

**INNISFIL PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
MEETING AGENDA
Tuesday, February 20, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.
Lakeshore Library – Community Room**

1. Call to Order, Welcome & Land Acknowledgement
2. Approval of Agenda (copy & motion)

[Motion #2024. – THAT the agenda of the February 20, 2024 meeting be approved as presented.]

3. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest
None at time of agenda creation
4. Delegations to the Board
 - a) Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion in Collection Management – Mandy Pethick

Consent Agenda

5. Approval of Previous Minutes (copy)
6. Correspondence (copy)
7. Reports for Information
 - a) CEO Report (copy)
 - b) Municipal Council Report (copy & information sharing)
 - c) Library Board Report (information sharing)
 - d) Board Committee Reports (copy & information sharing)
 - i. Fundraising Committee
 - ii. CEO Evaluation Committee (motion)

[Motion #2024. – THAT the CEO Appraisal Committee, having achieved their mandate of preparing and performing an annual CEO Appraisal, be disbanded.]

- e) Health & Safety Update (copy)



Consent Recommendation

[Motion #2024. – THAT the consent agenda items 5a.01.01 to 7e.01.01, and the recommendations contained therein be approved as presented.]

Agenda

8. Reports for Action
a) LIB-03-2024 Collection Usage (copy & motion)

[Motion #2024. – THAT the Staff Report LIB-03-2024 Collection Usage 2023 be received for information.]

9. Business Arising
None at time of agenda creation

10. Policies
- a) **EMPLOYMENT** – Dress Code Policy #E-2024-03
 - b) **EMPLOYMENT** – Professional and Associations Memberships Policy #E-2024-04
 - c) **EMPLOYMENT** – Recognition of Life Events Policy #E-2024-05
 - d) **EMPLOYMENT** – Staff Recognition Policy #E-2024-06

(copy & motion)

Recommendation

[Motion #2024. – THAT the EMPLOYMENT – Dress Code Policy #E-2024-03, the EMPLOYMENT – Professional and Association Memberships Policy #E-2024-04 the EMPLOYMENT – Recognition of Life Events Policy #E-2024-05 and the EMPLOYMENT – Staff Recognition Policy #E-2024-06 be approved as presented.]

11. Strategic Issues
None at time of agenda creation



12. New Business
None at time of agenda creation
13. Comments and Announcements
a) Calendar of Events (link)
<https://innisfil.bibliocommons.com/events/search/index>
14. In Camera
No in camera at time of agenda creation
15. Adjournment
[Motion #2024. – THAT the meeting be adjourned]



CORRESPONDENCE LIST for February 20, 2024

6a.01.01	<i>CFLA-FCAB and CFE</i> , January 22, 2024, article entitled <i>CFLA-FCAB and CFE Joint Challenges Database</i>	(copy)
6a.02.01	<i>C2C Journal</i> , December 17, 2023, article entitled <i>Empty Shelves: The Noxious Politics Behind a Canadian School Board's Massive Book Purge</i> , written by Marjorie Gann	(copy)
6a.03.01	<i>Peterborough Currents</i> , September 26, 2023, article entitled <i>We Have Some Work To Do: More Diversity Needed in Peterborough Public Library's Collection</i> , written by Brett Throop	(copy)
6a.04.01	<i>Collection HQ</i> , May 22, 2022, article entitled <i>Creating Community Through a Diverse Collection</i>	(copy)
6a.05.01	<i>Dartmouth Library</i> , documentary entitled <u>Change the Subject</u> regarding a group of Dartmouth College students who challenged anti-immigrant language in the Library of Congress subject headings.	(link)

**INNISFIL PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, January 15, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.
Lakeshore Library – Community Room**

In Attendance: Anne Smith, Rob Nicol, Councillor Jennifer Richardson,
Councillor Robert Saunders, Barb Baguley, Sue Bennett,
Rhonda Flanagan, Cynthia Gordon, Raj Grover
Staff in Attendance: Erin Scuccimarri, Kathryn Schoutsen, Jennifer Miyasaki
Regrets: None

1. CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.
- The Board Chair delivered the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion #2024.01

Moved by: Rob Nicol
Seconded by: Jennifer Richardson

THAT the agenda of the January 15, 2024, meeting be approved as presented and amended.

CARRIED.

3. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

4. DELEGATIONS TO THE BOARD

a) Spark Fundraiser

- Kathryn Schoutsen joined the meeting to provide an overview of our upcoming fundraiser event “Spark”
- Details of the event were provided in a short presentation along with some of the initiatives the funds raised will pay for (seniors kits, short story contest)
- Requests of the Board for the event were outlined; Executive Assistant to send out reminder to Board prior to February Meeting
- Presentation and other relevant information for the event will be shared.

CONSENT AGENDA

5. Approval of Previous Minutes

6. Correspondence

- The Board Chair asked about cyber security plan given the recent attacks on other libraries
- The CEO provided information about our processes and current plans, as well as the ongoing training for all staff

7. Reports for Information

- CEO Report
 - The CEO highlighted the drop in HackLAB programs we hosted in December; allowed all ages to participate without requiring registration; received very positive feedback
- Municipal Council Report
 - No additions
- Library Board Report
 - Roundtable of events attended by Board and Staff and upcoming events in our community

Committee Updates:

- Fundraising Committee
 - Met on January 8, 2024
 - Kathryn Schoutsen provided information in Section 4 (Delegation to Board)
 - Tip Tap Banner is up; can we do more outreach with Tip Tap to increase our fundraising
- Truth & Reconciliation Committee
 - Met on January 8, 2024
 - Committee is working on revising the Land Acknowledgement statement
- CEO Evaluation Committee
 - Deferred to In-Camera session at end of meeting
- Health & Safety Update
 - JHSC Minutes included in package; no other updates

Motion #2024.02

Moved by: Barb Baguely

Seconded by: Raj Grover

THAT the consent agenda items 5a.01.01 to 7e.01.01, and the recommendations contained therein be approved as presented.

CARRIED.

AGENDA

8. REPORTS FOR ACTION

- a) Staff Report LIB-01-2024 Statutory Holidays 2024 and New Year's Day 2025.

Motion #2024.03

Moved by: Rhonda Flanagan

Seconded by: Cynthia Gordon

THAT the Staff Report LIB-01-2024 Statutory Holidays 2024 and New Year's Day 2025 be approved as presented.

CARRIED.

- b) Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Progress Report.

- Minor updates to report; accessible privacy pod installed at Cookstown.

Motion #2024.04

Moved by: Jennifer Richardson

Seconded by: Barb Baguley

THAT the Multi-Year Accessibility Progress Report be approved as presented.

CARRIED.

- c) Staff Report LIB-02-2024 Building Safer Communities Fund

- The CEO provided an overview of the report and the funds the library will be receiving over the next 3 years; the grant will allow us to hire a youth programmer to work on engagement strategies and initiatives.

Motion #2024.05

Moved by: Raj Grover

Seconded by: Sue Bennett

THAT the Staff Report LIB-02-2024 Building Safer Communities Fund be received.

CARRIED.

9. BUSINESS ARISING

No business arising

10. POLICY

- a) **OPERATING & TECHNOLOGY** – *Advertising Policy for Library Signs #2024-01*
- b) **OPERATING & TECHNOLOGY** – *Community Information & Display Policy #2024-02*

Motion #2024.06

Moved by: Rob Nicol
Seconded by: Jennifer Richardson

THAT the OPERATING & TECHNOLOGY – Advertising Policy for Library Signs #2024-01 and the OPERATING & TECHNOLOGY – Community Information & Display Policy #2024-02 be approved as presented.

CARRIED.

