



## **Agenda Document Number 9a**

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**Subject: Advocacy Task Force Report 2012**

**Prepared by: Larry Stewart, Advocacy Task Force Chair**

**Prepared for: FOPL AGM**

**Meeting of: Wednesday, January 30, 2013**

**Date of Preparation: Thursday, January 10, 2013**

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The Committee was actively involved in addressing the ascribed advocacy initiatives throughout the year.

The Committee itself convened by teleconference on five occasions. It is important to note that, while the Committee teleconferences were used for the purposes of feedback and direction setting, the actual advocacy actions were carried out by the CEO, the FOPL Chair, members of the Executive Committee and Board and members of the Advocacy Committee.

An updated PLOG proposal utilizing 2011 Census data and 2011 CPI figures was submitted to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport with a new ask of \$51 M with a five year phase-in.

Meetings with Provincial Cabinet Ministers and their officials provided an opportunity to discuss FOPL's mission and mandate, the PLOG, the significant role that public libraries are playing and could play in Early Childhood literacy, public library support for Provincial economic development initiatives, identification of capital infrastructure needs, and support for First Nations libraries.

Meetings with Provincial and Federal officials and First Nations representatives provided an opportunity for direct dialogue about the paucity of financial support for libraries. Assistance was provided to the National Aboriginal Public Library Organization in the submission of a funding proposal for every First Nations library. In addition, a written submission was made to the National Panel of First Nations Elementary and Secondary Education.

The Monteith Brown infrastructure study provided the framework and data for a written report forwarded for information to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, and the Canadian Library Association. It also was the basis of discussion with Provincial and Federal government officials responsible for infrastructure grants.

Meetings and discussion at the Committee and Board level in the Fall of 2012 were primarily focused on reviewing the status of FOPL Advocacy initiatives to date and deciding on a course of action for 2013-2016. Feedback was solicited and received on existing directions and our

future focus from external library sources. A Draft Advocacy Plan for 2013-2016 was circulated to members for comment and 4 teleconferences were scheduled for mid December.

The Draft Advocacy Plan for 2013-2016, dated Dec.5,2012, is attached to this report for further review and approval in principle by the membership.

My thanks to; Members of the Advocacy Committee:

Liz Rossnagel CEO, Sault Ste-Marie Public Library  
Jill Nicholson CEO, Lincoln Public Library  
Sam Coghlan CEO, Stratford Public Library  
Daphne Johnston CEO, Ninda-Kikaendjigae-Wigammik Public Library

Members of the FOPL Executive and Board:

Jim Bennett Chair and Trustee Ottawa Public Library Board  
Ian Ross CEO, Whitby Public Library  
Mary Baxter CEO, Georgina Public Library  
Sheri Mishibijima CEO, Wikwemikong Public Library

Staff members:

David Allen CEO  
Erin Menzies Administrative Assistant  
Susie Benes Administrative Assistant

Larry Stewart, Chair  
Trustee County of Brant Public Library

Attachment A: Updated Advocacy Plan

Federation of Ontario Public Libraries

# Updated Advocacy Plan for 2013 to 2016

December 5, 2012

## **1. Introduction**

The Federation of Ontario Public Libraries' updated Advocacy Plan was approved by the Board on June X, 2013. The plan will provide direction for the advocacy activities of the Federation during the period 2013 to 2016.

The updated Advocacy Plan was drafted by the Federation's Advocacy Task Force. Federation members had an opportunity to review and comment on a first draft of the updated Advocacy Plan during December 2012 to January 2013 and on a second draft during April and May 2013.

## **2. Advocacy Goals**

The goal contained in this updated Advocacy Plan continues to be "to advance public library policy, programs and funding with government and other stakeholder organizations". The desired outcome is to create an awareness of the benefits of public libraries, and to translate this awareness into favourable decisions on policy, programs and funding, based on input from members.

