

# BiblioBoard Pilot Review and Recommendation

## October 2019

### Background

The WPLC's two-year pilot subscription with BiblioBoard ends in April 2020. The following timeline was created and implemented for the review of this pilot.

- January – February 2019: Collection Development Workgroup discusses what elements to include in a review of BiblioBoard.
- March 2019: Collection Development Workgroup makes recommendation to retain BiblioBoard in the 2020 budget pending review.
- September-October 2019: WiLS collects information for review.
- October 2019: Collection Development Workgroup makes recommendation on whether or not to continue with BiblioBoard.
- November 2019: Steering Committee reviews and takes action on recommendation.
- February 2020: Board reviews and takes action on recommendation.

The following was identified as essential data to review for this process:

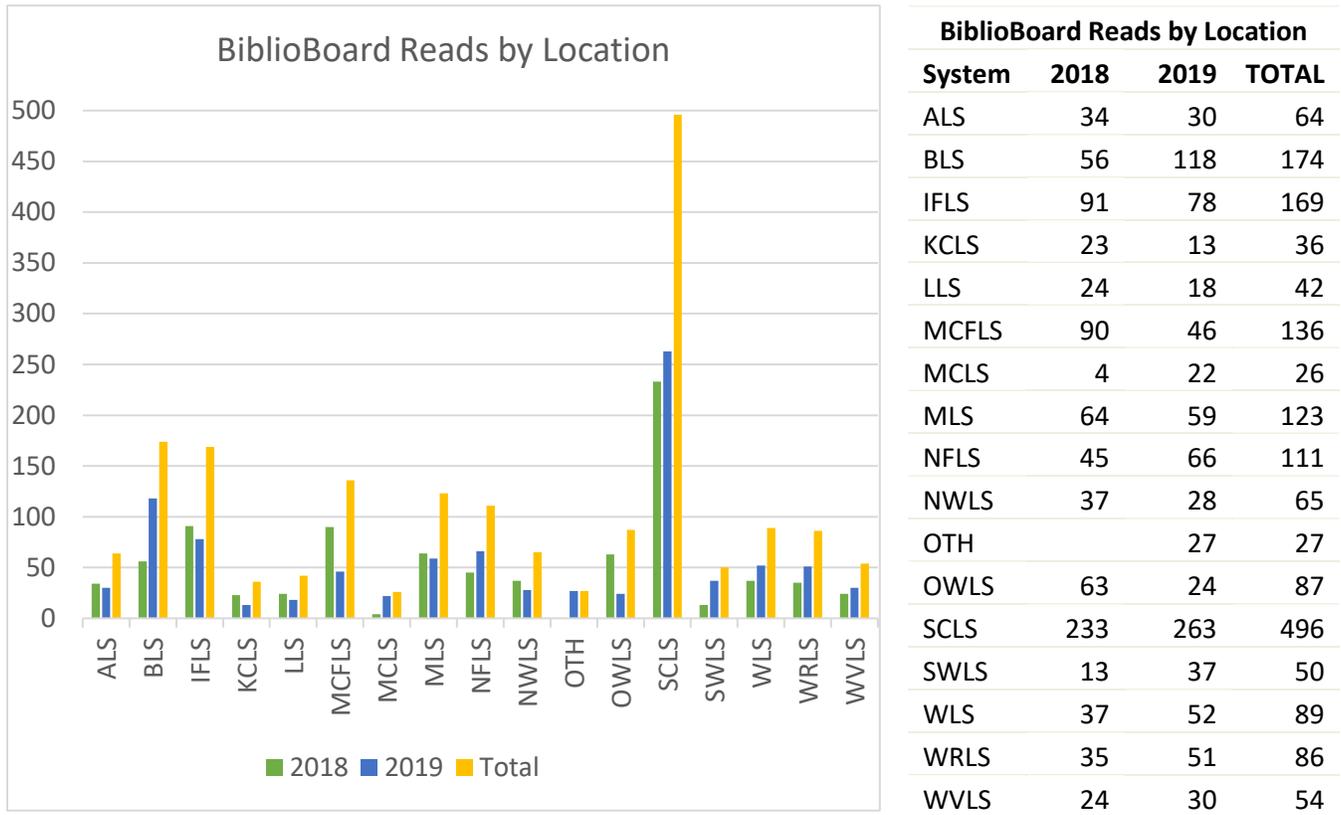
- BiblioBoard Library usage statistics
- BiblioBoard titles available through OverDrive statistics
- Cost information for BiblioBoard materials through OverDrive
- Cost information for separate components of the pilot (Pressbooks, Author Contest)
- Cost information for other simultaneous use collections available through OverDrive
- Wisconsin Author Contest statistics and user feedback
- Pressbooks User statistics and user feedback
- Wisconsin Author Contest judges' feedback