11. STRATEGIC ISSUES

There were no Strategic Issues to discuss this month.

12. NEW BUSINESS

No new business

13. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) Calendar of Events
 - o Link to Library offerings was provided in the agenda.

14. IN CAMERA

- a) Consideration of a resolution to hold an “In Camera” Committee of the Whole meeting as provided for under the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, the Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, and the Library Board’s Procedural By-Law Policy# B-2023-03.

Motion #2024.07

Moved by: Barb Baguley
Seconded by: Sue Bennett

THAT the Board holds a “Closed Session” Committee of the Whole meeting as provided for by the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, the Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. c. P.44, and the Board’s Procedural By-Law Policy #B-2023-03 to deal with:

- a) Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal employees.

CARRIED.

Motion #2024.08**Moved by:** Jennifer Richardson**Seconded by:** Rob Saunders

THAT the Board now rise and report on the In Camera session and resume the regular Board meeting.

CARRIED.**15. ADJOURNMENT****Motion #2024.09****Moved by:** Barb Baguley

THAT the meeting be adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

CARRIED.**DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next Library Board meeting will be held on

Tuesday, February 20, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Innisfil Public Library & ideaLAB – Lakeshore Branch – Community Room

Anne Smith, Board Chair

Erin Scuccimarri, Secretary

[Select Page](#)

CFLA-FCAB and CFE joint challenges database

Jan 22, 2024 | Intellectual Freedom, News | 0 comments

Please read the following statement on the joint database for challenge survey [here](#) and below:

January 22, 2024

Joint Library Challenges Database Tracks Censorship Demands Faced by Canadian Libraries

The Centre for Free Expression (CFE) and the Canadian Federation of Library Associations- Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques (CFLA-FCAB) are partnering in a single, joint database of challenges to Canadian library materials, programs, displays, and room rentals. The Library Challenges Database is being hosted by the CFE and resides on its [website](#). CFLA-FCAB will maintain a historical archive of anonymous challenges for research purposes.

“CFLA-FCAB is excited to partner with CFE in this important project thanks to the tireless work of CFE and the CFLA Intellectual Freedom Committee.” said Lorisia MacLeod, Chair of CFLA-FCAB.

“Collaboration often leads to the strongest outcome and, with the topic of censorship attempts, it’s more important than ever to ensure that we have strong data collection for both research and advocacy- a goal I think this joint database supports wholeheartedly.”

James Turk, Director of CFE, shares the excitement that CFE and CFLA/FCAB have committed to working together on providing a joint library challenges database which will be a uniquely useful source of information for libraries, researchers, and the public.



"It's important, amidst the growing demands for censorship in our society, that libraries be able to see who else has faced similar challenges and how they dealt with them," said Turk. "It is also important for the public to know when there are attempts to block access to books, films, and speakers and whether these attempts at censorship are successful."

For more information about the library challenges database, please contact [Ange Holmes](mailto:ange.holmes@torontomu.ca), Coordinator Centre for Free Expression, Toronto Metropolitan University, ange.holmes@torontomu.ca, (437) 995-7396.

News – Nouvelles

Dr. James L. Turk to be awarded the CFLA-FCAB Intellectual Freedom Award for his commitment to intellectual freedom and its advocacy in Canada.

CFLA-FCAB and CFE joint challenges database

Winner for the W. Kaye Lamb Award



FREEDOM TO READ

Empty Shelves: The Noxious Politics Behind a Canadian School Board's Massive Book Purge

Marjorie Gann December 17, 2023

Libraries have served as storehouses of diverse knowledge since ancient times and over the centuries blossomed into bastions of intellectual freedom. So why did one of Canada's largest school boards recently decide to remove most of the books from its own libraries? Children's book author and retired schoolteacher Marjorie Gann examines the discreditable politics behind the Peel District School Board's plan to send books written before 2008 to the landfill, and the literary carnage caused by this shocking decision. With Canada's entire children's book industry – publishers, librarians and writers' groups – now apparently in the thrall of wokism, it has fallen to a small group of outraged parents and teachers to defend students' freedom to read.

[Share on Facebook](#) [Share on Twitter](#)

([HTTPS://C2CJOURNAL.CA/AUDIO-SHOW-NEW/EMPTY-SHELVES-THE-NOXIOUS-POLITICS-BEHIND-A-CANADIAN-SCHOOL-BOARDS-MASSIVE-BOOK-PURGE](https://c2cjournal.ca/audio-show-new/empty-shelves-the-noxious-politics-behind-a-canadian-school-boards-massive-book-purge)) NARRATION

When I was 10 years old I discovered Louisa May Alcott's 1868 novel *Little Women*. From the very first line – “Christmas won't be Christmas without any presents” – I was hooked. I loved the world of the March sisters, their sisterly rivalries and affections and their earnest efforts at amateur dramatics, even though I had no idea what *Pilgrim's Progress* was or what it meant to be in the Slough of Despond. I just thought it was enchanting how Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy sang and sewed together and then went off to the Hummels' cottage to donate their Christmas breakfast to a poor, hungry family.

Alcott introduced me to a world that was totally alien to my own. As a Jewish family, we didn't celebrate Christmas. There was no copy of *Pilgrim's Progress* in my house. I also didn't have ancestors who fought in the Civil War as the March girls' father did; my grandparents arrived in America in 1906. The world of *Little Women* captivated me precisely because it was so different from my own. Little did I know the “harm” it was causing.



Beloved...but possibly harmful: Sisters Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy March have charmed readers since Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* was published in 1868. Recently, however, Ontario school board bureaucrats have claimed

such classic works contain "explicit and implicit biases" and must be removed from school library shelves. At right, a scene from the 1994 movie adaptation starring Susan Sarandon and Winona Ryder.

According to diversity bureaucrats in charge of libraries at Ontario's second-largest school board, I should never have been allowed anywhere near my favourite book, because it says nothing about my own "lived experiences." According to the board's internal training documents, classic novels such as my beloved *Little Women* are rife with "explicit and implicit biases" that make them "inherently racist, classist, heteronormative, and/or sexist." Rather than bringing joy and an appreciation for the wider world around them, these books are actually "causing harm" to young, impressionable readers. And the only proper place for this sort of toxic literature is the garbage dump.

Subterfuge at the School Board

In April 2023 Tom Ellard, a parent in Mississauga, Ontario, was given a school training manual clandestinely photocopied by a teacher from the Peel District School Board (PDSB), which covers a sprawling suburban area west of Toronto. Ellard is well-known locally for his participation on school councils. But in this instance, it was his discretion that really mattered. Before accepting the document, Ellard had to promise not to reveal the teacher's identity. Good to his word, today Ellard won't even disclose the whistleblower's gender.

Why such intrigue at a publicly funded school board? Because the document in question describes a plan for a veritable intellectual putsch at PDSB libraries. And in doing so, reveals the damage being done by "anti-racist" activists hiding within our public learning institutions.

The manual in question is entitled *Weeding and Audit of Resources in the Library Learning Commons Collection*

Cloak and dagger: After promising never to reveal the name of his source, Mississauga parent Tom Ellard was quietly handed an internal training document describing a massive purge of library books at Ontario's Peel District School Board (PDSB). (Source of photo: Nicole Brockbank/CBC (https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/peel-school-board-library-book-weeding-1.6964332))

(<https://librariesnotlandfills.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Peel-Board-Book-Purge-Manual.pdf>). Weeding and auditing are generally uncontroversial aspects of a librarian's job. All library shelves should be regularly reviewed to ensure their books are in serviceable shape and contain accurate information; any damaged or outdated items should be discarded or given to charities. But the PDSB's weeding and audit plan was by no means regular maintenance. Rather, it contained detailed instructions for librarians at the board's 259 schools on how to destroy the vast bulk of their book collections.