Over the past four years, the Federation has made considerable progress in raising awareness of the value of public libraries amongst funders. Highlights include:

- Securing over 80 face-to-face meetings with MPPs, MPs and senior bureaucrats
- Submitting to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport a proposed new funding model for provincial operating grants, which had 100% membership agreement
- Developing advocacy toolkits for provincial and municipal elections
- Sharing with funders our consultant's report that quantified the infrastructure obligation for Ontario public libraries
- Sharing with funders our researchers' reports that "inventoried" the scope of literacy programs in Ontario public libraries, and in particular, measured outcomes of preschool literacy programs.
- Making a submission to the National Panel on First Nation Elementary and Secondary Education, and drafting a funding proposal to Aboriginal Affairs & Northern Development Canada on behalf of the National Aboriginal Public Library Organization
- Increasing the profile of public library issues at MPP receptions, AMO and AMCTO conferences and OPLW launch events.

Although governments have not approved the specific funding proposals we have put forward, the public library sector has benefitted from the following provincial funding decisions, which can be attributed in large part to the Federation's efforts:

- One-time Capacity Building Grants totaling \$1.9 million
- E-resources (Internet Databases) Grant through SOLS totaling \$5.4 annually for 3 years
- Preserving existing allocations to public library operating grants (PLOGs).

In addition, many municipalities have increased the allocations to their public libraries.

These funding decisions are noteworthy, at a time when most governments, faced with enormous debt, have reduced support to many other public services. Now is not the time to pull back on our advocacy initiatives. We have gotten the attention of funders. Implementation of a continued concerted advocacy plan will eventually pay off. Advocating for increased government funding typically takes many years before tangible results are realized.

The advocacy activities of the Federation will take a positive approach in which we demonstrate to government how advancing public library policies and programs will also further its own goals and priorities. Through evidence-based research using quantifiable outcome measures, the Federation will promote public libraries as indispensable rather than desirable to ensure Ontario's future prosperity.

We will encourage supporters and the general public to become advocates in their own communities to increase awareness of the value of the public library and to influence the decision making process of government. To leverage the Federation's limited resources, an important element of advocacy will be to build alliances and partnerships to promote shared interests. Where appropriate, advocacy will also involve promoting the development of new government policy and legislation to respond to changing circumstances in the library world.

### 3. Priority Issues and Target Audiences

Public libraries face many more policy, program and funding challenges than it is possible for the Federation to address effectively at any one time. The updated advocacy plan attempts to ensure that the Federation's advocacy priorities are realistic in relation to its own resources, and to the policy and fiscal goals of government and other stakeholders. The plan focuses on initiatives that will benefit all members and the provincial system of public libraries as a whole, plus targeted initiatives where there is general agreement among members.

The following statement of priorities (listed in order of importance) is meant to provide the basis for an appropriate set of advocacy initiatives for 2013 to 2016:

*"Within the policy frame of equal access for all citizens to information, knowledge, culture and learning resources:*

- a. **Base/Municipal Funding:** *Secure adequate and sustainable base funding for public library operations that meet the unique needs of the community through both general and targeted initiatives;*
- b. **Provincial Operating Funding:** *Increase the provincial portion of operating budgets of all public libraries to ensure equal access to information, especially in electronic formats;*
- c. **Capital Funding:** *Increase access to capital funding sources for updating and expanding physical facilities and electronic infrastructure, and for accommodating AODA requirements ;*

- d. **Literacy and Learning:** Enhance library programs including children's literacy, family literacy, digital literacy, and support for learning in a digital age;
- e. **First Nations (including Urban First Nations):** Expand public library capacity through designated federal funding;

These priorities will be addressed in different ways to the various target audiences in accordance with the mandate they have with respect to public libraries. The potential audiences for each priority are identified in the advocacy initiatives in Section 7.

#### 4. Positioning Statement

This section sets out the elements of a positioning statement which expresses the fit between the core business of public libraries and the perceptions of decision makers and supporters about the public library. The concepts in the positioning statement will serve as the basis for formulating key messages in the Federation's advocacy materials. Please note that this document focuses on the concepts that shape the advocacy plan – the messaging will occur during implementation of the advocacy initiatives.