### BiblioBoard Library Usage Statistics

All resources in BiblioBoard Library are immediately available for unlimited simultaneous use and authentication is done via geolocation. BiblioBoard Library includes the following components:

- BiblioBoard Access: international resources and rare materials from smaller organizations that openly share their digital artifacts around the world.
- BiblioBoard Core: a historical database covering a wide range of topics—including Literature, Philosophy, History, Geography and Science in subject anthologies and over 14,000 full-text eBooks and over 24,000 pieces of primary source content.
- Indie Wisconsin: a showcase of Wisconsin independent and small press fiction and non-fiction authors.
- The Library Journal Selects Collections: aggregations of top-notch selected submissions from SELF-e from around the country in General Fiction, Mystery/Thriller/Horror, Romance, Science Fiction/Fantasy, and Young Adult.
- Popup Picks: a collection of the best ebooks and other digital media from around the world including hand-curated, award-winning titles of all kinds from leading expert librarian curators. Every four months, there is a brand-new collection of titles.

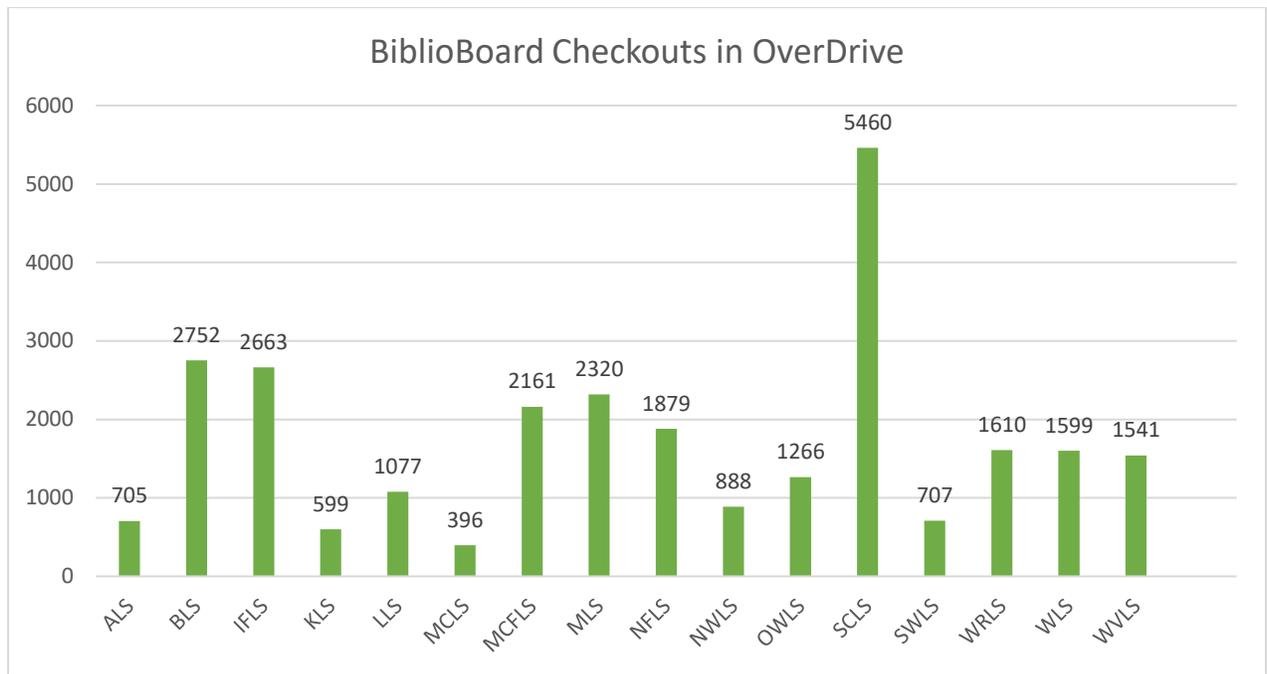
Because of the simultaneous use and access by geolocation, there is no need for patrons to log in to access the resources. Unlike OverDrive, the WPLC is not able to get login and checkout statistics. We are able to gather some download statistics by system based upon the geolocation. The graph and chart below show the number of reads from March 2018 through August 2019.



