

Office of the Chair

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August 26, 2009

SENT VIA FAX ONLY: 1-250-387-3200

The Honourable Dr. Margaret MacDiarmid
Minister of Education and Minister Responsible for Early Learning and Literacy
East Annex, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4

Dear Honourable Dr. Margaret MacDiarmid:

RE: 2009 LIBRARY GRANT FREEZE

At the August 25, 2009 Comox Valley Regional District board meeting, directors unanimously supported the call to express concern regarding the 2009 Library Grant Freeze. This matter was brought to the board's attention by UBCM, who were contacted by the BC Library Trustees Association.

What board directors specifically what to know is:

- How is it possible that the funding many libraries require to keep in operation is just cut, with no other plan to supplement the funding?
- What are the citizens who rely on literacy programs supposed to do without the funding that supports it and with no other back-up programming in place? What programming is the provincial government willing to put in place to supplement the programs it's taking away?
- Who will explain to the many patrons who are increasingly using these services, due to the current economic condition, that the programs will cease to exist?
- Will the money the municipalities pay into their local libraries be returned to them or be allocated to the local libraries they have provided financial support for?

We are hoping that this situation will be resolved shortly and no later than the Union of BC Municipalities Convention in October, when the annual library reception takes place. The provincial government needs to seriously consider if this is one of the areas of public service that we can afford to cut and how the lack of library reference materials, access to database information, internet service, books and knowledge will affect students returning to school this September.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fred Bates', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Fred Bates
Chair

cc: Don McRae, MLA, Comox Valley
BC Library Trustees Association