Positioning Statement – Key Concepts
<p>The public library is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the one community gathering place,</li> <li>• both physical and virtual,</li> <li>• which provides equal access for all</li> <li>• to information, knowledge, culture, and learning resources in print and electronic format,</li> <li>• along with advice, assistance, and connections</li> <li>• to transform individuals, communities, and the economy,</li> <li>• in the 21<sup>st</sup> century of a digital, globalized world.</li> </ul>

The two overarching concepts are that the public library transforms individuals, communities and the economy, and that it is highly relevant in the digital, global world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Public library services are indispensable. Without them communities are at a significant disadvantage in terms of future growth.

The value of public libraries is particularly relevant during economic downturns, when they experience increased usage and become an essential community resource for the unemployed and residents with reduced incomes. Increased investment in public libraries supports faster recovery of communities that are now, more than ever, dependent on the knowledge economy for their future development. These points will be highlighted in our messaging to funders.

## **5. Advocacy Strategy**

The advocacy strategy consists of a number of general directions, and also specific approaches tailored to each of the provincial, municipal, and federal governments.

### **General Approach**

- a. The Federation will undertake a package of advocacy initiatives to benefit all members and the provincial system of public libraries as a whole.
- b. The advocacy initiatives will be realistic in relation to the policy and fiscal environment in which they will be implemented.
- c. The Federation will target its advocacy activities to the level of government and stakeholders most relevant to each of the advocacy priorities.
- d. The Federation will work closely with other advocacy organizations such as OLA, CLA and ALA (and its PLA division) to avoid duplicated effort, and to demonstrate to funders that our efforts are organized and coordinated.
- e. The Federation will make direct representation to provincial governments and provincial level stakeholder organizations, and the federal government as appropriate.
- f. At the community level, the Federation will provide methodologies and materials to member libraries to assist them to mobilize supporters, and to make representation to local government and stakeholders, and area MPPs, on member and Federation issues and opportunities.
- g. The Federation will prepare general materials and messages on the benefits of public libraries that can be adapted as circumstances require.
- h. As well, the Federation will prepare a package of initiatives related to the advocacy priorities, which it will advance with government and stakeholders. The level of detail will be sufficient to ensure that the initiatives are understandable and workable.
- i. The Federation will address current issues as they arise, consistent with the overall advocacy plan.
- j. Regarding political activity, during an election campaign the Federation will advocate to all political parties; after the election it will work with the elected party to advance public library policy, programs, and funding. We will offer the same information to all parties.

### **Municipal/Local Government**

Within the general approach described above:

- a. The Federation will provide members with tools and resources that facilitate their advocacy at the municipal level, but the Federation will not approach municipalities directly unless specifically invited by members.
- b. The Federation will frame the advocacy materials that it provides to members in the context of the broader value of public libraries to the community (e.g., as a community gathering place and a key part of the municipal infrastructure, provider of various types of literacy programs, and provider of support services to newcomers and the unemployed, etc.).
- c. In recognition of the important role of municipalities in funding public libraries, the Federation will build strong and supportive working relationships with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario, and the Municipal Cultural Planning Partnership.
- d. The Federation will provide materials on province-wide issues and opportunities which member libraries will be able to promote at the local level.

## **Provincial Government**

Within in the general approach described above:

- a. The Federation will promote the economic and societal value of public libraries (as providers of essential rather than desirable services) by developing and broadcasting outcome measures that demonstrate how Ontario's future prosperity depends on greater financial investment
- b. The Federation will seek to demonstrate how increased financial investment in the public library sector will result in new and more cost effective service delivery models, rather than expansion of the status quo.
- c. The Federation will build awareness of contemporary public library services among politicians and bureaucrats beyond the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, and will identify opportunities for cost effective partnerships with other ministries and levels of government.
- d. The Federation will emphasize the democratic right for all Ontarians to have equal access to information, and the fact that the disparity in service levels from one community to another is getting worse because the provincial government has downloaded most of the funding responsibility to the discretion of municipalities.
- e. The Federation will address new policies and legislation for public libraries as the occasion arises, after consultation with members, time permitting.

