

BCLTA

*To develop and support library trustees to advance public library service in British Columbia.*

---

---



May 12, 2008

The Honourable Gordon Campbell  
Premier of British Columbia  
PO Box 9041 STN PROV GOVT  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

Dear Premier Campbell:

As you will recall, in 2004 your government's Public Library Services Branch (PLSB) delivered a strategic plan for public libraries entitled *Libraries Without Walls: The World Within Your Reach*. This was an ambitious undertaking following extensive consultation with library trustees and staff, library associations, local governments, schools, and many other public library stakeholders. Over the past three years, PLSB has worked hard to achieve the goals set out in the plan and has implemented and encouraged many successful initiatives that have gone a long way to improving library service around the province. Some of the many success stories include:

- The OneCard initiative, which enables library patrons to borrow and return materials from any public library in BC.
- The Evergreen initiative, which is currently piloting an open source IT system in several public libraries around the province.
- The formation of library federations, which enable groups of libraries to join together in the delivery of common programs and to access funding and other opportunities unavailable to individual libraries.
- Encouraging multi-type library partnerships through initiatives such as BC Libraries 2020.
- Facilitating group database licensing.
- Providing virtual reference services.
- Improving library staff training opportunities.
- And so on...

BCLTA

To develop and support library trustees to advance public library service in British Columbia.

Overall, the strategic plan has been well received by the public library sector, and its upcoming review and renewal is much anticipated. I am writing today to convey our strong appreciation for your government's support of public libraries and to thank you for the investments you have made, through the strategic planning process and through other initiatives, to enhance and improve learning and literacy in BC. Our province's public libraries are a crucial component to a literate and educated citizenry and further long-term provincial investment through a renewed strategic plan will benefit all British Columbians.

Our Association, which represents all 70 library boards in the province and over 650 individual trustees, is also thankful for the annual funding we receive through the Public Library Services Branch – to support our general operations and staffing and to enable us to provide our highly successful Trustee Orientation Program (TOP) to new trustees throughout the province. I should mention that word of our TOP program is now circulating nationally and we are in the process of mentoring the Manitoba Library Trustees' Association in their development of a similar program.

Support for the BC Library Trustees' Association is just one more way that the provincial government has acknowledged the importance of British Columbia's public libraries. We thank you for your investment in libraries to date and, on behalf of our member libraries and trustees, we lend our full support to the PLSB's upcoming efforts to update and renew the strategic plan for public libraries.

Sincerely,



Andy Ackerman  
President, BCLTA

cc: The Honourable Shirley Bond, Minister of Education  
cc: Jacqueline van Dyk, Director, Public Library Services Branch