



Peterborough Public Library

To: Peterborough Public Library Board of Trustees

From: Jennifer Jones, Library CEO

Meeting Date: November 10, 2020

Subject: Report PPL20-023
OLA & FOPL Support Letter

Purpose

A report to suggest that the Library Board submit a letter of support for the Ontario Library Association (OLA) and Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL) pre-budget submission to our local MPP.

Recommendation

That the Library Board approve the recommendation outlined in Report PPL20-023, dated November 10, 2020, of the Library CEO, as follows:

That a letter be submitted on behalf of the Peterborough Public Library Board in support of the joint recommendations put forward by OLA and FOPL to MPP Dave Smith (Peterborough – Kawartha).

Budget and Financial Implications

There is no budget or financial implications associated with the recommendations of this report at this time.

Background

From the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries website:

The Ontario Library Association (OLA), with the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL), has submitted recommendations as part of Ontario's 2020 Fall Pre-Budget consultation process.

Libraries are an essential part of Ontario's COVID-19 recovery. The following priority recommendations by OLA and FOPL will ensure that libraries can continue to adapt and perform their critical role during the disruption of the pandemic and beyond:

- Maintain critical provincial funding for Ontario's public libraries at current levels and work with municipalities to prevent unsustainable cuts to public library funding.
- Leverage Ontario's broadband action plan funding to ensure that modern broadband connectivity is available in more public library branches in communities across Ontario.
- Provide critical e-learning support through fair access to modern, digital resources for the people of Ontario – no matter where they live – by creating an Ontario Digital Public Library.
- Preserve the proven impact of school libraries on student achievement and success by requiring that provincial funds currently allocated for school libraries, teacher-librarians and school library professionals are used for their intended purpose.

[\(http://fopl.ca/news/ontarios-2020-fall-budget-consultations/\)](http://fopl.ca/news/ontarios-2020-fall-budget-consultations/)

FOPL has put out a call to action for libraries to submit a letter of support (see Appendix A) to our local MPP to augment and amplify this pre-budget submission.

As suggested in the template letter, it is helpful to add examples of successes the library has achieved during these unusual circumstances. Such examples locally may include curbside pickup, visiting library service, the increased accessed to digital and online resources provided, and the shift to digital programming offered by staff in response to our new reality. We have also instituted a number of health and safety measures which may be worth noting to protect both the staff and our community members. Other content suggestions are most welcome.

Both the Executive Summary (see Appendix B) and the full pre-budget submission (see Appendix C) are included for information.

This type of support letter represents a good opportunity for the Board to advocate for both the Peterborough Public Library and the importance of public libraries in general in Ontario communities. It also provides us with the chance to let the MPP know what we do and how well we are doing it, while providing support to a greater cause.

Submitted by,

Jennifer Jones
Library CEO

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Attachments:

Appendix A – OLA & FOPL Support letter template
Appendix B - Executive Summary: Fall 2020 Ontario Pre-Budget Submission
Appendix C - Getting Ontario Up to Speed: Fall 2020 Ontario Budget Submission

Appendix A – OLA & FOPL Support letter template

Sample Letter – Sending OLA and FOPL’s Fall 2020 Pre-Budget Submission Directly to your MPP

Remember to remove all italicized placeholders and replace them with the appropriate information!

[Date]

[MPP or staff person name]

[Office address]

Subject: Fall 2020 Pre-Budget Consultation - *[LOCAL LIBRARY NAME]*

Dear *[name of MPP or staff person]*,

In my capacity as *[ROLE]* of the *[LOCAL LIBRARY NAME]*, I am writing to share with you the Ontario Library Association (OLA) and Federation of Ontario Public Library (FOPL)’s Fall 2020 Ontario Pre-Budget submission.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated how much Ontarians in all communities rely on local libraries in their daily lives – to work, to learn, to connect to community and government services, to find or train for a job, and to access health information. I have seen first-hand how *[LOCAL LIBRARY NAME]* has worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to meet the evolving and rapidly changing needs of the people they serve, delivering critical services and supports while offering a wide range of resources safely. *[PROVIDE ANY LOCAL EXAMPLES IF APPROPRIATE]*. As the Ontario Government carefully balances the ongoing re-opening of the province and economy while managing an upsurge in COVID-19 cases, protecting Ontario’s libraries, while making smart, targeted investments, is essential to Ontario’s recovery and making sure that small, rural and Northern communities and schools aren’t left behind.

[I or We] available at your convenience to answer any questions or provide any further clarification that you require. My phone number is *[your telephone number]* and my email is *[your email address]*.

[I or We] hope *[I or We]* can rely on your support for the priority recommendations included in Pre-Budget submission, enclosed with this email. *[I or We]* would greatly appreciate you raising these issues with the Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries.

Thank you,

[NAME AND ROLE]