

Summary of Joint Library Association Meeting with Minister of Education September 29, 2009

On Tuesday, September 29th BCLTA President Andy Ackerman, BCLA President Ken Cooley and VPL Director Paul Whitney (standing in for ABCPLD President Ursula Brigl) met with the Honourable Dr. Margaret MacDiarmid, Minister of Education and Minister Responsible for Early Learning, to communicate the essential nature of library service and the need to reinstate and increase library funding at the earliest opportunity. The crucial role the provincial government plays in leading and fostering cooperative initiatives among public libraries and between the public library sector and complementary sectors was stressed, as was the role that libraries play in assisting government to achieve its core priorities. Also discussed were recent cuts to association funding and related impacts, including fewer training and professional development opportunities for library trustees and staff. As well, the Presidents requested that the associations be kept apprised of developments around Neighbourhood Learning Centres, the pending Library Act Review, and renewal of the 2003 Strategic Plan for Public Libraries.

The Minister was receptive to feedback from the associations, but advised that she was not yet able to provide any information on 2010 funding levels for libraries. She did encourage the library sector to get involved in the Budget 2010 Consultation process – by participating in 2010 Budget discussions or by submitting letters to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services. (See www.leg.bc.ca/budgetconsultations for further information.)

In closing, BCLTA, BCLA and ABCPLD communicated their joint commitment to work with the Public Library Services Branch and the Ministry of Education to preserve vital library services across the province; and also reiterated their request that the provincial government reinstate full funding to libraries as soon as possible.

Please click on the following link to access the joint [BCLTA/BCLA/ABCPLD Brief to Minister MacDiarmid](#).