The Saskatchewan Multitype Library Board (MLB) met June 7-8, 2006

**Government’s Strategic Themes**

Assistant Deputy Minister, Gillian McCreary, outlined some of the government’s challenges and objectives on the second day. Overshadowing all government initiatives are the national discussions on equalization and the fiscal imbalance.

A long-term strategy for addressing the shortage of skilled professionals is through the education of young First Nations and Métis people. School curriculums are changing to reflect Aboriginal ways of knowing and by adding more First Nations and Métis content. Libraries can play a role in achieving this goal by working with First Nations and Métis communities to improve library services, as knowledge of libraries is essential for lifelong learning. Libraries aim to support lifelong learning for all Saskatchewan residents, a vital activity in the new knowledge economy.

**Representative Library Workforce**

It was recognized First Nations and Métis people, as well as many new immigrant groups, are underrepresented in Saskatchewan libraries. In subsequent meetings, the Board will discuss the role they might play in encouraging and supporting a representative workforce in libraries.

**Multitype Library Development Unit Staff Changes**

The Board would like to thank Amy Rankin for all her work in support of the Board’s initiatives. A new manager for the Multitype Library Development Unit will be hired later this summer. Jack Ma has assumed the Manager’s responsibilities until a replacement is appointed.

**Digitization**

Library and Archives Canada (LAC) hosted thematic meetings on digitization in four cities across the country. The Board heard reports from each meeting and found consistent themes. Digitization will have to happen at the local or provincial level, where there is an emphasis on local and Canadian content. There is wide-spread concern about copyright restrictions hampering digital projects among librarians and archivists.

LAC will facilitate information sharing and encourage common standards, but it will not be involved with large-scale content creation. LAC will be more focused on interoperability issues, with the ultimate aim of enabling many collections across the country to be searched simultaneously.

**Multitype Database Licensing Committee (MDLP) Report**

The MDLP Committee has been drafting documents to outline their roles and responsibilities, as well as their relationship with Board. Board members made suggestions to improve the clarity of these documents. The final version will be a single document, including an appendix that describes the rationale for the current, voluntary, contribution method.

The MDLP Committee has decided to spend its current account surplus on e-books. They found that ThomsonGale’s e-book service best meets Saskatchewan’s needs. Final title selections will be made at the June MDLP committee meeting.

**Librarian Competency Profile**

A working group has been working with the Public Service Commission to create a competency profile for professional librarians, as recommended in Working Together: Saskatchewan Libraries and other Information Providers. A final draft is expected later this summer.

**Board Appointments**

Board appointments are in process.

The next meeting of the Multitype Library Board will be held September 7, 2006 in Saskatoon.

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