### BiblioBoard & OverDrive Relationship

Since WPLC started this pilot, the relationship between BiblioBoard and OverDrive has changed dramatically. At the beginning of the pilot, the BiblioBoard content was only available on their platform. This required patrons to discover and use another interface. Those who were already using OverDrive might never encounter this other source of content.

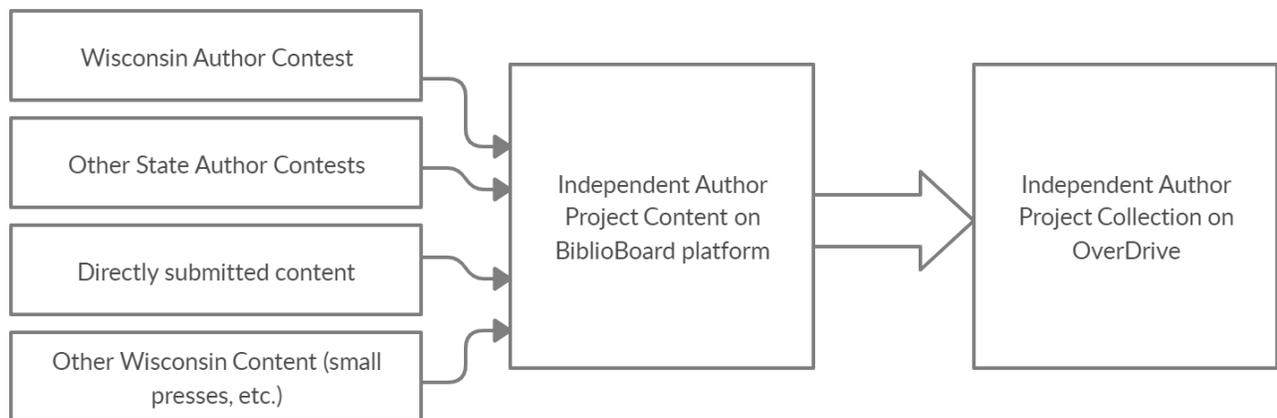
In June of 2018, BiblioBoard partnered with OverDrive to allow BiblioBoard subscribers to access 50 BiblioBoard SELF-e Select ebook titles through OverDrive. These titles were available as simultaneous use to WPLC patrons and are a curated collection on the WPLC OverDrive website and Libby App. In July of 2019, 58 more BiblioBoard titles were added to the OverDrive collection. From inception through August 31, 2019, these BiblioBoard titles have circulated a total of 27, 623 times. Below is a chart of the checkouts by system.



As you can see from the usage statistics, this pilot was very successful. BiblioBoard and OverDrive will continue with this partnership and the first collection of this new partnership will be available on OverDrive in October 2019.

The collection is from self-published authors, like those who participate in the author contest. In fact, we expect *Light of our Yesterdays* by the 2019 award winner, Ken Hansen, to appear in OverDrive shortly. Once there, we will be able to highlight his work and provide him with exposure to library readers.

This relationship between BiblioBoard and OverDrive creates a supply chain for content that is low-cost, simultaneous use, locally produced, and, if our pilot number are any indication, popular. The Wisconsin and other author contests feeds titles into a collection which is then available through OverDrive. In addition, by soliciting and honoring this content through the Wisconsin author contest, we allow talented Wisconsin authors to grow their careers.



## Cost of BiblioBoard Materials Through OverDrive

The collection will initially have 350 top indie published books, curated by Library Journal, Publishers Weekly, Black Caucus of the ALA, and library editorial boards in 14 states and Canadian provinces -- from over 12,000 submissions. The collection will grow throughout the year with no additional cost.

The collection features multiple indie author NY Times and USA Today best-sellers, as well as 2019 Indie Author of the Year Ran Walker's award-winning *Daykeeper* in ebook and audiobook formats and a public library ebook exclusive on his new book *Portable Black Magic: Tales of the Afro Strange*. The published price of the collection for a consortium the size of WPLC would be \$9,975 per year for unlimited simultaneous use lending.

## Cost Information for Continuing with BiblioBoard

For the two-year BiblioBoard pilot, the WPLC received the BiblioBoard Library, Pressbooks, SELF-e, and the Author Contest for \$24,000 per year.

