

June 28, 2019

Attention: Honourable Rob Fleming, Minister of Education, Honourable Michelle Mungall, Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, Nelson Public Library, BC Public Library Partners

Regarding: 20 Million in 2020

I am writing in support of the 2020 campaign for BC library funding. While funding for a variety of infrastructure projects for all cities and towns across the province is crucial, we must not forget what continues to be an important "hub" of all communities; namely the library.

Libraries must continue to be sustained at a respectable level as they provide equal access to all community members to information, culture, education, internet access, etc. Libraries are a welcome and safe places in the community that all members feel invited to and are offered the opportunity of enrichment. Libraries are meeting places that belong to all of us and and we each feel welcome and grateful that we can share with our neighbors circulating materials without any cost. We don't have to buy a coffee to use the internet, we don't have to buy a book that we don't need to own, or media, etc.

I punctuate the "welcoming" aspect of a community library because my son and I experience this every day. My adult son has autism and Down syndrome. One of his interests is in going to the library each and every day. He knows he belongs when he is at the library. It is a place that is familiar, with familiar community faces that he connects with every day. It is HIS meeting place, his chance to belong, his right to borrow materials of his choice and discover new things. For a person with autism this stability and regularity means greater comfort and enjoyment.

But the truth is, that everything I have mentioned above is the same for each and every community member: a meeting place, belonging, ability to borrow materials, and greater comfort and enjoyment...that truly belongs to all of us.

Thank you for your consideration and remembering that supporting the library is supporting community in the truest sense.

Sincerely,
Susan Thiele
Nelson, BC