Rife with the jargon of critical race theory (<https://c2cjournal.ca/2022/09/the-dangers-and-delusions-of-critical-race-theory/>), the 54-page document explains that to "promote anti-racism, inclusivity, and critical consciousness" in the school library system, it is necessary to remove "any harmful, oppressive, or colonial content from our collections." To this end, most books written prior to 2008 (or perhaps all; the document is unclear) are to be eliminated "in order to maintain the currency and relevance of the collection while ensuring that the resources...remain culturally responsive."

“

The teacher who handed the document to Ellard reported that other educators at the PDSB were equally 'alarmed' by its implications, but feared reprisals – from reassignment to termination – if they spoke out against it.

🐦(<https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?text=The+teacher+who+handed+the+document+to+Ellard+reported+that+other+educators+at+the+PDSB+>

This 15-year limit applies to a sweeping range of non-fiction books, including ancient history, folk and fairy tales, religion and philosophy. Purged books are to be destroyed in a “sustainable manner” by being sent to a landfill or shredded. They are not to be sent to developing countries or even given away to charitable organizations like Little Free Library, because that would merely spread the “harm.”

In addition to burying non-fiction books older than 15 years, the plan also calls for the removal of similarly-aged works of fiction: everything from classic novels to simple picture books for the youngest readers. No literary work, no matter how beloved, timeless or innocent, is to be protected. “All items should be deemed potential candidates for weeding,” the document reads. “The category of ‘Classics’ typically consists of Euro-centric texts that were penned long before students’ birth dates, and may not reflect the lived experiences of students.” Ideological content and age, rather than literary merit, are the determining factors.

Spare nothing: According to the PDSB document Weeding and Audit of Resources in the Library Learning Commons Collection (excerpted on right), “any harmful, oppressive, or colonial content” must be removed, including potentially all fiction and non-fiction written prior to 2008. Purged books are to be destroyed in a “sustainable manner” – that is, shredded or sent to a landfill. (Source of photo: The Custodian (<https://thecustodian.ca/peel-district-school-board/>))

In an interview, Ellard says he was initially stunned by the plan’s scale and scope. “It was so at odds with the purpose of a library that I didn’t believe it at first,” he says. “I couldn’t believe PDBS was directing its staff to manage their libraries in this way.” It was true, however. The teacher who handed the document to him reported that other educators at the PDSB were equally “alarmed” by its implications, but feared reprisals – from reassignment to termination – if they spoke out against it. Hence the secrecy.

In a set of FAQs appended to the guidelines, the *Weeding and Audit* manual anticipates the inevitable reaction to a plan that contemplates the mass destruction of library books. There’s a jargon-filled, critical race theory-based answer to every objection – from why burial is required to what to say if anyone asks why the shelves are bare. “In Peel, we must acknowledge that society operates in white supremacist structures where socially constructed hierarchies...privilege some and marginalize others,” it suggests as a response to questions about empty shelves. “These resources are being weeded because they are causing harm ... because they are not inclusive, culturally responsive, relevant or accurate (racism, stereotypes, microaggressions, lack of representation or erasure of communities, slurs, oppression etc.)” The document recommends that, to avoid any unpleasantness, all weeding should be done when the library is closed.

Ellard’s informant explained that some librarians were eagerly following the new rules – removing and sending the bulk of their collections to a landfill – while others were hesitant to take such drastic action. When Ellard showed the purloined document to his local school trustee, they said it was the first time they’d heard about the plan. To bring greater attention to the issue, the next

month Ellard organized
other concerned
parents, grandparents
and educators into a
group they've called
Libraries Not Landfills
(<https://librariesnotlandfills.ca/>).

Its motto:

"No society that

destroys books has

ever ended up on the

right side of history!" The pushback thus began in earnest.

Saving books begins here: Concerned by the implications of the PDSB's radical "Weeding & Audit" plan, Ellard and other parents have created the group Libraries Not Landfills to push back against the mass-destruction of books.

Book Burying and its Fallout

The broader public learned of the situation at the PDSB early in the 2023/24 school year (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/peel-school-board-library-book-weeding-1.6964332>) when Libraries Not Landfills convinced the CBC to report on Erindale Secondary School student Reina Takata's complaints about her school's library. At the end of the previous school year, Reina explained, the library at her school was well-stocked with many of her favourite books, including popular young adult series *Harry Potter* and *The Hunger Games*, plus the 1977 civil rights novel *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. But when she returned in September, these books plus many others were gone. "There [were] rows and rows of empty shelves with absolutely no books," Reina told the CBC. She figures half of her library's books had disappeared over the summer.

"Rows and rows of empty shelves with absolutely no books": Erindale Secondary School student Reina Takata (top right) explained to the media that when she returned to school after summer break, many of her favourite books were missing from library shelves, including the Harry Potter and Hunger Games series. At bottom, a photograph released by Libraries Not Landfills showing a container of purged books destined for the garbage dump. (Source of top right photo: CBC (_wp_link_placeholder))

Beyond supplying the CBC with eyewitness accounts from Reina and other students and parents, Ellard's group also provided the weeding document along with proof of its malign effect, including photos of empty shelves and copies of books rescued from containers destined for the dump. Among the books confirmed (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9GYCe9XCmyg>) to have been discarded are pre-kindergarten mainstay *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and Anne Frank's iconic *Diary of a Young Girl*. Rescued books include the *Curious George* series and a host of other innocuous

picture books. Even the reliably-left-leaning CBC had to admit the process made no sense, and gave the last word to Reina. "I feel that taking away books without anyone's knowledge is considered censorship," she said.

Irrefutable evidence that publicly-funded school libraries were deliberately destroying perfectly good books for nakedly political reasons led to a swift (<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-peel-school-board-libraries-removing-books/>) and heated public reaction (<https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/peel-school-board-equity-cull-books>) elsewhere in the media (<https://thehub.ca/2023-09-14/brian-dijkema-who-left-the-barbarians-in-charge-of-our-books/>). Ontario's normally cautious Education Minister, Stephen Lecce, immediately ordered a stop to the practice. "It is offensive, illogical and counterintuitive to remove books from years past that educate students on Canada's history, antisemitism or celebrated literary classics," Lecce said via press release.

Having been caught in the act, PDSB leadership reacted by pointing fingers elsewhere. Despite earlier efforts by Ellard's group to raise the alarm with the board last spring, PDSB chair David Green told CBC's Power & Politics (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AmLJ_s8fEZ4) that "during this period of time we were kept in the dark; we were not aware of what was taking place." Green further ascribed the eagerness with which some school staffers had destroyed their own books to "a miscommunication." Yet they were simply following the explicit instructions handed to them by board administrators.

"Offensive, illogical and counterintuitive": Once news broke, Ontario's normally cautious Education Minister, Stephen Lecce, ordered an immediate stop to the PDSB's weeding and audit program. (Source of photo: Taymaz Valley, licensed under CC BY 2.0)

In a response to questions from C2C Journal, Malon Edwards, the PDSB's manager of communications, said via email that the board "has paused our disposal of

books." Regarding claims that beloved works such as Anne Frank's *Diary* or the *Harry Potter* series had been purged, she said examples of those titles remain "in circulation" and that school librarians have been instructed "to keep books with any publishing date that are accurate, relevant to the student population, inclusive, not harmful, and support the current curriculum from the Ministry of Education." Edwards did not provide information on how many or which books had already been consigned to the landfill. (Follow-up reporting by the CBC (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/teacher-librarians-speak-out-peel-school-book-weeding-1.7003363>) revealed that some librarians removed "more than half of their library's books.")

