

November 2008

Federation's Key Accomplishments in the Past Year

During the past year, the Federation can point to a number of deliverables that demonstrate the value of membership.

- The Board of Directors undertook an extensive search for a new CEO, which resulted in the hiring of David Allen in May.
- The new CEO's orientation included meetings with numerous stakeholders in order to establish relationships and understand issues.
- The CEO established a pattern of communicating regularly to members on the progress of Federation activities, and to date has done so in four reports (May 30, July 2, August 11 and October 3).
- The Board had a special meeting in June to set strategic priorities, which led to reconstituting the Advocacy Task Force to expedite the development of an Advocacy Plan.
- A 2-year Action Plan was developed that defined the sequence, due date, required resources and accountability for each of the Federation's strategic initiatives.
- A pre-emptive member survey was conducted on how the Ministry of Culture's \$15 million grant to public libraries should be allocated, prior to the Ministry's release of terms of reference for the kinds of projects that would be funded. This was followed by two written submissions and a face-to-face consultation with SOLS/OLS-N. Recently the Federation has been involved in shaping two likely projects: a province-wide IT strategic plan and a Libraries 2020 symposium.
- Confirmation was received from the Ministry that the Federation is responsible for setting dates and themes for Ontario Public Library Weeks in the future. We coordinated the design and distribution of this year's posters and bookmarks for use by all public libraries. We helped organize the opening ceremony at Barrie Public Library where the Minister of Culture, Aileen Carroll spoke. We also issued two press releases to mark the week.
- We raised the profile of public libraries by participating at the AMO Conference as an exhibitor and connecting with hundreds of municipal officials and many MPPs. The highlight was the offer by Linda Jeffery (MPP for Brampton – Springdale) to host a reception at Queen's Park for all MPPs.

- The Queen's Park reception was held on October 21st, and was attended by 23 MPPs, which is higher than average. Among the MPPs were 5 Ministers and 5 Parliamentary Assistants. All senior staff members from the Ministry of Culture were also there. Minister Carroll presided over the event and spoke eloquently about the value of public libraries. A two-page handout was prepared for all attendees listing our key messages to government.
- A letter was sent to Ministers of Education and Culture asking to be consulted on policy and funding decisions on literacy programs. In separate letters, both Ministers responded welcoming our input. The Minister of Culture specifically requested data on the scope and enrolment of public library-based literacy programs. The Minister of Education wants to meet with the Federation soon.
- An application was submitted to the Library Services Development Fund for the Federation to retain a market research firm to survey members on the scope of their literacy programs.
- A media release was issued and a letter to Ministers of Finance and Culture was sent regarding the importance of safeguarding your funding because public library utilization increases dramatically during periods of economic downturn. We also delivered this message at a consultation session for the 2009 Ontario Budget.
- We organized an all-day tour of five public libraries for the benefit of Ministry of Culture staff.
- Meetings were held with Minister Carroll on April 3 and November 3, 2008.
- Accounting responsibility for the Federation was transferred from OLA requiring migration to a new system, change in signing officers and bank branch. The Federation now produces its own invoices, cheques and reports.