



MPP Meeting Campaign Toolkit

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Overview: MPP Meeting Campaign, Winter 2018

The goal of MPP Meeting Campaign is for representatives of the Ontario Library Association (OLA) and the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL) to help achieve the following objectives:

1. Educate Ministers, MPPs and staff about the importance of libraries for **education**, **poverty reduction** and **community economic development**
2. Inform Ministers, MPPs and staff about the need for new funding for libraries in Ontario, and seek support and input
 - This is OLA & FOPL's main Ontario "Budget Ask" – three Priority Recommendations!
3. Secure commitment from MPPs to follow-up with key Ministers on priority recommendations

To accomplish these goals, OLA and FOPL will be calling on its members to meet with their local MPPs in their constituency offices to emphasize the importance of libraries and build support and commitment to a modernized approach to library funding in Ontario.

Remember, **all politics is local**. When meeting with your local MPP, convey the importance of the local public and school libraries to the community, and how the OLA & FOPL's Budget Ask would benefit those libraries.

Key Messages: A Modern, Sustainable Approach for Ontario's Libraries

- Public and school libraries are Ontario's farthest-reaching, most cost-effective resource for empowering positive change in education, poverty reduction and economic development.
- Ontarians young and old across the province have a positive experience and memory of the impact libraries and librarians have had on their lives.
- Ontario's current funding approach is threatening the long-term sustainability of libraries across Ontario.
- Ontario's support for libraries must reflect the need for a modern, innovative library system that is responsive to diverse and evolving communities.
- We are calling on the Ontario Government to modernize and enhance its support for libraries by:
 - ▷ **Mandating that school boards and schools properly spend the funding they are allocated by the Ministry of Education for school libraries and teacher-librarians.**
 - ▷ **Providing enhanced, predictable and sustainable funding for all public and First Nations libraries across Ontario by increasing annual base funding.**
 - ▷ **Ensuring that all Ontario residents and students have access to comprehensive, world-class digital resources through the creation of Ontario's Digital Library.**
- Libraries need sustainable, predictable, and flexible funding to plan for and deliver real impacts as local change agents in communities.
- Modern, sustainable funding will ensure that all Ontarians will benefit from equitable, world-class resources in their local community – including tens of thousands of Ontario students and First Nations communities, that lack access to libraries and library services.

OLA & FOPL Budget Ask

The Ontario Library Association (OLA) and Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL) recommend **three funding priorities** that are essential for ensuring a modern, sustainable library sector in Ontario.

- Provide sustainable, predictable funding for all public and First Nations libraries across Ontario by increasing annual base funding from \$33 million to \$50 million – **an increase of \$17 million in annual funding.**
- Dedicate **\$25 million in new, annual funding** for the development and implementation of **Ontario’s Digital Library.**
- Mandate the use of **funding allocated by the Ministry of Education for school libraries and teacher-librarians** for its intended purpose. This will inject **an estimated \$100 million in annual funding** to school libraries across Ontario **without requiring any new provincial funding**, while ensuring that school libraries get their fair share.

Together, these Priority Recommendations represent better use of existing funds intended to support libraries and librarians, and a \$42 million/year increase in new funding.

Sample Meeting Request Email

This is a sample meeting request email that you can send to your MPP – just remember to remove all italicized placeholders and replace them with the appropriate information!

Subject: Meeting Request – *[local library name]*

Dear MPP *[last name]*,

On behalf of the Ontario Library Association (OLA) and Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL), and in my capacity as *[role]* of the *[local library name]*, I would like to request a meeting with you in January at your constituency office.

Libraries are Ontario's farthest-reaching, most cost-effective resource for empowering positive change in education, poverty reduction and community economic development. This meeting is an opportunity to share our vision for a modern, sustainable funding approach for libraries that reflects the needs of an innovative and integrated library system in Ontario, and to seek your input and support.

OLA is the oldest continually-operating non-profit library association in Canada, with over 5,000 members comprised of library staff and supporters from public, school, academic, and special libraries. FOPL represents over 400 public library systems in Ontario, exceeding 1,000 library branches in communities throughout the Province. Together, OLA & FOPL are committed to ensuring that libraries are able to continue to play a critical role in the social, education, cultural and economic success of our communities.

Please feel free to contact me to coordinate or if you have any questions: *[email]* or *[phone]*.