“

Ascribing the implementation of the PDSB's plan to 'a miscommunication' is obvious legerdemain. In fact, the story of how the book purge came to be provides clear evidence of the dangers posed by handing administrative control of public institutions to anti-racist activists operating under the guise of promoting diversity, inclusion and equity.

🐦 (<https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?text=Ascribing+the+implementation+of+the+PDSB%E2%80%99s+plan+to+%E2%80%98a+miscommunication>)

Edwards' vague responses leave Ellard uneasy. Libraries Not Landfills has called on the PDSB to "make public the list of the materials already weeded" and to restore any purged books that have not yet been destroyed to library shelves. And despite all the media attention and ministerial

instruction, Edwards' claim that weeding has been "paused" suggests it could be restarted once the hubbub dies down. "As parents we lack transparency and accountability for the loss of the materials," says Ellard. "And we have no clarity on who is responsible for the path forward." As for repairing the damage already done, Ellard figures it could take between four and nine years and \$16.2 million to repopulate the PDSB's school libraries to their pre-purge levels.

Who Thinks Treating Books as Garbage is a Good Idea?

Ascribing the implementation of the PDSB's plan to "a miscommunication" is obvious *legerdemain*. In fact, the story of how the book purge came to be provides clear evidence of the dangers posed by handing administrative control of public institutions to anti-racist activists operating under the guise of promoting diversity, inclusion and equity. Make no mistake, this is the same poisonous ideology that has infected universities across North America, imposing race-based hiring (<https://c2cjournal.ca/2023/08/racism-at-canadas-universities-is-wrong-in-any-form/>), marginalizing conservative-minded professors, cancelling invited speakers with contrary points of view and generally contributing to campuses devoid of intellectual freedom or merit.

The story of how a public school board declared picture books about curious monkeys and hungry caterpillars unfit for circulation took shape three years ago when the PDSB, Canada's second-largest school board comprising the racially-diverse Toronto suburbs of Mississauga and Brampton, was riven by accusations of racism. A black parents' group, Advocacy Peel (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/470230073644869/>), also known as Peel African Youth Advocacy, complained loudly that their children were underperforming at school due to board-wide systemic discrimination (while ignoring obvious socio-economic factors such as rates of single-parenthood and family income).

Wokist rage: the PDSB's plan to purge its libraries of books based on "anti-racist" ideology began as a reaction to claims by activist group Advocacy Peel that the school board was discriminating against black students. Shown at right, Advocacy Peel members disrupt a PDSB meeting in May 2023. (Source of photo: Advocacy Peel/Facebook, retrieved from CBC (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/kola-iluyomade-obituary-advocacy-peel-black-children-1.6082432>))

Seeking to calm the waters, Lecce dutifully ordered an investigation. Based on recommendations of the Review of the Peel District School Board (<https://files.ontario.ca/edu-review-peel-dsb-school-board-report-en-2023-01-12.pdf>), in March 2020 the province provided the PDSB with 27 directives (<https://files.ontario.ca/edu-minister-directions-pdsb-review-en-2023-01-12.pdf>) to correct the alleged problems. Most were focused on governance issues and hiring practices, but Directive #18 called for "a comprehensive diversity audit of schools – including naming, mascots, libraries and classrooms...to ensure that they are inclusive and culturally responsive."

The province, perhaps naïvely, told the board to check its libraries; anti-racist zealots at the board took this as permission to impose their own political agenda on the entire library system. From the slender thread of Directive #18, it appears PDSB bureaucrats concocted the entire weeding plan. The document clandestinely handed to Ellard does not list an author other than "Library Support Services," but Ellard's group has also released an internal memo from Bernadette Smith, the PDSB's Superintendent of Innovation and Research, promoting the weeding plan and reminding board employees to "follow the guidance from the training sessions" and to dispose of all culled library materials "in a sustainable manner."

Burning books is bad for the environment, so bury them instead: An internal memo from Bernadette Smith, PDSB Superintendent of Innovation and Research (left), and released by Libraries Not Landfills, encourages school librarians to dispose of all purged books "in a sustainable manner." (Sources: (photo) Nicole Brockbank/CBC (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/teacher-librarians-speak-out-peel-school-book-weeding-1.7003363>); (screenshot) LinkedIn)

The eagerness with which the PDSB's administrators embraced the idea of destroying books in the name of diversity appears consistent with the board's growing reputation for intolerance in other areas. The *National Post*, for example, recently published a front-page investigation into rampant anti-Semitism at the PDSB following the October 7 Hamas attacks on Israel. As the *Post* reported (<https://nationalpost.com/news/jewish-teachers-scared-for-life-peel-school-board>) after interviewing numerous teachers at the board, "Some principals are using social media tools like X and Facebook to broadcast hateful content toward Israel and Jews on feeds that are displayed in school foyers and over the internal public address system." Several Jewish teachers told the *Post* that, given this atmosphere, they feared for their safety.

The Rot Spreads

Beyond publicly-funded education institutions such as universities and school boards, the rejection of pluralism and freedom of thought is apparently infecting other components of the literary world as well. For example, well-known Canadian children's book publisher Tundra Book Group states on its website (<https://tundrabooks.com/submissions/>) that it is "currently only accepting manuscript and art submissions by creators from underrepresented communities. If you identify as Black, Indigenous or as a person of color, [sic] LGBTQI2S+, having a disability or have ever had refugee status, we want to hear from you!" Tundra's commitment to diversity appears to exclude a vast array of established Canadian children's authors and illustrators, as well as most of this country's young readers.

Not just school boards are infected by the new racism: Children's book publishers, including Tundra Book Group, have become obsessed with identity over literary merit.

Other major children's publishers, including KidsCan and Second Story, have similar submission policies. And in 2021, Annick Press issued a call for applications for a mentorship program for writers "whose perspectives have historically been excluded from children's publishing. This

includes but is not limited to LGBTQ2SIA+ writers, Black writers, Indigenous writers, writers of color, [sic] writers living with disabilities, and anyone living at the intersections of these identities.”

Curiously, all these publishing houses remained silent throughout the PDSB scandal. But when news broke around the same time that the Waterloo Catholic District School Board (https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/books/access-to-books-with-lgbtq-themes-restricted-by-ontario-s-waterloo-catholic-district-school-board/article_241b8c55-cc83-5c0b-aec0-6b9d5118cfc5.html) in southwestern Ontario was screening books in a reading contest to limit access by young students to new books with explicit LGBTQ themes, Annick and two other children's publishers released a joint statement (<https://owlkidsbooks.com/a-joint-statement-on-childrens-access-to-books/>) declaring, “It is especially critical that all kids, including those who are 2SLGBTQIA+ and from other underrepresented communities, have access to stories that celebrate the rich and diverse experiences of the children we serve across the country.” It appears book publishers are more interested in selling *new* books with a particular ideological bent than they are in defending the foundational issue of the freedom to read *any* book.

A Delightful Diversity of Children's Literature in Canada

The argument that publishers need to impose artificial discriminatory policies to diversify their lists, or that school library collections need to be culled to ensure young readers have a “rich and diverse” reading experience, is itself a falsehood. It is belied by the fact that Canada has for decades been well-supplied with a broad range of stories and perspectives aimed at children. There is no diversity problem in Canada's school libraries or the publishing world in need of fixing.

“

Michael Kusugak's wonderful Arctic stories, like 1988's A Promise is a Promise, seamlessly merged legends of the past with life in the North today. Since his books were originally published by Annick, it's puzzling that today the same publisher thinks Indigenous authors are historically 'excluded.'

