

DATE: July 30, 2009

SUBJECT: BCLTA - Summary of Meeting with the Minister of Education July 28, 2009

Peter Fassbender (Mayor of Langley), Andy Ackerman (BCLTA President) and Maureen Woods met July 28th, with the Hon. Dr. Margaret MacDiarmid Minister of Education and Minister Responsible for Early Learning and Literacy and aides to discuss the current library situation. Jacqueline van Dyk (Public Library Services Branch Director) was also present.

In general, the meeting was very positive with the Minister assuring us that the government fully supports libraries. She was disappointed that we had gone to the media prior to this meeting but we explained that we had requested a meeting a couple of months ago and had not heard back from her. Putting that together with hearing that there were going to be cuts to library funding resulted in us having to take proactive action. This also had another affect of substantially increasing awareness of the public and various levels of government to the importance of libraries and our programs offered throughout the province.

We did emphasize that libraries across BC depended on the numerous grants that the government has provided us for many years and that we certainly appreciated their past support. Many of these programs positively impact seniors, children and others who turn to the libraries for support and services. We also thanked PLSB for their continuing support to libraries and the significance of this ongoing support.

The Minister told us that we should be hearing about budgets sometime in early August and that she is committed to working with us in the future. She stated that the government may not be able to fully support at the levels they have in the past but that she expected a positive change as the economy improves. She also committed to meeting with us after the budgets are announced.

Our recommendation is that we continue with the current campaigns and that we may have to develop different strategies if the budget cuts are significant.

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