Thank you,
[name and role]

Step 1: Requesting the Meeting

- Enclosed in your MPP Meeting Toolkit is a template email that you can use for your own local meeting request.
 - OLA/FOPL staff will be able to provide you with the details you need on the name and contact information for your MPP.
- Be as accommodating as possible in terms of making yourself available to meet with the MPP, for whatever length of time they have available.
- MPPs get a lot of meeting requests. You should expect to follow-up on your request after a few days if you haven't received any response or a confirmed meeting.
- It is important to get a meeting scheduled with your MPP as soon as possible. You should inform the MPP's office that the meeting request is time sensitive.
- Once a meeting is scheduled, remember to share the OLA/FOPL Pre-Budget Submission and the names/titles of those attending the meeting with the MPP's office. This will help them prepare the MPP in advance and contribute to a better meeting.

Step 2: Preparing for the Meeting

- Review the Pre-Budget Submission and this toolkit so that you can focus on OLA & FOPL's Priority Recommendations and Key Messages.
- Also familiarize yourself with your local MPP, include biographical information and any recent media coverage, especially if you do not have an existing relationship. Explore how your MPP's interests could allow them to act as a champion for libraries at Queen's Park, and encourage them to bring the priority recommendations to the attention of the key Ministers (Education and Tourism, Culture & Sport).
- Stories strengthen your message. Look at the "Portraits" included in the budget submission to find inspiration for the type of stories to emphasize the importance of libraries in practical terms. Think of your own examples to convey the impact of libraries on individuals and families in the MPP's own community and schools.
- Review the meeting worksheet.
- Ensure that you have the appropriate material to leave behind for your local MPP after your meeting. This should include:
 1. Your contact information;
 2. The OLA/FOPL 2018 Pre-Budget Submission

Step 3: Conducting the Meeting

- Stick to the Priority Recommendations and Key Messages.
- Be passionate and respectful, not argumentative and confrontational.
- When speaking with the local MPP, pay attention to their body language (and yours).
- Be concise. The meeting will range in duration from 15 to 30 minutes (or more, possibly). Focus on conveying the importance of Ontario's libraries in a local context, and the Priority Recommendations and Messages.
- Draw upon your own personal experiences to enhance the Key Messages, and use local examples.
- It is important to remember that it's okay to say "I don't know" if you're asked a question that you can't answer. Just remember to identify the question in the enclosed Meeting Worksheet so OLA/FOPL representatives can provide you with the answer before you send your thank you letter.
- Take notes.
- Leave behind a copy of the OLA/FOPL 2018 Pre-Budget Submission, along with your contact information. Thank them for their time, and indicate that you will be following up.
- One More Thing – Don't Forget!**
 - An effective MPP meeting is one that often provides the MPP with an action that they can undertake on your behalf. This is especially effective when the action itself is simple and easy to achieve.
 - For this campaign, we want you to **ask your MPP to raise the priority recommendations in the OLA/FOPL Pre-Budget Submission with the key Ministers responsible for this issue** – the Minister of Tourism, Culture & Sport (Daiene Vernile) and the Minister of Education (Indira Naidoo-Harris).
 - They can do this either in person or by letter to the Minister – they do this type of thing all the time and it is not a demanding request.
 - Of course, the sooner the better, so be sure to indicate to them that time is of the essence with the Budget rapidly approaching.

Step 4: Following Up After the Meeting

- Send your local MPP a thank you letter, attaching a copy of the OLA/FOPL Ontario Pre-Budget Submission (enclosed as a separate document with this package), and include any follow up information that you promised.
- You may be asked in the future to follow up by email and phone with the local MPP to seek additional support or to request further information.
- Complete the Meeting Worksheet included in this package to let us know how your meeting went.

Meeting Worksheet

Use this worksheet to take notes that will help you prepare for your meeting and ensure that your information is stored in one place.

Meeting Details	Name of Local MPP: Riding: Party: Supporting Staff in Attendance:
Meeting Attendees from OLA/FOPL	
Meeting Tone (Positive/Negative; Supportive/Not Supportive)	
Summary of Meeting Discussion	
Questions from Local MPP/Staff	
Commitments made by local MPP/Staff	
Any Follow-up Required by OLA/FOPL?	

Sample 'Thank-You' Letter

This is a sample letter that you can send to your MPP you met with – just remember to remove all italicized placeholders and replace them with the appropriate information!

[Date]

[MPP]

[Office address]

Dear *[name of MPP or staff person]*,

On behalf of the Ontario Library Association (OLA) and the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL), thank you for taking the time to meet with *[me or us]* on *[date]*. *[I or We]* appreciated the opportunity to discuss the critical role libraries play in the lives of Ontarians across the province and outline the challenges facing libraries.