Because the ecosystem between OverDrive and BiblioBoard has changed so dramatically, continuing with BiblioBoard could be considered another pilot so we can better understand the value to local authors in this new ecosystem. To continue with BiblioBoard, the costs would be as follows:

- \$9,975/year for the collection in OverDrive OR
- \$24,066/year for the collection, the statewide author contest with improved support/promotion from BiblioBoard (see below), a platform for procuring/serving other local content, and the ability to add selected titles to the OverDrive collection. This assumes a 3-year commitment and pre-payment for all three years (which WiLS can support). If WPLC is interested in a shorter commitment, then the cost would be renegotiated.

In 2019, \$12,000 of WPLC's R&D fund was allocated for BiblioBoard. Because DPI was able to allocate additional LSTA for the project, none of these R&D funds were expended on the pilot. A placeholder of \$24,000 was put into the 2020 budget, pending this review.

It would be expected that the cost of the collection could come from the buying pool funds, leaving \$14,091/year to be covered from the WPLC operating budget, or \$42,273. \$36,000 of the three-year cost could be covered in what was saved in 2019 on this project and what was allocated for 2020.

## Cost for Other eBook Simultaneous Use Collections Available through OverDrive

Because of the popularity and high circulation of the BiblioBoard titles available through OverDrive, it was asked at the annual WPLC Membership meeting if cost information could be gathered on other simultaneous use collections that are available through OverDrive. OverDrive was asked for this information. Unfortunately, they were unable to provide cost comparisons for ebook simultaneous use collections as they currently do not have anything comparable. The only simultaneous use collections that OverDrive currently have access to are audiobooks and ebook collections that have been reviewed by the WPLC selectors and not chosen for purchase.

## Wisconsin Author Project Statistics and User Feedback

The Wisconsin Author Project was the first component of BiblioBoard that was launched in April of 2018. The first contest was open until July, 2018. There was a total of 114 submissions by 90 different authors. In 2019 the contest was open for a shorter period of time with a total of 75 submission by 58 different authors. The difference in submission amounts may be due to two main factors; 1) the submission period in 2018 was longer and 2) since 2018 was the first contest of its kind available to many public library patrons, the higher number of submissions may be due to a stockpile of titles by authors.

In addition to the opportunity to submit to the Wisconsin Author Contest, local authors can also submit to the BiblioBoard Indie collection at any time via SELF-e. This program allows local authors the opportunity to share their works with others not only in the state, but with BiblioBoard subscribers across the US. The below chart shows the number of Wisconsin author works read by users in other states.

State	Opens
California	2
Colorado	1
Connecticut	1
Illinois	9
Iowa	1
Kentucky	1
Louisiana	1
Minnesota	9
New York	2
Oklahoma	1
Rhode Island	1
South Carolina	20

In August of 2019, a survey was sent to all Wisconsin Author Contest participants from 2018 and 2019. 33 participants responded. A summary of the questions and participant responses are below.

- Overall, how satisfied were you with your experience with the Wisconsin Author Project contest.

Answer Choices	Responses
Very Unsatisfied	2
Unsatisfied	10
Satisfied	16
Very Satisfied	5

- How has entering your work in the Wisconsin Author Project affected your career?

Answer Choices	Response
Negatively. My career is worse off because I entered the contest.	0
Neutrally. My career was unchanged by the contest.	28
Positively. My career is better off because I entered the contest.	0
Unsure	5

- Were you motivated to start or complete a book because of the contest?

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	4
No	27
Unsure	2

4. Did entering the contest encourage you to take any of the following actions? Select all that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses
Share your writing with others for feedback or advice	9
Connect with other writers	5
Seek out additional resources about writing or publishing	5
Encourage other writers to enter the contest	7
List a book for sale on Amazon or another platform	5
Other (please specify)	3

Other Response:

- none of the above
- I never received a receipt for or an acknowledgment of my submission.
- Not much communication from WAP

5. Did you use Pressbooks (<https://wplc.pressbooks.pub/>) to create, organize, edit, or publish your book?

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	2
No	31
Unsure	0

6. How has your experience with the Wisconsin Author Project changed your opinion of the public library?

Answer Choices	Responses
Negatively. I have a lower opinion of the public library than I did before the contest.	2
Neutrally. My opinion of the public library was not changed by the contest.	22
Positively. I have a higher opinion of the public library than I did before the contest.	8
Unsure.	1

7. Did your experience with the Wisconsin Author Project help you discover other resources for writers offered by your library?

