



ONTARIO SCHOOL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

# President's Report

## Ruth Hall

### 2009 OSLA Council

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Since you're reading this article, you are likely one of the people who works in, works with, supports, or oversees school libraries. In my new role as OSLA president I've been thinking a lot about the work we do in school libraries, and, perhaps more importantly, how to convey the scope of that work to those "outside" the library. This issue of *The Teaching Librarian*, with its focus on collaboration, provides a timely opportunity to take stock of our relationships: relationships with students, teachers, administrators, and parents within our library communities; and relationships in the larger community. Many of us work alone in school library facilities. Our community relationships inform our professional practice and help us as we make choices, in our time-challenged work lives, about where to place our energies.

So what is going on in the school library community? In the current economic climate it's only natural to worry about budgets and cutbacks and libraries. However, there are good news stories, notably in the public library sector, showing that when the economy goes down, library usage goes up. I suspect the same is true in our school library sector. In spite of the economic downturn, the Ministry of Education has continued its support by including OSLA in Ministry consultation sessions and by allocating an additional \$10 million for elementary school libraries. Working together with vendors, the ministry is monitoring spending by school boards to ensure that these funds are used to provide additional print resources for elementary school libraries as intended and not to replace existing budgets.

We'd like to hear your experiences with this round of funding. Consider posting to the LNG (Library Networking Group) meeting space to share the experience with your library or board. Like our existing OSLA listserv, the LNG is a way for us to meet and share information online where you can both ask for and find information on a variety of relevant topics. The beauty of the LNG is that alerts are emailed to you, but all posts are saved and can be searched at any time. This is invaluable if your email has space restrictions, or just gets plain cluttered. Join the LNG space at [www.libraryng.com/user\\_registration](http://www.libraryng.com/user_registration).

Another good news story has been the expansion of Knowledge Ontario, with five additional databases, including French language materials. This publicly funded service is invaluable because it provides equitable access to subscription databases across the province. In order to maintain this access, we need to use it. Be sure your staff and students know about the rich resources available to them from school or home for free. Find information at the LNG ([www.libraryng.com/node/1703](http://www.libraryng.com/node/1703)) or the KO ([www.knowledgeontario.ca](http://www.knowledgeontario.ca)) website. For connection information or answers to your questions contact [lisa.weaver@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:lisa.weaver@tdsb.on.ca) or [jeffreyp@hwcdsb.ca](mailto:jeffreyp@hwcdsb.ca). Remember to think of the KO resources when you are looking for non-fiction reading materials.

Of course, libraries aren't just about "stuff" (physical/virtual resources and spaces). The resources don't mean a lot without humans (trained library staff) to make connections, form relationships, and

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