

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 27, 2012

On Family Literacy Day, teacher-librarians lament a decade of cuts

On this Family Literacy Day—as on every day of the past decade—the BC Teacher-Librarians' Association wonders if the Ministry of Education is serious about improving literacy rates in the province and increasing 21st-Century learning opportunities for our students.

Over 30% of teacher-librarian staffing has been eliminated in the past decade, part of the total loss of more than 3,500 teacher positions since 2002.

January 27 is Family Literacy Day in BC, a day to celebrate the love of reading together. January 28, however, marks the 10th anniversary of the introduction of Bill 27 and 28, which significantly contributed to the loss of over 275 teacher-librarian positions across BC.

Heather Daly, president of the BC Teacher-Librarians' Association, noted that ensuring BC students develop a life-long love of reading is just one aspect of the critical role of teacher-librarians. “Our role is also to ensure that students become fluent in the use of information regardless of the format,” she said. “Proficiency in research strategies is just one of the competencies that students need in order to be successful 21st-Century learners, and teacher-librarians excel at teaching those skills.”

The remaining members of the BC Teacher-Librarians' Association grieve for the lack of service to BC students in schools throughout the province.

“Given that our students need to learn to love to read and to become proficient users of information and content creators in their own right, it seems unbelievable that teacher-librarian losses continue throughout the province because of underfunding to public education,” said Daly. “The Ministry of Education’s BC Education Plan purports to focus on 21st-Century learning, yet government consistently misses the mark in terms of the vital role teacher-librarians play as information specialists in contemporary schooling.”

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For more information, go to the BC Teacher-Librarians' Association website at www.bctf.ca/BCTLA or contact Heather Daly at 604-937-6380.