## **Federal Government**

The Federation will identify relevant sources of funding and promote access by public libraries (eg. First Nations).

## **Stakeholders**

The approach with regard to each of the stakeholders is described in the advocacy initiatives in the following section.

## **6. Advocacy Action Plan**

Summarized in the following table are the advocacy initiatives that the Federation will undertake in 2013 through 2016 in order to address its advocacy priorities. Each initiative sets out the target audiences, key messages, and approach.

Highest immediate priority will be given to accessing opportunities to participate in the Best Start Strategy by leveraging the results of OISE's study that measured outcomes of preschool literacy programs in public libraries. With the recent study by Monteith Brown that quantified the infrastructure obligation for Ontario's public libraries, Federation members are well positioned to sell the need for capital funding as opportunities arise.



The expected outcomes and timelines for each initiative must remain flexible so that the Federation can respond quickly and effectively to issues as they crop up. While the Advocacy Plan focuses on proactive initiatives, significant time and effort will be required for “just-in-time” responses to defend the interests of members.

Several of the initiatives in the Action Plan include the development of guidelines, resources and training opportunities in preparation for the municipal elections that will occur in the Fall of 2014.

## FOPL Advocacy Initiatives

Issue	Target Audience	Messages	Approach – FOPL Will Do This	Approach – Member Libraries Can Do This
Adequate and Sustainable Base/Municipal Funding	<p>Direct Targets – provincial organizations representing municipal interests (eg. AMO, AMCTO, Ontario Chamber of Commerce, Ontario Business Improvement Areas Association, Social Planning Network of Ontario, etc.)</p> <p>Indirect Targets – FCM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public libraries are indispensable for building/transforming individuals, communities and local economies in the electronic, global world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with AMO and AMCTO to increase awareness among their members of the potential of public libraries and consequences of not funding them</li> <li>Provide information and materials to members on current funding issues, e.g., uncertain economic times</li> <li>Produce materials for members to advocate directly with local governments, build awareness/support of local stakeholders, and show comparisons with peers.</li> <li>Assist members, on request, in becoming part of Municipal Asset Management Plans.</li> <li>Produce a municipal elections toolkit in 2014.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with municipal councils and CAOs to increase their awareness of the potential of public libraries and the consequences of not funding them.</li> <li>Share with Councils comparative information on peer municipalities, as available.</li> <li>Invite Councillors to library events/tours.</li> <li>Offer the library's support for municipal initiatives.</li> <li>Ensure public libraries are part of Municipal Asset Management plans</li> <li>Ask Friends of the Library groups to advocate to Council directly</li> <li>Utilize applicable components of FOPL's municipal elections toolkit</li> </ul>
Increased Provincial Portion of the Operating Funding of all Public Libraries	<p>Direct Target – provincial government, both bureaucrats and politicians (Ministry of Tourism, Culture &amp; Sport)</p> <p>Indirect Targets – other Ministries (Municipal Affairs &amp; Housing, Children &amp; Youth, Education, Training, Colleges &amp; Universities, Infrastructure, Citizenship &amp; Immigration, Economic Development &amp; Innovation, Northern Development &amp; Mines)</p> <p>MPPs from all parties</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On a per capita basis and accounting for inflation, provincial operating grants to Ontario public libraries have declined 63% over the last 15 years. Ontario's share of library funding is the lowest (4% of total revenue) of all provinces with municipally funded library systems and is 100% less than the closest comparator.</li> <li>Provincial government should become a stronger partner with municipalities in providing sustainable operating grants to Ontario's vital public libraries. Dependence on the discretionary funding by municipalities has resulted in serious disparity of service levels from one community to another, and the situation is getting worse every year.</li> <li>A renewed, innovative, library system plays a key role in furthering the goals and priorities of the provincial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the economic and societal value of public libraries (as providers of essential rather than desirable services) by developing &amp; broadcasting outcome measures that demonstrate how Ontario's future prosperity depends on greater financial investment.</li> <li>Participate actively in the research by Bill Irwin at UWO, which will measure societal value.</li> <li>Highlight the inequity of existing PLOGs first, then the inadequacy.</li> <li>Promote the funding model approved by 100% of Federation members, which uses common per capita amounts for all libraries plus fixed supplements for rural and northern libraries, implemented incrementally over 5 yrs..</li> <li>Seek to demonstrate how increased financial investment in the public library</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer as FOPL research sites, as required.</li> <li>Write the provincial government highlighting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the inequity and inadequacy of PLOGs,</li> <li>continued support of FOPL's proposed funding model,</li> <li>how increased financial investment in the public library sector will result in new and more cost effective service delivery models, rather than expansion of the status quo.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Meet with local MPPs on a regular basis to review the issues affecting libraries, especially those that FOPL is focusing on.</li> <li>Utilize applicable components of FOPL's provincial election toolkit</li> </ul>

