



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

Committee Report

To: Chair and Members of the Library Board
From: Rebecca Hine, Chief Librarian
Date: Wednesday, February 14, 2024
Subject: **Library Update January 2024**

Background: To provide the Library Board with an overview of events and activities from across the library system.

Ontario Library Association Super Conference

The conference was held January 24 – 26 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre and was attended by 15 library staff and one library board member. Everyone found it informative, educational and a great networking opportunity. In addition to attending, Wellington County Library staff presented at two separate sessions. The presentations are summarized below.

Amplifying Accessibility Through Collaboration – Connecting Public and School Libraries in Your Community

Jessica Veldman, Information Services Librarian, discussed how Wellington County Library and Upper Grand District School Board teamed up in 2019 to enhance local educators' access to reading materials for students with print disabilities from the Centre for Equitable Library Access. The presentation covered the process of identifying barriers to educator access; developing and implementing new CELA registration workflows; promoting the Educator Access Program at UGDSB; and engaging staff in learning about utilizing accessible reading formats.

OLA Climate Action Committee's Benchmarking Survey Analysis

Kiirstin Maki, Fergus Branch Supervisor, presented with three other members of the OLA's Climate Action Committee about the preliminary results of the committee's first benchmarking survey. The results of the survey are going to help shape the work of the OLA CAC as they work to support public libraries' climate and sustainability actions over the next two years.

Ontario Digital Public Library

Librarians across Ontario are advocating for the province to support the creation of the Ontario Digital Public Library. This would be a universal set of digital resources that would be available to all Ontarians through their local public library. When these resources are purchased by individual libraries, they are very expensive and many libraries can afford few, if any, of them. The ODPL would provide equitable access to a common set of online databases and e-learning resources for everyone in Ontario regardless of where they live with technology and digital literacy supports provided by library staff. These high-quality resources would support career skills, student success and lifelong learning. We are asking for an investment of between \$10 million to \$20 million annually. Any savings that

libraries would see from no longer having to individually purchase these resources could be applied elsewhere in their budgets.

On January 31, the Chief Librarian and the CEO of Halton Hills Public Library met with Ted Arnott, MPP, to advocate for his support of the provincial government funding this initiative, highlighting the benefit of universal access to the same set of resources across Ontario. Please see the attached correspondence from Mr. Arnott in support of our libraries.

Recommendation:

That the Chief Librarian's report for January 2024, including the attached correspondence from Ted Arnott, MPP, and The Next Chapter, be received for information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "RHine", is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Rebecca Hine
Chief Librarian