🐦(<https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?text=Michael+Kusugak%E2%80%99s+wonderful+Arctic+stories%2C+like+1988%E2%80%99s+A+Promise+is>)

Judith Saltman's authoritative 1987 *Modern Canadian Children's Books* (<https://www.cmreviews.ca/cm/cmarchive/vol15no5/moderncanchildrens.html>) charts the emergence of a distinctly Canadian children's literature early in the 1970s, citing numerous examples of ethnic diversity in subject matter and authorship. Any well-stocked children's library will have countless books illuminating the Canadian experience from multiple perspectives. Shizuye Takashima's 1971 *A Child in Prison Camp*, for example, recalls the author's experience in an internment camp during the Second World War.

Befitting Canada's identity as an immigrant nation, the arrival experience has long been a subject for children's books. Two significant early examples date to 1980: Betty Waterton's *Pettranella* (<https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/read-up-on-it/015020-6007-e.html>), which tells the story of European immigrants arriving to homestead in Manitoba in the 19th century, while Shelley Tanaka's *Michi's New Year* describes Vancouver of the same era from the perspective of a young Japanese immigrant girl. Multicultural writing for children in Canada really took off in the 1990s, with Tanzanian-Canadian Tololwa Molle's gorgeously illustrated *Orphan Boy* winning the prestigious Governor-General's Award in 1990.

Diversity aplenty: Canadian children's literature has a long record of diverse authors and stories, including, from top, Betty Waterton's Pettranella, Shelley Tanaka's Michi's New Year and Tololwa M. Mole's Governor-General's Award-Winning The Orphan Boy.

Indigenous stories have also been a popular theme for young readers in this country for many decades. In 1977, Canadian children could read *Peter Pitseolak's Escape from Death*, a story of two Inuit hunters on a fast-moving ice floe. As a teacher, I frequently used Tundra Books' series of beautifully painted and retold legends by Mohawk artist C. J. Taylor (published between 1990 and 1994) in the classroom. Michael Kusugak's wonderful Arctic stories, like 1988's *A Promise is a Promise*, seamlessly merged legends of the past with life in the North today. Since his books were originally published by Annick, it's puzzling that today the same publisher thinks Indigenous authors are historically "excluded."

Concerning LGBTQ and disabled authors, *Mom and Mum are Getting Married* by Ken Setterington and Alice Priestly came out in 2004. And as far back as 1972, Jean Little drew on her own experience of near-blindness to write one of Canada's most memorable children's books about living with a disability, *From Anna*. None of these books was the result of political zealotry. They appeared organically from publishers and writers with stories to tell.

Further, books with white, heterosexual main characters can have something important to say to *all* readers. Janet Lunn's *The Root Cellar* shifts back and forth in time between Ontario and the American South, bringing to life the trauma of the American Civil War. *The Pit Pony* by Joyce Barkhouse paints a vivid picture of the dangerous working conditions for turn-of-the-20th-century

Cape Breton coal miners, including child labourers. And Scholastic's *Dear Canada* series of fictionalized diaries presents a comprehensive view of Canadian history, from the *filles du roi* of mid-17th-century Quebec to the Great Depression. Allowing our youngest citizens to learn about our shared history is critical to developing a strong sense of Canadian identity in the next generation.

As for older classics dismissed as racist, sexist and colonialist by the PDSB's weeding document, such a sneering characterization ignores the transcendental nature of all great literature. My father was born in Latvia in 1903; his favourite boyhood book was Robert Louis Stevenson's

Historically "excluded"? Contrary to recent claims, Indigenous stories have occupied a special place for decades in Canadian school libraries.

Treasure Island, which he read repeatedly as he vicariously sailed on the *Hispaniola* with young Jim Hawkins and the pirates. The book is as Eurocentric as you can get, but it nonetheless captured my father's imagination and in doing so introduced him to a lifelong love of reading – just as *Little Women* did for me.

As a former elementary school teacher, I share Ellard's shocked reaction to any plan that seeks to destroy books on the basis of age or ideology. Doing so requires a profound ignorance of what teaching reading is about: informing the naturally curious child about animals, plants and planets; expanding vocabulary and developing sensitivity to the beauty of the English language; showing how different characters living in different times and places think and feel; and experiencing wonder as you hear toads talk, see brooms fly or look into magic mirrors. All are crucial aspects in the formation of young minds.

“

The goal should be to encourage a broad diversity throughout the library collection, rather than demand removal of any individual book deemed insufficiently 'diverse' regardless of its other merits.

🐦(<https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?text=The+goal+should+be+to+encourage+a+broad+diversity+throughout+the+library+collection%2C+rathe>)

Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden* is one of the most successful books I've ever taught in the classroom. This story of an encounter between Mary and Colin, two spoiled upper-class English children, and Yorkshire cottage boy Dickon touches all youngsters regardless of their "lived experience." Admittedly, the book is marred by incidental racist language; when Mary arrives at her uncle's manor from colonial India the maid expresses surprise that she isn't "black" and the child erupts in rage at the affront. It's a passage that bears some unpacking.

But rather than cancelling the best children's book ever written, I always tried to explain the prejudices of the Edwardian period. Kids can understand that people thought differently in the past – even if some adults can't. Illustrating a different issue, *The Wind in the Willows* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zE0uAfAuZ08>) has no female protagonist. But must we toss aside Kenneth Grahame's poetic evocation of a vanished countryside, with its hilarious satire of Mr. Toad's bombast, because it fails some arbitrary gender quota?

The greatest stories ever told: Despite accusations of racism, sexism and colonialism, classic literature such as Robert Louis Stevenson's Treasure Island, Frances Hodgson Burnett's The Secret Garden and Kenneth Grahame's The Wind in the Willows offers young readers the opportunity to embark on a lifelong love of reading. Shown, top to bottom, scenes from movie adaptations of each book.

The argument that books must meet post-modern representational balance (<https://edtrust.org/tool-for-representational-balance/>) standards (of the sort demanded by the U.S.-based Education Trust (<https://edtrust.org/>)) or be removed from circulation is a mischaracterization of diversity. The goal should be to encourage a broad diversity *throughout* the library collection, rather than demand removal of any *individual* book deemed insufficiently “diverse” regardless of its other merits. Diversity is achieved through a plurality of viewpoints, characters and stories, not by enforcing one particular template on each and every book.

Canada's Self-Proclaimed Voices of Freedom Fall Silent

The swift rebuke dealt to the PDSB's book-burial scheme by parents, the media and Ontario's government suggests the values of intellectual freedom and literary excellence still count for something, at least in the public's mind. Yet many other necessary voices were disappointingly silent throughout this affair. Together with a group of other children's book authors, I wrote to three well-known Canadian organizations that claim to defend the freedom to read, reminding them that “books do not belong in landfills, but in the hands of children,” and urging them to “issue a public

statement condemning the actions of this publicly-funded school board.” The reactions from The Writers’ Union of Canada (TWUC), the Ontario Library Association and PEN Canada (a free expression lobby group) are revealing, and deeply troubling.

Around the time of the PDSB library scandal, TWUC (<https://www.writersunion.ca/canadas-school-libraries-require-serious-investment>) issued several other statements on book bans. In September 2023, in response to a proposal in Brandon, Manitoba to create a parental committee to review books at the local school board (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/brandon-school-division-books-libraries-1.6852651#:~:text=In%20the%20end%2C%20trustees%20in%20Brandon%20have%20rejected,certain%20books%20dealing%20with%20sexuality%20and%20gender%20identity.>) for sexual and gender identity content, the organization declared that it “notes with growing concern the trend in Canada of challenges to specific books in schools and libraries across the country. Very often those with a focus on LGBTQIA2s+ perspectives and stories are the target of coordinated complaints.”