Issue	Target Audience	Messages	Approach – FOPL Will Do This	Approach – Member Libraries Can Do This
		<p>government (eg. finding leading edge solutions for making information technology that is relevant to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, available to the public).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demographic changes require public libraries to provide specialized niche services to many groups (eg. newcomers, elderly, francophones, youth), while still providing day-to-day support to all Ontarians.</li> <li>While one-time, year-end financial support has helped, all public libraries need an increase in ongoing provincial operating grants to effectively plan for and meet current and future service demands.</li> </ul>	<p>sector will result in new and more cost effective service delivery models, rather than expansion of the status quo.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organize a symposium of provincial government leaders from various ministries to identify the need and framework for a provincial library strategy.</li> <li>Utilize findings of DM S. Davidson's survey of other ministries in order to identify opportunities for new and expanded partnerships beyond MTCS.</li> <li>Identify various MPP caucus groups across Ontario; seek to meet with them.</li> <li>Promote a larger role for the provincial government in ongoing funding for development and innovation within our sector.</li> <li>Produce a provincial election toolkit, when required.</li> </ul>	
Capital Funding to Update/Expand Physical Facilities	<p>Municipalities</p> <p>Provincial government (Ministries of Infrastructure, Municipal Affairs &amp; Housing, Community &amp; Social Services, Tourism, Culture &amp; Sport)</p> <p>Federal government (Infrastructure Canada, Industry Canada)</p> <p>Corporations and foundations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public libraries are vital public places that provide information and resources to strengthen individuals, communities and local economies in the globalized world.</li> <li>Public libraries require ongoing investments in electronic resources to ensure their continued leadership in public access to digital information.</li> <li>Public libraries have a considerable need for <u>sustainable</u> capital/infrastructure funding.</li> <li>According to Monteith Brown, the infrastructure obligation for Ontario public libraries is in crisis and amounts to \$1.4 billion at present, and could be \$2.1 billion by 2021.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote access by public libraries to infrastructure funding sources.</li> <li>Include capital/infrastructure funding as part of the methodologies and materials provided to members to address adequate base funding.</li> <li>Prepare a short communication piece that summarizes the results of Monteith Brown's study and that member libraries can use in their local level advocacy efforts.</li> <li>Meet with AMO, FCM, CLA and FedNor executives to highlight significance of Monteith Brown's study and why sewers and roads should not always trump libraries.</li> <li>Seek to have Monteith Brown's report posted on Infrastructure Canada's website.</li> <li>Update Monteith Brown's report using</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the public library's access to municipal infrastructure funding, highlighting how the demands for library services have changed requiring constantly updated facilities.</li> <li>Utilize FOPL's summary of Monteith Brown's study, which concludes that provincially library infrastructure is in a state of crisis, because roads and sewers too often trump libraries for municipal support.</li> <li>Work with the local municipality to ensure that the library is included in the municipal infrastructure asset management plan.</li> <li>Have prepared in advance funding proposals that are "shovel ready", in order to respond to intakes with short lead times.</li> </ul>

