The Saskatchewan Multitype Library Board (MLB) held its most recent meeting on September 8, 2010 in Regina.

Advocacy vs. Advice

Assistant Deputy Minister, Darren McKee was invited to clarify the difference between advocacy and advice because the Board’s mandate is to advise the minister and the library community. He noted that advisory boards are relied upon to provide ‘best thinking’ in terms of policy or funding recommendations. Good advice answers the question “what is the benefit to the people of Saskatchewan?”

The Multitype Library Board is most effective when it speaks for its partners with a single voice and considers the risks and strategic implications for the government in its recommendations. Although various multitype partners fall under the jurisdiction of other ministries, the Government of Saskatchewan is committed to horizontal integration between ministries to work together to streamline services.

SIAST

The Board has been invited by SAIST to have a representative join the Library and Information Technology Advisory Committee for their Library and Information Technology Program. This committee provides advice and guidance to assist in ensuring the quality of the program. The Board selected Charlene Sorensen as its representative and will contact SIAST shortly after the meeting.

Provincial Panel on Student Achievement

Craig Melvin, an education consultant and former teacher, was commissioned by the Ministry of Education to prepare the government’s response to the “Final Report of the Provincial Panel on Student Achievement.” Mr. Melvin is working with all the partners and stakeholder groups before implementing the recommendations. He met with the Board to share details about the report and to add to his understanding of the role libraries play with respect to the recommendations.

The report emphasizes social issues, including early learning and child care for at-risk children. It also notes the importance of community engagement, especially with First Nations and Métis communities. There are some good policies in place to improve First Nations and Métis outcomes, but implementation has been a challenge.

Effective practices demonstrated by research need to be put into practice and all stakeholders in student achievement need to work on improving learning outcomes.

Proposed SLA Sessions

The Board is proposing two ideas for conference sessions at the 2011 Saskatchewan Libraries Conference. The first is to host a speaker to share the results of research on best practices for early literacy commissioned by the Provincial/Territorial Public Library Council. This research will be summarized in the forthcoming report by Heather McKend, Early Literacy Storytimes for Preschoolers in Public Libraries. The second proposed session is a panel discussion on distance MLIS education. Practicing librarians in Saskatchewan who obtained their degrees via distance education would be invited to join the panel.

Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) Paper

The Government of Saskatchewan currently has no plans to implement the HST. However, most provinces have adopted it and business groups support it; so, this issue may be revisited in the future. For that reason, the Multitype Library Development Unit wrote a short background paper to examine the potential impact on libraries if Saskatchewan implements the HST. Based on jurisdictional comparisons, it is unlikely that libraries would be significantly affected. The Board thanked Jack and Elgin for doing this research. The background paper is available upon request.

Strategic Planning

The Multitype Library Board selected images to improve the visual appearance of its new Strategic Plan. Once copyright permissions have been obtained for these images, the document will be made public and added to the Sask Libraries website.

The Board reviewed and confirmed its key actions for the next 12-18 months. They are based on goals and objectives from the Strategic Plan that the Board selected for near-term action at the previous meeting.
Next Meetings

The Multitype Library Board will meet next on January 14, 2011.

Information on MLB is available at www.lib.sk.ca/staff/multitype/
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