



**SASKATCHEWAN  
LIBRARY  
TRUSTEES'  
ASSOCIATION**

**BRIEF  
TO  
HONOURABLE Gordon  
Wyant  
2020**

---

*The only thing that you absolutely have to know is the  
location of the library.*

- Albert Einstein

## **Introduction**

Libraries are important cornerstones of healthy communities. Libraries give people the opportunity to find jobs, experience new ideas, get lost in wonderful stories, while at the same time providing a sense of place for gathering.

Saskatchewan libraries reflect the diversity and character, and the needs and expectations of our communities. Those needs and expectations are often extensive, and the services invaluable.

Our libraries are a great benefit for new Canadians and fellow Canadians moving from other provinces. They often are the only readily available source of comprehensive information needed by people for personal, family, and job-related purposes. Our community economies benefit when employees use it to improve job skills, or the disadvantaged use it to help break the cycle of poverty. During economic hardship, our citizens turn to and depend on our libraries.

Our library system is unique as it is a provincial system with universal accessibility and can provide support for many provincial initiatives.

## **The Challenges**

We struggle to keep up with the many changes in technology, infrastructure costs, rising costs in books and other materials, staff and budget shortages, and a growing demand from our customers for more information.

## **Recommendations**

SLTA asked regions to supply their top priorities and needs for their community libraries.

### ***1. Operating Funds -***

Systems need reliable and sufficient baseline funding with reasonable increases every year to maintain service levels which include operating funds for headquarters to ensure appropriate staffing levels, especially in leadership positions. Special funding is also required for improvements to rural libraries, such as wheel chair access, internet and WIFI services.

### ***2. SILS –***

The Ministry would take on the funding of SILS.

### ***3. Visionary Resources –***

Visionary resources to provide community hubs which include services for all residents.

### ***4. Sector Plan –***

The sector plan is important. Regions would like clarification of the role of libraries and literacy within the Ministry of Education. Libraries need a champion in the government – presumably someone from the Minister’s Office or the Provincial Library and Literacy Office.

***5. Phase Four – Reopening Saskatchewan Plan***

In order for libraries to successfully achieve protocols set forward in Phase Four, systems would like a coherent opening plan for libraries, and that the government take on any costs associated with it.

**In Conclusion**

As community leaders, we ask you to please make a commitment to Saskatchewan libraries and to library services for all.

On behalf of SLTA and Saskatchewan library trustees we thank you for the opportunity to meet and present this information to you. Thank you for your time and consideration.