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	5
No	27
Unsure	1

8. Is there anything more you'd like to share about your experience with or the impacts of the Wisconsin Author Project?

- no
- Really cool opportunity—thanks for doing what you do!
- The contest I entered is not over. I might have more to say once I see the results.
- What impact?

- The application process was long and complicated, and nothing changed for me as far as I can tell, but thanks for having me anyway.
- I don't ever recall receiving any results about the contest's winner(s).
- Timely updates would be nice, even if it's to say works are still being read through.
- Glad to be able to share my book
- entered, never heard anything more - just another black hole for self-published authors
- I never received any communication from them.
- After submitting my book, I got no response or other feedback on my book or others.
- A little frustrating to use press books and not be able to correct of formatting issue and upload it again without essentially destroying my entry to self-e
- I entered the contest for 2019 and have not yet been contacted about the results, so it feels a bit weird to get this survey!!
- These contests have always been and will always be a waste of my time. I have let people talk me into submitting to one every now and then, but I don't intend to bother again. I'm sure they are great for many authors but I believe my work will never appeal to the judges of such things. Certain kinds of work always win. The categories are always too broad. There's nothing inherently wrong with this, but I, for one, believe that will never find any benefit in literary contests and will have to let my thousands of positive reader reviews speak for me instead.
- Raised 100k for kids cancer. Book won two national awards. Would be nice if WI supported its homegrown authors. Thanks.
- Re, the contest. It would be helpful if it was more specific when it ends, who won, etc. Then I could tell more about impact. If some judge read the book, could I get some feedback besides "try again next year." Having said that, thanks for helping us Indies. Writing is easy, promoting is difficult with limited resources.

## Pressbooks User Statistics and User Feedback

Pressbooks, available to every resident of the state of Wisconsin through WPLC's BiblioBoard subscription, is easy-to-use online software that allows users to create professional-quality print-ready and ebook files. With the Pressbooks tool, libraries and their patrons can create and design their own books, newsletters, poetry, novels, and more in digital and print ready formats. Since WPLC launched Pressbooks, a total of 179 Wisconsin library patrons have created pressbook accounts. BiblioBoard was asked what will happen to Wisconsin Pressbooks current users and their accounts if the WPLC does not continue its Pressbooks subscription. They responded that current Pressbooks users will have 30 days to export their material or they can retain access to Pressbooks by purchasing an individual (non-library) subscription to it for \$99/export, or other paid book formatting services. BiblioBoard would email all current users their options.

In August of 2019, all Pressbooks users were contacted to complete a survey. Of those users, 10 responded. The results of that survey are below.

1. Overall, how satisfied were you with your experience using Pressbooks?

Answer Choices	Responses
Very Unsatisfied	1
Unsatisfied	2
Satisfied	3

Very Satisfied	4
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2. How useful do you think Pressbooks has been to help you with the following:

Answer Choices	Not at all useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful
Creating and writing	3	3	4
Editing	2	4	4
Organizing	1	3	6
Publishing	1	3	6

3. What kind(s) of work did you create using Pressbooks? Select all that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses
Novel or short stories	8
Non-fiction work	1
Poetry	1
Textbook or other educational resource	3
Community resource, such as a restaurant guide or a literary magazine	0
Professional resource, such as a work newsletter or meeting documentation	1
Other (please specify)	0

4. Did using Pressbooks encourage you to take any of the following actions? Select all that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses
Share your work with others for feedback or advice	6
Collaborate with other writers using Pressbooks	3
Connect with other writers generally about writing or publishing	0
Seek out additional resources about writing or publishing	5
Encourage other writers to use Pressbooks	6
List a book created in Pressbooks for sale on Amazon or another platform	2
Submit a book to the Wisconsin Author Project contest	2
Other (please specify)	0

5. How has your experience with Pressbooks changed your opinion of the public library?

Answer Choices	Responses
Negatively. I have a lower opinion of the public library than I did before using Pressbooks.	0
Neutrally. My opinion of the public library was not changed by using Pressbooks.	4
Positively. I have a higher opinion of the public library than I did before using Pressbooks.	5
Unsure.	1

6. Is there anything more you'd like to share about your experience using Pressbooks or the impacts Pressbooks has had?

- As a newbie to self-publishing, I am very glad I chose to utilize Pressbooks to prepare my manuscript for publication.
- I feel that Pressbooks is an inspiring and practical resource that few people in my locality know about. I think it could use more promotion, possibly through signage in local libraries, library

- friends events that demonstrate the website, and other outreach to explain the possibilities of the application.
- Please continue Pressbooks! We've been getting the word out that its available for all, and have many people interested
  - It is another tool for sharing my novels.
  - It's a shame that once a book converted to epub with Press books is submitted to Self-E, you can't make any edits or fix formatting problems.
  - I found the Pressbooks application inadequate to the job of writing a novel. Thank you for making this available to writers, but in the future, please ask us what we need instead of offering us something we neither need nor want.