Then in November, the group addressed

(<https://writersunion.ca/memo-suggests-shadowbanning-of-lgbtqia2s-books-in-some-ontario-schools>) the previously mentioned “access restrictions” to LGBTQ+ books

at the Waterloo Catholic School Board for works that were part of a student reading competition called “Forest of

Brave defenders of intellectual freedom...some of the time: The organizations depicted above claim to support the freedom to read, yet all abandoned their sense of purpose when confronted with the PDSB's book purge.

Reading.” The unequivocal response: “TWUC believes any access restrictions for Forest of Reading shortlisted titles must be immediately removed. Furthermore, policies that *keep students from books for any reason* must be reconsidered.” (Emphasis added.)

You might think that dumping library books in a landfill would be “keeping students from books,” but in this case, TWUC somehow lost its sense of outrage. “Initial media reports suggested an extreme book-culling policy had been implemented,” it stated blandly. “The PDSB has since clarified its intention was to assess the collection, and replenish shelves with diverse books reflective of the broader community.” The shelves at PDSB schools are now half-empty. Ho-hum.

Like TWUC, the Ontario Library Association also claims to stand resolutely in favour of unfettered reading. According to its Statement on Intellectual Freedom (https://accessola.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/2020_OLAIntellectualFreedomStatement.pdf), “The Ontario Library Association...[is] committed to the fundamental rights of intellectual freedom, the freedom to read and freedom of the press...Materials are not excluded from library collections based on race, place of birth, origin, ethnic origin, ethnicity, citizenship, age, creed, disability, family structure, sex, and sexual orientation.” Furthermore, the first line of its official statement on the rights of children states (<https://accessola.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/1998-OLACHildrensRightsLibrary.pdf>) that, “Children in public libraries have the right to intellectual freedom.” Sounds clear enough.

“

Well-written children's books do not cause harm. They entertain, illuminate, enlighten and educate. And in doing so, they can (hopefully) inspire a lifelong love of reading. To encourage children to reap these many benefits requires a library with shelves sagging under the weight of books.

🐦(<https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?text=Well-written+children%E2%80%99s+books+do+not+cause+harm.+They+entertain%2C+illuminate%2C>

Yet when asked to comment on the PDSB situation, the organization meekly deferred to the Ontario School Library Association's equity-based Guide to the Selection and Deselection of School Library Resources (https://accessola.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/FINAL-2023-09-OSLA-A-Guide-to-the-Selection-and-Deselection-of-School-Library-Resources_EN.pdf). This document allows for the removal of a book if it "contradicts policies on diversity and inclusion as outlined by other school board documents." Hardly a resounding endorsement of freedom to read; more like rank hypocrisy that, for some reason, precisely follows woke ideology.

PEN Canada never bothered to answer our queries.

Burning Books, Burning People

In his 1821 play *Almansor*, the German poet Heinrich Heine famously wrote that, "Those who burn books will in the end burn people." More than a century later, on the evening of May 10, 1933, the infamous mass bonfire of "un-German" and Jewish books took place at Berlin's Opernplatz, organized by Nazi Germany's Reich Minister of Public Enlightenment, Joseph Goebbels. "You are doing the right thing in committing the evil spirit of the past to the flames at this late hour of the night," Goebbels declared to the assembled throng. "It is a strong, great and symbolic act." We know what Nazi Germany did next.

"Those who burn books will in the end burn people": The prescient warning of 19th-century German playwright Heinrich Heine came to pass a century later with the mass bonfire of Jewish books in Berlin on May 10, 1933, which was followed by Nazi Germany's mass murder of Jews beginning in 1941. (Source of photo: Everett Collection (<https://www.shutterstock.com/g/everett/Shutterstock>))

Bureaucrats at Peel District didn't burn books – they buried them because that's the "sustainable" way to destroy literature. But Heine's warning remains acutely relevant. Driven by an extreme ideology that seeks to eradicate viewpoints it considers "evil," nameless woke activists sought to purify the library collections to their own satisfaction, in line with the actions of universities, book publishers and so-called advocacy groups that actively seek or obligingly consent to politically-motivated limitations on the intellectual freedom of younger generations.

Well-written children's books do not cause harm. They entertain, illuminate, enlighten and educate. And in doing so, they can (hopefully) inspire a lifelong love of reading. To encourage children to reap these many benefits requires a library with shelves sagging under the weight of books – because it is impossible to know what particular book will capture the imagination of which particular child. The real harm lies in destroying books.

Marjorie Gann is a retired elementary school teacher and children's book author and reviewer. Her non-fiction books include Speak a Word for Freedom: Women Against Slavery (<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/232307/speak-a-word-for-freedom-by-janet-willen-and-marjorie-gann/>) and Five Thousand Years of Slavery

(<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/202299/five-thousand-years-of-slavery-by-marjorie-gann-and-janet-willen/9781770491519/>), both co-authored with Janet Willen. *Gann sits on the Advisory Board of the Aristotle Foundation.*

Love C2C Journal? Here's how you can help us *grow*.

- ✓ [Subscribe\(https://c2cjournal.ca/subscribe/\)](https://c2cjournal.ca/subscribe/)
- ✓ [Donate\(https://c2cjournal.ca/donate/\)](https://c2cjournal.ca/donate/)
- ✓ [Like our Facebook Page\(https://www.facebook.com/c2cjournal/\)](https://www.facebook.com/c2cjournal/)
- ✓ [Share a story](#)

[Like](#) [Share](#) Be the first of your friends to like this.

More for you

(<https://c2cjournal.ca/2024/01/running-on-empty-anti-semitism-infects-canadas-theatre-scene/>)

Running on Empty: Anti-Semitism Infects Canada's Theatre Scene (<https://c2cjournal.ca/2024/01/running-on-empty-anti-semitism-infects-canadas-theatre-scene/>)

Michael Posner

(<https://c2cjournal.ca/2024/01/epic-fail-the-liberals-online-news-act-faceplant/>)

Epic Fail: The Liberals' *Online News Act* Faceplant (<https://c2cjournal.ca/2024/01/epic-fail-the-liberals-online-news-act-faceplant/>)

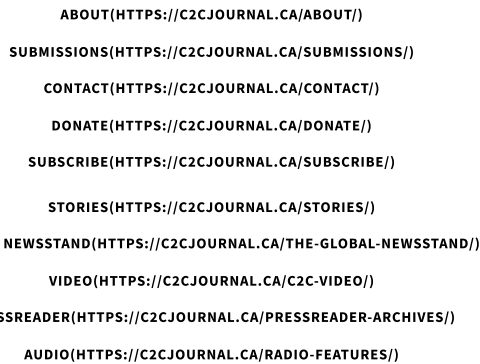
Clayton DeMaine

(<https://c2cjournal.ca/2024/01/something-to-cry-about-the-disastrous-rollout-of-canadas-10-a-day-childcare/>)

Something to Cry About: The Disastrous Rollout of Canada's \$10-a-Day Childcare (<https://c2cjournal.ca/2024/01/something-to-cry-about-the-disastrous-rollout-of-canadas-10-a-day-childcare/>)

Matthew Lau

More from this author



"We have some work to do": More diversity needed in Peterborough Public Library's collection, CEO says

An audit of books for children and young adults found a shortage of titles by racialized, LGBTQ+ and disabled authors

BY BRETT THROOP • **ARTS & CULTURE** • SEPTEMBER 26, 2023



The Peterborough Public Library is trying to increase the diversity of its collection. (Photo: Will Pearson)

The Peterborough Public Library's book collection needs to adapt to reflect the city's growing diversity, according to a recent report by library staff.

The report states that only 11 percent of children's fiction and 16 percent of young adult fiction books are written by a diverse author, according to a partial audit of the library's print collection.

