



September 14, 2011

Mr. Michael David Reansbury
Ontario Association of Library Technicians
c/o 1B Thorncliffe Avenue
Toronto, Ontario
M4K 1V4

Dear Mr. Reansbury:

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Ontario Association of Library Technicians.

Ontario Liberals value the importance of libraries in our schools and communities across the province. Ontario's public libraries are among the best in the world. They help our children learn and provide valuable resources for all Ontarians. They are also a hub of community life — with over 67 million visits each year throughout Ontario.

That is why we have been working with our partners to ensure school and community libraries remain a cornerstone of Ontario's knowledge economy. Partners such as library technicians play an important role in ensuring that students meet and exceed our high standards for education and ensure that families and entrepreneurs in communities across Ontario get the assistance they need in public libraries.

Ontario Liberals are proud of the significant investments we have made in our schools and public libraries, including increased staffing levels. Despite declining enrolment across the province, school library staffing levels have increased by 12 per cent over the past eight years and salary benchmarks for teachers — including teacher-librarians as well as library technicians — have been increasing by three per cent each year since 2008.

Ontario Liberals are supporting strong, open and accessible school libraries. Some of our investments include:

- In February 2008, we announced a \$40-million initiative beginning in 2008–09 to support an estimated additional 160 positions in elementary school libraries. School boards can use this funding for teacher-librarians or for library technicians, or both.

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- Ontario Liberals have invested \$590 million annually for learning materials and textbooks in addition to \$120 million over the past eight years specifically for library resources.

Ontario Liberals are supporting strong public libraries by:

- Providing almost \$5 million earlier this year in additional funding to strengthen the Ontario public library system and build capacity in the areas of collections and programs for communities
- Investing nearly \$400 million since 2003 to ensure that libraries provide consistent, reliable and accessible services and are up-to-date on modern technologies.

We have made these investments because Ontario Liberals support libraries and the value they provide to students and, more broadly, to all Ontarians.

Investments in libraries and schools are at risk under the PCs. The PCs do not recognize the needs of our schools, educators, support staff and students. Under the PCs, People for Education reported that just 58 per cent of elementary schools had a teacher-librarian, down from 80 per cent in 1997. School libraries would be among the first cuts the PCs would make to fill the \$14-billion hole in their reckless platform. Their cuts would undermine quality public education and students would suffer with fewer teachers, fewer support staff and fewer resources to maintain high-quality public education.

The NDP is no better — their disappointing platform ignored education. They voted against new investments in our schools, funding for full-day kindergarten and other measures that make Ontario schools among the world's best.

Ontario Liberals remain committed to our public and school libraries. We have a proven track record over the past eight years. In collaboration with our education and community partners, Ontario Liberals will continue to support the success of all Ontario students and work to ensure libraries are equipped to help Ontarians succeed in a knowledge-based economy.

Mr. Reansbury, thank you for your continued interest in and dedication to Ontario's public and school libraries.

Please accept my best wishes.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dalton McGuinty". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dalton" being more prominent and the last name "McGuinty" written in a more compact, connected style.

Dalton McGuinty
Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party
Premier