, including responsibility for Library Board governance activities related to their fiduciary responsibilities.
- Communicates with city councils, county boards, and community organizations regarding operational and fiscal requirements of local libraries.
- Determines and prepares agenda and materials for Library Board meetings.
- Actively consults with local legislators regarding library issues and related concerns.
- Assists the Department of Children, Families, and Learning Office of Library Development and Services and Minnesota regional public libraries in planning and developing programs, services, and technologies.
- Manages and consults with member library managers in determining priorities and resolving staff and operational issues, conducts regular staff meetings.
- Manages the selection of administrative staff and Head Librarians for the Library System; makes recommendations to the Library Board regarding promotions, discharges, transfers, or suspensions.
- Responsible for seeking and procuring grants.
- Serves as Personnel and Labor Relations Manager responsible for labor unions and non-union negotiations, contracts and agreements, and personnel policies. Resolves labor grievances on behalf of or in conjunction with the Board.
- Performs other duties and responsibilities as apparent or as directed by the PLS Board.



Desired Leadership Profile

Leadership Style & Personal Qualities

- Strong team player who delegates effectively and empowers staff.
- Open to new ideas and willing to lead change.
- Outgoing, relationship-builder, approachable, and a strong “people person.”
- Positive, high-energy presence who is visible, engaged, and proactive.
- Strategic thinker with a clear vision for the future of libraries, including transition to increased digital materials.
- Influential leader who can bring others along and build trust across the system.
- Strong team player who delegates effectively and avoids micromanagement.
- Someone committed to the stability of the organization and the Willmar community.

Communication & Relationship-Building

- Excellent communicator who keeps staff and the Board informed while minimizing surprises.
- Able to build strong relationships with elected officials from counties and cities.
- Expected to build relationships with County Board and City Council members to promote libraries.
- Partners with Head Librarians to participate in community-facing events.
- Skilled at networking and representing the library system throughout the state.

Management & Administrative Skills

- Strong administrative background in addition to library experience.
- Skilled in HR, strategic planning, budgeting, and organizational management.
- Must be comfortable leading a small administrative team and, at times, backing up staff.
- Effective at working with a Board and navigating governance dynamics.
- Experienced in union environments and able to work constructively with the union.
- Strong financial acumen, including experience budgeting, coordinating state/federal funding, and managing grants.

Professional Experience

- Required: Master’s degree in Library Science from a library school accredited by the American Library Association.
- Desired: 5-10 years of experience or upward advancement coupled with knowledge.
- Administrative leadership experience is highly valued.
- Experience working with boards and unions is beneficial.

Strategic Expectations

- Expand electronic and digital services.
- Maintain smooth internal operations while preparing for future shifts in library usage.
- Balance internal management with external advocacy.
- Keep the organization running well while also modernizing where needed.





Position Announcement

Organization: Pioneerland Library System

Position: Executive Director

Salary: \$100,505 to \$130,520, plus Health, Life, and Disability Insurance, vacation, leaves, and more

Application Deadline: February 15, 2026

Job Summary: The Executive Director provides leadership and guidance to the overall operation and development of the Pioneerland Library System through recommending policies, new services, and developing the annual budget. This position is also responsible for establishing goals and objectives through strategic planning, budgeting, supervising professional library staff, and for representing the Library System to various city, county, state, and other organizations and service groups.

Minimum Qualifications: Master's degree in Library Science from a library school accredited by the American Library Association, plus five (5) years of related library experience, including progressive management experience covering a broad range of financial, administrative, supervisory, and operational activities.

Apply: Visit <https://daviddrown.hiringplatform.com/366533-pioneerland-library-system-executive-director/1399750-application-form/en> and complete the application process by February 15, 2026. Finalists will be selected on March 9, 2026, and final interviews will be held on April 9, 2026.

Please direct any questions to Pat Melvin at pat@daviddrown.com or 612-385-7162.