As you know, OLA and FOPL are focused on ensuring that public and school libraries are sustainable and can continue to be Ontario's farthest-reaching, most cost-effective resource for empowering positive change in education, poverty reduction and community economic development.

Ontario's support for libraries must reflect the need for a modern, innovative library system that is responsive to diverse and evolving communities. Libraries need sustainable, predictable, and flexible funding to plan for and deliver real impacts as local change agents in communities.

[Reiterate any relevant details from the meeting, including if they committed to help raise these points]

[Provide answers to any questions they raised that you committed to following up on]

[I or We] thank you for your interest, support and passion for Ontario's libraries. *[I or We]* hope *[I or We]* can rely on your support for the priority recommendations included in OLA and FOPL's Ontario Pre-Budget submission, enclosed with this email, which will ensure the sustainability of local public and school libraries in communities across Ontario. *[I or We]* would greatly appreciate you raising these issues with the Minister of Tourism, Culture & Sport and the Minister of Education as they consider Ontario's upcoming Budget.

If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. My phone number is *[your telephone number]* and my email is *[your email address]*.

Sincerely,

[Insert your name]

What if I'm unable to meet with my MPP?

- Meeting with your MPP 1-on-1 is the most effective way to communicate our message and support the campaign locally.
- If you are unable to meet with your MPP, there are other ways that you can contribute positively in engaging your local member.
- If you have a good relationship with your MPP, you can contact them or their office to arrange a **phone call** (or call them directly if you are comfortable doing so).
 - If possible, share the Pre-Budget Submission with their office in advance for review.
 - When speaking to the MPP, use the enclosed key messages, discuss the priority recommendations, and ask them to raise your issues with the key Ministers
 - Send a follow-up letter after the call, enclosing the Pre-Budget Submission. You can modify the sample "Thank You" letter on the previous page to reflect a call rather than an in-person meeting.
- Alternatively, you can **send a letter** to your MPP outlining the key messages and priority recommendations from the Pre-Budget submission.
 - A template letter is provided on the following page for your use if you are unable to meet or speak with your MPP directly.

Sample Direct MPP Letter

This is a sample letter that you can send to your MPP if you are unable to meet or speak with them directly – just remember to remove all italicized placeholders and replace them with the appropriate information! Don't forget to enclose the OLA / FOPL Pre-Budget Submission document.

[Date]

[MPP]

[Office address]

Dear *[name of MPP or staff person]*,

My name is *[name]*, *[title/organization]*.

On behalf of the Ontario Library Association (OLA) and the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL) *[indicate which of the two organizations you belong to]*, please find our joint 2018 Pre-Budget Submission attached for your review and consideration.

OLA and FOPL are focused on ensuring that public and school libraries are sustainable and can continue to be Ontario's farthest-reaching, most cost-effective resource for empowering positive change in education, poverty reduction and community economic development.

As outlined in the attached submission, Ontario's current funding approach is threatening the long-term viability of libraries across the province. As *[title/role]* of *[organization/library]*, I've seen firsthand how the current approach is negatively impacting the well-being of our public and school libraries here in *[electoral district]*.

[Provide any local examples if appropriate]

Ontario's support for libraries must reflect the need for a modern, innovative library system that is responsive to diverse and evolving communities. The three recommendations included in this submission represent a fiscally-responsible approach for both school and public libraries, which will ensure that all Ontarians will benefit from equitable, world-class resources in their local community – including the tens of thousands of Ontario students and First Nations communities who currently lack access to libraries and library services.

Specifically, we are recommending that the Ontario Government:

- Provide sustainable, predictable funding for all public and First Nations libraries across Ontario by increasing annual base funding from \$33 million to \$50 million – **an increase of \$17 million in annual funding;**

- Dedicate **\$25 million in new, annual funding** for the development and implementation of **Ontario's Digital Library**;
- Mandate the use of **funding allocated by the Ministry of Education for school libraries and teacher-librarians** for its intended purpose. This will inject **an estimated \$100 million in annual funding** to school libraries across Ontario **without requiring any new provincial funding**, while ensuring that school libraries get their fair share.

[I or We] thank you for your interest, support and passion for Ontario's libraries. *[I or We]* hope *[I or We]* can rely on your support for the priority recommendations included in OLA and FOPL's Ontario Pre-Budget submission, enclosed with this email, which will ensure the sustainability of local public and school libraries in communities across Ontario. *[I or We]* would greatly appreciate you raising these issues with the Minister of Tourism, Culture & Sport and the Minister of Education as they consider Ontario's upcoming Budget.

If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. My phone number is *[your telephone number]* and my email is *[your email address]*.

Sincerely,
[Insert your name]