Issue	Target Audience	Messages	Approach – FOPL Will Do This	Approach – Member Libraries Can Do This
			2011 census figures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask Friends of the Library groups to advocate to Council directly.</li> </ul>
Literacy and Learning	<p>Provincial government primarily (Ministries of Education, Child &amp; Youth Services, Tourism, Culture and Sport, Community &amp; Social Services, Training Colleges &amp; Universities, Citizenship &amp; Immigration, and Health)</p> <p>Federal government secondarily (Human Resources and Social Development Canada)</p> <p>Research community (eg. OISE, Ontario Education Research Panel, Assoc of Education Researchers in Ontario)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research studies by Lumos and OISE demonstrate that libraries play an active role in literacy development, especially for preschoolers. Very positive outcomes have been measured in terms of school readiness and motivation to read</li> <li>Public libraries provide important community spaces for learning.</li> <li>Libraries assist users develop electronic information skills, which help to closing the digital divide.</li> <li>Public libraries are at the leading edge of developments in public access to digital information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage in dialogue with relevant government departments regarding policy and program development, eg. Best Start Centres</li> <li>Approach TD Bank as a potential funding partner for early literacy programs.</li> <li>Develop a funding proposal with a specific dollar value, focused on early literacy among immigrant families</li> <li>Continue to build champions from the research community, eg. OISE.</li> <li>Broadcast OISE's report widely when it is published in a peer reviewed journal.</li> <li>Seek speaking engagements targeted at educators (in addition to OLA Super Conference 2013) to explain the results of OISE's study.</li> <li>Prepare a short communication piece that summarizes the results of Lumos' and OISE's studies, which member libraries can use in their local level advocacy efforts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share results of Lumos and OISE research studies with local Best Start Committees</li> <li>Seek membership on local Best Start Committees</li> <li>Share results of Lumos and OISE studies with local Boards of Education</li> <li>Implement OISE's recommendations regarding the delivery of preschool literacy programs, as appropriate.</li> </ul>
First Nations (including Urban First Nations)	<p>Federal government (Aboriginal Affairs &amp; Northern Development Canada, FedNor's Community Futures program, Privy Council)</p> <p>Provincial government (Ministries of Aboriginal Affairs, Tourism, Culture &amp; Sport, Ontario Trillium Foundation)</p> <p>Potential champions (eg. NAPLO, AFN,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Because First Nations represent one of the fastest growing segments of the population, they have the potential to help Canada fill its expected future skill gap. Libraries are an integral to improving the education and employability of First Nations people.</li> <li>NAPLO recommends AANDC fund each of Canada's 615 First Nations a minimum of \$91,600 annually to provide basic public library services, requiring an additional \$55.5 million.</li> <li>Increased federal funding for First Nation public libraries is supported by Chief Shawn Atleo and MP Rob Clarke.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support initiatives by First Nations (eg. NAPLO) to promote greater provincial and federal funding.</li> <li>Arrange follow-up meetings with champions (esp. Rob Clarke) to plan next steps.</li> <li>Develop additional packages of initiatives and/or proposals to gain funding from governments, tailored as appropriate.</li> <li>Link First Nations with National Reading Campaign</li> <li>Address needs of urban aboriginals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make Band Councils aware of NAPLO's, AFN's and Conservative Aboriginal Caucus's support for dedicated funding for public libraries.</li> <li>Highlight to Band Councils the benefits of public libraries and the limitations of the school system in addressing literacy development, employment, and safety of 'at risk' youth</li> </ul>

Issue	Target Audience	Messages	Approach – FOPL Will Do This	Approach – Member Libraries Can Do This
	Conservative Aboriginal Caucus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public libraries provide equal access for all to information, culture, literacy and learning.</li> <li>Public libraries provide opportunities for personal and career development.</li> </ul>		