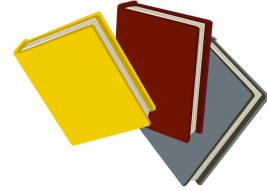


FORT ST. JOHN



**PUBLIC
LIBRARY**

10015 - 100th AVENUE
FORT ST. JOHN, BC
V1J 1Y7

July 23, 2009

The Honourable Dr. Margaret MacDiarmid
Minister of Education and
Minister Responsible for Early Learning and Literacy
East Annex, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4
Fax: (250) 387-3200

Dear Minister MacDiarmid,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the funding for libraries throughout the province. In past years, the Fort St. John Public Library has annually received a grant from the provincial government in the summer; in 2009 to date, the Library has received no word on funding from the provincial government outside of the OneCard Grant and Resource Sharing Grant made in the spring of 2009. This funding is a vital component of the Fort St. John Public Library's operating budget, and I am certain it is a part of the operating budget of all libraries in the province.

These operating funds are used to support the Library's basic programming and technological equipment, including but not limited to:

- Interlibrary loans, giving smaller rural libraries equitable access to collections in more populous areas of the province ;
- Book purchases;
- Union Catalog;
- Online reference services;
- Online resources for all libraries such as magazines and encyclopedias;
- Federations such as the North East Library Federation that deliver books and services amongst the various rural libraries in northeastern BC;
- Literacy programming; and,
- OneCard for all libraries in BC.

The City of Fort St. John, along with the Areas B and C, contribute generously to the financial support of the Library, but I fear that programming will have to be cut if provincial funding is curtailed.

Given the uncertain economic climate and the stress that comes along with such a climate, libraries have a more important role in British Columbia's communities than ever before. Support for literacy initiatives and library services must be maintained not only to serve the current needs of citizens, but to give everyone an opportunity to contribute and thrive in a forward-looking economy.

On behalf of the Fort St. John Public Library Association, I ask you to carefully consider the needs of the citizens of British Columbia and continue the financial support to the province's libraries.

Yours Truly,

Lori Phillips
Chair, Fort St. John Public Library Association

CC: The Honourable Gordon Campbell, Premier of British Columbia
Jacqueline van Dyk, Director, Public Library Services Branch
Mayor Bruce Lantz and Council, City of Fort St. John
Andy Ackerman, President, BCLTA