## Wisconsin Author Contest Judges Feedback

The Wisconsin Author Contest judging panel consists of a WLA formed group. In August of 2019 the judges for the Wisconsin Author Contest were surveyed. All five judges responded. The survey questions and the participants response are below.

1. Do you believe your participation helped further the careers of independent authors in the state? Why or why not?
  - Yes. I think giving independent authors this platform and a contest to participate in can be very encouraging.
  - Yes. Award-winning books tend to sell better.
  - Yes, because I think it gives them recognition and exposure.
  - I am unsure. I think more free and accessible promotional materials would be helpful.
  - Yes, it gives them access to another platform to display their work.
2. Do you believe the committee and contest were a valuable use of your time? Why or why not?
  - Yes. For the reasons stated above.
  - Yes. Anytime I can work with others in my field, I learn new things. Also, vetting these books has given me a better perspective for those times when my patrons self-publish and then ask me to put their book in our library. I feel I now have a more experienced eye for good literature.
  - Yes. I'm a fast reader, so it's not an inordinate amount of time. Fewer books made it easier this year. Promoting reading and authors is never a waste of my time as a librarian.
  - It was. It has been a while since I've had to put this sort of thinking cap on, particularly for adult reading materials. I'd like to be more involved with committees and groups on a state and national level. This is a step in the right direction for me. I do wish we had more in-person time with the committee, though. Face-to-face online meeting would be helpful for a more meaningful discussion. Or having two people read the same book at the first round. Having somebody to discuss things with either in person or via email would have been helpful.
  - Yes, it helps promote independent authors.
3. Do you recommend continuing the statewide author contest? Why or why not? Do you recommend continuing the statewide author contest? Why or why not?
  - Based on the number of entries received I would say yes, this contest should continue.

- Yes. Even though only one author is given an award, the contest itself has encouraged authors who may not otherwise have started, completed or considered publishing their books. It encourages people to give it a try, and one of those people may actually be good and become successful!
- I do recommend it. It encourages writers (and readers) and provides a place for them to get feedback and recognition. The first year was rough, but the process will get easier each year. Also, many libraries host writer's groups, and this gives them a way to promote their books when they are completed and possibly get them some statewide recognition for their work.
- I do, but with more time for reading materials or a different timeline throughout the year. Maybe it was just me in the midst of a public library Summer Learning Challenge, but it was a bit tricky to get through them all.
- I think the platform could be adjusted as well - I couldn't figure out how to get page numbers to show on the computer as I was reading. I prefer taking notes on paper and not being able to leave notes on specific pages was tricky.
- Yes.

## BiblioBoard in 2020

BiblioBoard has shared plans for improving and enhancing the services they provide in 2020:

- Print editions for selected independent author titles.
- Possibility of expanding author contest to include non-fiction, children's, foreign language, etc.
- Additional support for reaching author groups (templated communications, lists of contacts, programming tie-ins, etc.).
- Additional support to drive author contest participation (more outreach, etc.).
- Author workshops.
- Resource center for writers to find tools for creation, etc.
- More communication with authors participating in the contest.
- Working with independent authors like Ran Walker (2019 indie author of the year) to encourage more support of libraries (such as releasing titles to libraries) and to educate authors and others about independent publishing.

## WPLC Collection Development Committee Recommendation

The Committee recommends expending \$10,000 from the collection budget on the 350 BiblioBoard titles in OverDrive and not continuing with the other BiblioBoard components. There are concerns with the overall lack of usage by patrons of a second platform and the impact on authors and their feedback provided in the review.

The success of the 50 BiblioBoard titles available in OverDrive shows there is interest by current patrons for these materials. Having these titles available as simultaneous use and within one platform, OverDrive, is advantageous and a value for the price. Purchasing the additional package of 350 titles will be a benefit to the current collection. However, due to the lack of usage of the BiblioBoard platform and current author satisfaction and impact, the Committee feels an additional \$14,066 isn't worth the cost to continue.