

ONTARIO SCHOOL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Annual Report 2005

Anita Brooks Kirkland

Presented at the OSLA Annual Meeting, February 2, 2006

was represented by Helena Aalto, and OLA Executive Director Larry Moore was also on hand. The event gave us another opportunity to recognize this positive first step for improvement in school libraries.

During the week before school started this past fall, OSLA Vice-President Michael Rosettis and I were invited to attend a media event, where Premier Dalton McGuinty and Minister Kennedy visited a school to deliver new books to the library. We took the opportunity to engage the premier in discussion about school library issues.

OLA Research Study

The big news at last year's AGM, and the inspiration for our new sense of optimism, was the Ontario Library Association Board of Director's announcement of funding for a research study into school libraries and student achievement. On October 24, 2005, National School Library Day, I was given the honour of announcing the board's decision to fund a proposal from People for Education and Queen's University for a study linking data from People for Education's tracking reports and raw data from EQAO standardized tests. Other platform guests included Annie Kidder of People

for Education, Catherine Mitchell of the Ontario Coalition for School Libraries, and children's author Paulette Bourgeois. Results from the study are expected imminently. Our expectation is that the study will ask more questions than it answers, and our hope is that it will lead to further, much-needed research.

Teacher-Librarian's Toolkit for Evidence-Based Practice

A group of OSLA members took on the very important task this past summer of creating the Teacher-Librarian's Toolkit for Evidence-Based Practice. The toolkit offers fabulous resources for teacher-librarians to gather the evidence of their program's influence on student achievement, and to use that evidence for assessment and for advocacy. The toolkit shows us how to engage in data-driven decision making in education. This Web-based resource was launched at the beginning of the school year, to much acclaim. On behalf of OSLA, I would like to extend my congratulations and my thanks to the writing team, led by Past President Bobbie Henley, and including Kevin Bradbeer, Michael Rosettis, Carol Koechlin and Peggy Thomas. We extend our thanks also to OLA staff member Jennifer Marriott who designed the toolkit Web site, with support from

Andrew Ryther and Larry Moore. Partial funding for the toolkit project came from a grant from the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF).

Be The Change: Curriculum Resources for Global Citizenship

Another huge writing project took place over the summer. A group of OSLA members, lead by Peggy Thomas, took on the task of creating a package of literature and inquiry-based lessons for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve on the theme of Global Citizenship. The team worked extremely hard, and the Be The Change Web site was launched this past autumn. The project is part of OLA's Africa Project, and was driven by Peggy's inspiration and her vision of using this opportunity for students to Be the Change, personally, locally and globally. I was very fortunate to be a part of this writing team, along with Michelle Flecker, Sybille Parry, Marybeth Snyder, Lisa Teodosio and Aislinn Thomas. We are also very grateful for the support of OLA Executive Director Larry Moore and to Andrew Ryther for his inspired design and tireless efforts on our behalf. Peggy is a recipient of this year's OLA President's Award for Exceptional Achievement for her leadership with this project.