

use to change the world.” (Lewis) We have a central role to play in educating our students and our educational communities, and in ensuring that Ontario learners do not miss out on an invaluable resource that can assist in their development as information literate life-long learners.

Changing Attitudes at the Ministry Level

We continue to witness gradual growth in the positive perception of the role of school libraries in sectors within the Ministry of Education. Signs of support for school libraries are growing, and although sporadic, their cumulative effect brings us closer to achieving provincial changes that will address our areas of concern. *The Investment in School Libraries Grant, Grades K-12* was implemented during each of the past two years, reflecting a growing awareness in the Ministry of the need for designated funding for school library resources. The language in the memos to Directors of Education has referenced key statements, such as recognition of “the importance of Ontario students having access to new and up-to-date materials in their school library collections” and that “access to school library materials helps to improve student achievement.” Premier Dalton McGuinty has also provided public acknowledgment of the importance of school libraries. In his June 16, 2006 media release, he stated that “School libraries are places where students can develop a passion for reading and learning... [and] inspire our students and help them succeed.” Additionally, there has been a formal request to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch (CAPB) of the Ministry of Education, from TALCO and OSLA, that revisions in curriculum policy documents feature the inclusion of a statement on the role of school

libraries (similar to what was first evident in the Elementary Language document). We are very hopeful that the next curriculum document to soon be released, the Elementary Science curriculum document, will also contain strong statements about school libraries. In addition to the inclusion of a statement on the role and importance the school library in supporting student learning and success, OSLA and TALCO have also requested that the CAPB to include teacher-librarians on the panel for each upcoming curriculum document revision.

Collaboration between TALCO, OLA and OSLA

TALCO has recently gained status as an official Subject Association. This is wonderful news, and OSLA congratulates them on their success! This establishes a second Ministry-recognized provincial group to represent the concerns of school libraries in Ontario. Additionally, OLA continues to support our association in countless ways. During the past few months, a concerted effort has been made to collaborate for the benefit of all associations. A prime example of this collaboration is the letter that was written to the Hon. Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Education, requesting a joint meeting with representatives from OSLA, TALCO and OLA. OSLA Council remains hopeful that our Minister of Education will respond positively to our unified request to meet with her to discuss a number of identified major issues including:

- ◆ aligning the second phase of the Queen’s University research on school libraries with the Ministry’s needs for evidence
- ◆ creating a curriculum guideline to update and replace *Partners in Action: The Library Resource Centre in the School Curriculum* (1982)



The OLA Education Institute
March 1 4 pm
One-hour audio conference
**THE NOVEL MUSEUM: A “HANDS-ON”
LINK TO LITERACY**
Pat Elliott
Simcoe County District School Bd
OLA member, \$54.00 per site
Non-member, \$74.00 per site
www.thepartnership.ca

The OLA Education Institute
March 20 4 pm
One hour Web conference
**LIGHT THAT WIKI AND PUT A BLOG
ON THE FIRE**
Anita Brooks Kirkland
Waterloo Region District School Bd
OLA member, \$75.00 per site
Non-member, \$95.00 per site
www.thepartnership.ca

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March 27 4 pm
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COLLECTIONS: CANADIAN HISTORY
COMES ALIVE!**
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