The Saskatchewan Multitype Library Board (MLB) met March 11 and held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) March 12, 2008 in Regina.

**Annual General Meeting**

The partners agreed to renew all current products and maintain the same contribution levels as last year. The program now provides access to nearly 7,800 full-text journals. In January, the program received a refund of over $75,000 from the Ministry of Finance for PST paid erroneously in previous years. These funds must be reinvested in the program. Partner libraries at the AGM expressed interest in purchasing e-books in subjects ranging from literacy and ESL to science and health and those with French language text. The MDLP Committee will develop e-book purchasing guidelines to facilitate the process. The Health Quality Council has agreed to sponsor another year of the Cochrane Library. Some partners expressed a desire for marketing, publicity, and instructional pamphlets as a next step for the MDLP. There was some concern about past efforts in this area, so the partners agreed to make this discussion part of the program’s future development plan. Provincial Library will consult with the Ministry to find out if money held in the government account for the purpose of databases licensing can be used for other purposes, such as training and promotion. The partners also agreed that at least two sectors must agree on a product before it is recommended for a trial. Bibliobranchée has been “red flagged” because of repeated large price increases and service issues.

In the afternoon, Board members Heather West and Julie McKenna presented the findings of the Board’s environmental scan sub-committee. The partners then formed four cross-sectoral groups to answer questions posed by the Board:

1. What are some key opportunities for multitype cooperation? Specifically, what do you see as the greatest challenges that can be resolved by a multitype approach?
2. What is expected of the Board? What should be the next multitype initiative now that the Multitype Database Licensing Program is well-established and the Saskatchewan Digital Alliance has been formed to advance digitization?

The consensus was that the Board needs to provide leadership and facilitate communication among libraries. Other ideas for Board initiatives included funding and advocacy, reaching out to non-library sectors for partnerships and working on a single point of access for users. All of the feedback can be found on the Board’s environmental scan wiki. The information collected will help guide the Board’s strategic planning in June of this year.

**Letter to the Minister**

The Board will be sending out a letter of invitation for the new Minister of Education, the Honourable Ken Krawetz, to join the Board in a discussion about the importance of library services in building a knowledge economy in the province as well as providing culture and recreation to Saskatchewan residents. The letter will also highlight the Board’s successes, such as the Saskatchewan Libraries Education Bursary, partnerships with First Nations and the promotion campaign for province-wide e-library services.

**Digitization Update**

The Digitization Pilot Project Grant Program will continue for the 2008/09 budget year, with $19,000 available. An announcement on their year’s program is expected later in April. The 2007/08 projects, “Explorations of Saskatchewan Aboriginal Life” and “Culture and Heritage Image Bank of Southwest Saskatchewan” have submitted final reports to Provincial Library. The reports were reviewed by the Saskatchewan Digital Alliance to help in the development of standards and a set of best practices for future projects.

**Saskatchewan Libraries Conference**

This year, the Saskatchewan Libraries Conference will be held in conjunction with the Manitoba Library Association. The theme is “Prairie Partnerships” and it will be held in Regina from May 1st to May 3rd. The Board will sponsor the Conference’s Endnote Address— Library as Destination/Place, by Jessamyn West. Conference details are available online at: [www.prairiepartnerships.ca](http://www.prairiepartnerships.ca)

**Library Directors Survey**

The Board decided to make revisions to the survey that was sent to public library directors last year,
asking them about how library schools could better prepare students for working in Saskatchewan. Changes include, expanding the scope to include recruitment and retention concerns for higher level employees and asking questions about related topics such as succession planning and support for professional development. The survey will be sent to all libraries in the province. This survey will be confidential and only aggregate results will be publicly available.

**Provincial Panel on Student Achievement**

A panel of stakeholders has been created to provide the Minister of Education with 10-20 recommendations for improving Pre-K-12 student achievement. Joanne Beltramini, a Board member from Regina Catholic Schools representing school libraries, will sit on the panel to represent libraries. The Board will have an opportunity to make a presentation at one of panel’s future meetings on how libraries, especially school libraries, can contribute to the improvement of student achievement.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Multitype Library Board will be held June 11 and 12 in Regina.

Information on MLB is available at [www.lib.sk.ca/staff/multitype/](http://www.lib.sk.ca/staff/multitype/)

Or contact the board’s secretariat:

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