

Ministry of Culture

Minister

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Ministère de la Culture

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AUG - 5 2008

Mr. David Allen
Chief Executive Officer
Federation of Ontario Public Libraries
5120 Yonge Street
Toronto, ON M2N 5N9

Dear Mr. Allen:

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL) expressing your organization's interest in being consulted for input on literacy policies and programs.

I appreciate the important role that public libraries provide in literacy and reading support programs for Ontarians of all ages. I also applaud the work of the FOPL as an advocate for public libraries.

The Ministry of Culture provides input on literacy policies and programs to the Ministry of Education when opportunities arise. We will support the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services on consultations with public libraries and the FOPL should these ministries develop future children and family literacy policies and programming.

You may know that in 2005-06, the Ministry of Culture provided public libraries serving communities of 20,000 or less, including county library branches, with \$6 million for family literacy. In 2006-07, public libraries received \$5 million, including \$32,000 for the FOPL. The Ministry of Culture also provided 2007-08 year-end funding of \$15 million to the Southern Ontario Library Service (SOLS) to administer, in cooperation with the Ontario Library Service-North (OLS-North). SOLS and OLS-North will be coordinating a meeting with the FOPL to collect input from your organization. I trust that any recommendations that the FOPL includes regarding family literacy, parenting programs, collections and other resources would be much appreciated.

I also appreciate the Federation's offer of assisting the Ministry of Culture. The FOPL can assist the Ministry by gathering data from its members on public library programming in support of literacy and family literacy. Currently, we have general statistics on public library programming and attendance, but lack specific data on public library-based or supported family and children's literacy programming. Some data on public library literacy programming, including data for a representative sample of public libraries, would be of great assistance. If the FOPL chooses to undertake this research, please contact Mr. James Hamilton, my Ministry's Culture Services Unit Supervisor, to keep him informed of any progress. He can be reached by telephone, at (416) 212-7505, or by e-mail, at james.hamilton@ontario.ca.

Thank you again for your letter and for your commitment to literacy, parenting, and public library services.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "M. Aileen Carroll".

M. Aileen Carroll
Minister

c: The Honourable Kathleen Wynne
Minister of Education

James Hamilton, Supervisor of Culture Services
Ministry of Culture