A diverse author is someone who is other than "white, cisgender, heterosexual, nondisabled [or] neurotypical," states the report, which was submitted to the library's board of directors this month.

"We want to make sure that we make our collection more diverse," library CEO Jennifer Jones said. "We have some work to do."

Staff have only audited the children's and young adult collections so far; next up is the adult collection. However, collections software the library uses estimates that only 1.7 percent of the library's entire print catalogue is considered diverse – below the Ontario average of 2.5 percent, the report notes.

Jones said librarians haven't heard many complaints about a lack of diversity on library shelves, however they have received requests for more books that reflect the experiences of people in the LGBTQ+ community specifically. That feedback led staff to start acquiring more LGBTQ+ titles in recent years, Jones said.

"We want to have books that make you feel welcome and that make you see yourself in the collection," she said. "You want to know that you're not alone."

Graphic novel collection most diverse

The report notes that only about 15 percent of children's fiction books feature non-white characters. Characters with different racial and ethnic backgrounds are more prominent in the young adult section, where racialized characters can be found in 35 percent of titles.

"Young adult fiction titles also have a higher percentage of characters that have mental health and addiction concerns, body diversity, LGBTQ2+ [identities], and non-traditional family structures than children's fiction," the report states. "In some of these cases, low percentages are to be expected as there are likely few children's titles that are about some of these subjects in publication."

Additionally, children's holiday picture books mainly reflect Judeo-Christian traditions and characters with a disability are scarce within both children's and young adult titles, the report states.

Jones also noted that the library's overall collection lacks titles that deal with substance use and addiction. That's something the library needs to improve on because of the huge impact the toxic drug crisis is having on Peterborough, she said.

Diversity is highest within the graphic novel collections for both children and young adults. Slightly more than 21 percent of children's graphic novels and almost 44 percent of young adult graphic novels are written by a diverse author, according to the report. Meanwhile, racialized individuals are featured in 78 percent of biographies and memoirs in the young adult section.



CEO Jennifer Jones said the library should carry books that make everyone in the community feel welcome, regardless of their background or identity. (Photo: Brett Throop)

Potential to offend is not a reason to remove books from collection, CEO says

The report recommends that diverse titles should make up 10 percent of every book order the library makes going forward, with a goal of increasing the diversity of the overall collection by two percent each year. But Jones said that does not mean the library will toss books from the existing collection that are not considered diverse enough.

"We don't usually throw fiction books out unless they're physically old and gross [or] not being used," Jones said. Titles can also be withdrawn from the collection if they are "out-dated, unreliable, or misleading," if "more current materials on a subject become available" or if "space is required for new materials," according to the library's materials selection [policy](#).

The policy notes that many materials in the collection "are controversial and that any given item

She gave the example of the Little House on the Prairie book series, which includes [racist depictions](#) of Native American and Black characters.

While the books "can be offensive," they also offer "a pretty good representation or snapshot of how people in the 1800s treated Native Americans," Jones said.

"Do we throw it out? That's the question," she said. "Our answer is no. No one's upset about the book. No one has complained about the book. It's not factually inaccurate, which would be a reason to throw the book out."

In another case, Jones said the library did remove a book, whose name she did not recall, that included depictions of scalping because it was "misrepresenting the Indigenous cultures of the area and it was factually inaccurate."

Peterborough is rapidly becoming more culturally and ethnically diverse, with the number of racialized people in the city growing by 59 percent since 2016, according to 2021 census data. "Visible minorities" now make up 9.4 percent of the population.



Author



BRETT THROOP

Brett Throop is a reporter based in Peterborough. He previously worked as a radio producer for CBC Ottawa. His writing has appeared in the Globe and Mail, the Edmonton Journal, the Ottawa Citizen, Canadian Architect and the Peterborough Examiner.

Related Articles



Reframe opening-night feature looks at drinking water inequities in Indigenous communities

BY AVA BROWN-MANTHA • [ARTS & CULTURE](#) • JANUARY 24, 2024

Boil Alert follows Six Nations activist Layla Staats as she observes the impacts of environmental racism in First Nations

This site uses cookies to provide you with a great user experience. By continuing to use this website, you consent to the use of cookies in accordance with our [privacy policy](#).





Curve Lake filmmakers showcase their stories at Reframe Film Festival

BY AVA BROWN-MANTHA • [ARTS & CULTURE](#) • JANUARY 22, 2024

Six short films by Curve Lake citizens reveal the power of land, ancestral bonds and Anishinaabe culture



A great grandmother's secret recordings inspire new play about antisemitism

BY BRETT THROOP • [ARTS & CULTURE](#) • JANUARY 17, 2024

In *Bubie's Tapes*, playwright Jon Hedderwick grapples with how to tell his daughter about a history his great grandmother kept secret.

Foster a more connected Peterborough. Support our work.

The team at Peterborough Currents works hard to create journalism that deepens your understanding of the issues facing Peterborough. To do that, we have to be able to keep our journalism paywall-free for everyone. We ask our community to voluntarily show its financial support for the quality journalism we strive to produce. We choose to be powered by Peterborough because you—our readers—are at the centre of it all.

This site uses cookies to provide you with a great user experience. By continuing to use this website, you consent to the use of cookies in accordance with our [privacy policy](#).



Peterborough Currents is committed to telling stories that deepen our understanding of the community we love.

Subscribe to our newsletter

By signing up for our free newsletter today, you'll be better informed about your community tomorrow

your@address.com **Subscribe**

You can unsubscribe at any time.

- ABOUT US
- CONTACT US
- NEWSLETTER
- SUBMISSIONS
- LOGIN

Support Us

Copyright © 2024 Peterborough Currents | Powered by [Indiegraf Media](#)
[Privacy Policy](#) | [Subscription Agreement](#) | [Terms of Use](#)

Creating Community through a Diverse Collection

May 23, 2022



One of the greatest services that libraries can provide their patrons is a sense of community.

They can create a physical connection by providing gathering spaces, and they can create emotional connections through their programming and collection development.

That makes it all the more important for a library's collection to be able to speak to every community member. When a library has a diverse, equitable, and inclusive collection it can more robustly support and enrich the lives of all patrons.

Diverse, equitable and inclusive collections create connections

When a collection has been curated to be diverse and inclusive, for example, a library can more easily and strategically promote and support events such as Black History Month, Native American History Month and Disability Pride Month, to name a few.

Patrons are increasingly expecting to see libraries recognize and celebrate diverse populations. (Read this story (<https://bookriot.com/libraries-and-black-history-month/>) to learn about how some groups recently approached Black History Month.) When materials are at the ready, a library can more easily create programming that suits its demographic, whether it is creating a book display, organizing special storytimes or holding a month-long celebration.

Some libraries in the U.K. recently found creative ways to use their collections to support LGBT+ History Month (<https://www.librariesconnected.org.uk/page/lgbt-history-month>). Lambeth Libraries in London, for example, hosted a month-long program of LGBT+ History Month events that showcased Lesbian Rom-Coms, Gay detective books and more. Manchester Libraries featured special collections of local LGBT+ authors.

Diverse collections also can comfort patrons whenever they need it, particularly those who recently moved to the area. ABC News, Australia, shared the story of Rabiha (https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-12-12/takeover-melbourne-rabiha/100685960?utm_campaign=abc_news_web&utm_content=twitter&utm_medium=content_shared&utm_source=abc_news_web), a 13-year-old Afghan refugee who arrived in Melbourne, Australia. She couldn't understand people and they couldn't understand her, leaving her feeling lost. Her father took her to the local library where she worked on her English reading a variety of books. She also made a close friend when she met a girl perusing the library shelves one day.

