The third meeting of the Multitype Library Board was held on September 27 and 28, 1999 at the Provincial Library in Regina.

A discussion of the Board’s role and structure comprised a key part of the two day meeting. The Board discussed its role in facilitating cooperation amongst libraries in Saskatchewan. It identified joint purchasing of library resources as a key way for libraries to cooperate to improve services and decrease expenditures. However, Board members noted that coordination of such projects requires them to collect funds from libraries and pay vendors. This role is problematic because the Board’s current structure does not enable it to handle money.

Board members discussed changing the role and structure of the Board. They briefly looked at other models such as arms length government agencies, foundations, and non-profit corporate structures. The Board requested Provincial Library to research the implications of alternative structures and present them to the Board at the November meeting. Board Members will also take this issue to their respective library sectors for consultation.

The Board discussed new strategies for managing Database Licensing projects. “Database Licensing” is an initiative through which libraries of all types in Saskatchewan have pooled money to jointly purchase province-wide library access to electronic information databases which provide access to hundreds of full-text magazines and other information. The Multitype Library Board will work with the Provincial Library to devise new approaches to the management structure for Database Licensing initiatives.

Principles for multitype involvement in Database Licensing and preliminary guidelines for minimum standards of participation were identified. The Board will establish a committee which will make recommendations on databases to be purchased. Two representatives from each library sector will form the committee. Multitype Library Board Members will put forward names of candidates for the committee.

Preliminary Electronic Document Delivery survey results were reviewed. The survey was sent to public, school, special and post-secondary education libraries. Data was collected on library sectors currently using EDD services, reasons why libraries may choose not to use EDD, and libraries’ interest in joint purchases of EDD. Final survey results will be available in November. At that time, the data will be posted on the PLEIS web site and discussed in more depth by the Board.

Michael Keaschuk made a presentation on “Universal Library Cards,” that is, the ability to use one library card to borrow materials from many types of libraries in a city, province, etc. The
presentation highlighted library systems that have implemented universal library card systems – each with a varying approach. The Board discussed the examples and potential for similar initiatives in Saskatchewan libraries.

The Board established a Promotion Sub-Committee which will develop strategies to communicate Saskatchewan library cooperation goals and initiatives to its stakeholder communities. The Promotion Sub-Committee will begin meeting immediately. Tasks on their agenda will be to develop a visual identity for the Multitype Library Board and to develop a promotional strategy for the Database Licensing initiative. Other activities will include developing a communications plan, promotional materials, and planning activities which will promote library cooperation in Saskatchewan. One idea is to suggest a multitype thread to the annual Saskatchewan Library Association Conference.

The next meeting of the Multitype Library Board will be held on November 29-30, 1999.