Rabiha shared with the reporter (https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-12-12/takeover-melbourne-rabiha/100685960?utm_campaign=abc_news_web&utm_content=twitter&utm_medium=content_shared&utm_source=abc_news_web): "I'd felt so lonely since I came to Australia, [that] I felt a sense of belonging [with books]."

Helping patrons see and be seen

Literature allows children to see their own life and culture and get a view of the lives and cultures of others. Materials that accurately portray diversity can positively impact a child's sense of self. Everyone wants to see images that reflect their lives. A diverse collection can help young readers develop an appreciation for their culture and for the culture of others, fostering empathy.

On the other hand, a lack of representation or misrepresentation and inaccurate stereotypes can be hugely harmful, creating community divides and other damage.

In the 1990s, Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop published an essay about the importance of providing young readers with diverse books that reflect the “multicultural nature of the world in which we live.” In the essay, Dr. Bishop coined the phrase “Windows, Mirrors and Sliding Glass Doors” to illustrate how books can act as mirrors allowing children to see themselves, windows giving a glimpse into the lives and perspective of others and sliding glass doors by allowing readers the chance to become a part of the world through imagination.

Diverse collections provide libraries with these windows, mirrors and doors.

For example, disabled people, their allies and companies are working together more than ever to celebrate disabled and chronically ill people (DCI). (Learn how here (<https://www.thebookseller.com/comment/are-you-preparing-for-disability-pride-month>).) Disability Pride Month in July offers libraries an opportunity to use their collections to raise awareness of outdated attitudes and stereotypes, and combat ableism.

Recognizing the importance of including diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in collection development efforts, the American Library Association offers guidance for libraries in its Library Bill of Rights (<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/diversecollections>).

The ALA says that library workers are obligated to “select, maintain and support access” to such content. According to the ALA, “books and other library resources should be provided” for the use of “all people of the community the library serves”, and material should not be excluded because of the content creator’s “origin, background or views”. Materials should present all points of view on both historical and current issues, and materials should not be removed because of partisan or doctrinal approval.

Diversity growing in collections worldwide

Recent research has found that DEI representation accounted for an average of 17% of collections in a sample of U.S. public libraries and 14% in a sample of Canadian public libraries, while libraries in Ireland and the U.K. had average DEI representation of 10% and 8% respectively. Data collated from public libraries in Australia and New Zealand found an average of 16% and 17% respectively.

Within the U.S., libraries of all sizes have average DEI representation in the double digits. Very large library systems were found to have an average 18.4% DEI representation, while medium, small and very small libraries had DEI representation of around 16%.

COUNTRY	AVERAGE COLLECTION DEI (%)
U.S.A.	17%
Canada	14%
U.K.	8%
Ireland	10%
Australia	16%
New Zealand	17%

([https://chq-website-wp-content.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-](https://chq-website-wp-content.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/20134604/COUNTRY-1.png)

*DEI averages are based on customer collections submitted to collectionHQ's DEI Analysis tool and may not be fully representative of all holdings.

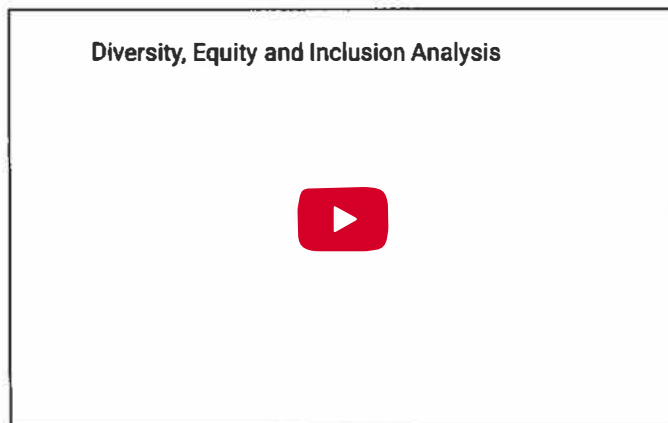
Technology can improve DEI representation

Ensuring a collection represents the vast viewpoints and backgrounds of a community can feel daunting. Yet there are tools that can help librarians more easily see and fill gaps in their collection that best match the changing demographics of their communities.

This ongoing monitoring of a collection is vital as communities constantly evolve, particularly during the pandemic, which saw many people move. Librarians can use Census data or other demographic data to make sure their collection is tracking with population changes.

Librarians are also turning to evidence-based tools for confidence and peace of mind when making DEI collection decisions.

DEI Analysis from collectionHQ offers evidence-based tools that empower libraries to discover, monitor, analyze and evaluate content at a branch and system-wide level. Libraries subscribing to collectionHQ can view how their collection compares with the averages highlighted earlier in this blog, and monitor changes in their collection's provision of DEI material over time.



Selection Lists

Another important tool for diversifying collections are curated, strategic selection lists.

Title Source 360's new "In Case You Missed It" selection lists feature titles from high-demand BISACS based on usage data from collectionHQ. The title lists are well reviewed and include backlist and forthcoming titles. For example, May selection lists are in celebration of two June holidays – Pride Month and Juneteenth.

Titles include:

- *We Carry Their Bones: The Search for Justice at the Dozier School for Boys* (ISBN 9780063030244) by forensic anthropologist Erin Kimmerle, investigates the notorious Dozier Boys School. The Arthur G. Dozier Boys School was a well-guarded secret in Florida for over a century, until reports of cruelty, abuse, and "mysterious" deaths shut the institution down in 2011. "With *We Carry Their Bones*, Erin Kimmerle continues to unearth the true story of the Dozier School, a tale more frightening than any fiction. In a corrupt world, her unflinching revelations are as close as we'll come to justice," said Colson Whitehead, Pulitzer-Prize Winning author of *The Nickel Boys* and *The Underground Railroad*. [Source: Annotation from Title Source 360, Baker & Taylor]
- *Gender Queer: A Memoir* (ISBN:9781637150726). "In 2014, Maia Kobabe, who uses e/em/eir pronouns, thought that a comic of reading statistics would be the last autobiographical comic e would ever write. At the time, it was the only thing e felt comfortable

with strangers knowing about em. Then e created Gender Queer. Maia’s intensely cathartic autobiography charts eir journey of self-identity, which includes the mortification and confusion of adolescent crushes, grappling with how to come out to family and society, bonding with friends over erotic gay fan fiction, and facing the trauma and fundamental violation of pap smears. Started as a way to explain to eir family what it means to be nonbinary and asexual, *Gender Queer* is more than a personal story: It is a useful and touching guide on gender identity—what it means and how to think about it—for advocates, friends, and humans everywhere.”
[Source: Annotation from Title Source 360, Baker & Taylor]

Libraries are making great strides in diversifying their collections. With the help of data-driven tools and other technology-based solutions to deepen insight, libraries can make sure everything in their collection is representative of their community while also ensuring that all facets of their community are represented within their collections.

Enjoyed this blog? Customers of Title Source 360 from B&T can click here (<https://ts360.baker-taylor.com/Pages/ExpandedLists.aspx?ecateid=279>) to access the new “In Case You Missed It” selection list, featuring titles to help libraries build their collections for upcoming displays and celebrations.

Comments are closed.

Categories

All (/news/)

Press Release (https://www.collectionhq.com/category/press_release/)

Newsletter (<https://www.collectionhq.com/category/newsletter/>)

News (<https://www.collectionhq.com/category/news/>)

Blog (<https://www.collectionhq.com/category/blog/>)

COLLECTIONHQ

Case Studies

Find out more about how collectionHQ has helped libraries with their performance and management.

Read More ➔

(<https://www.collectionhq.com/resources/>)

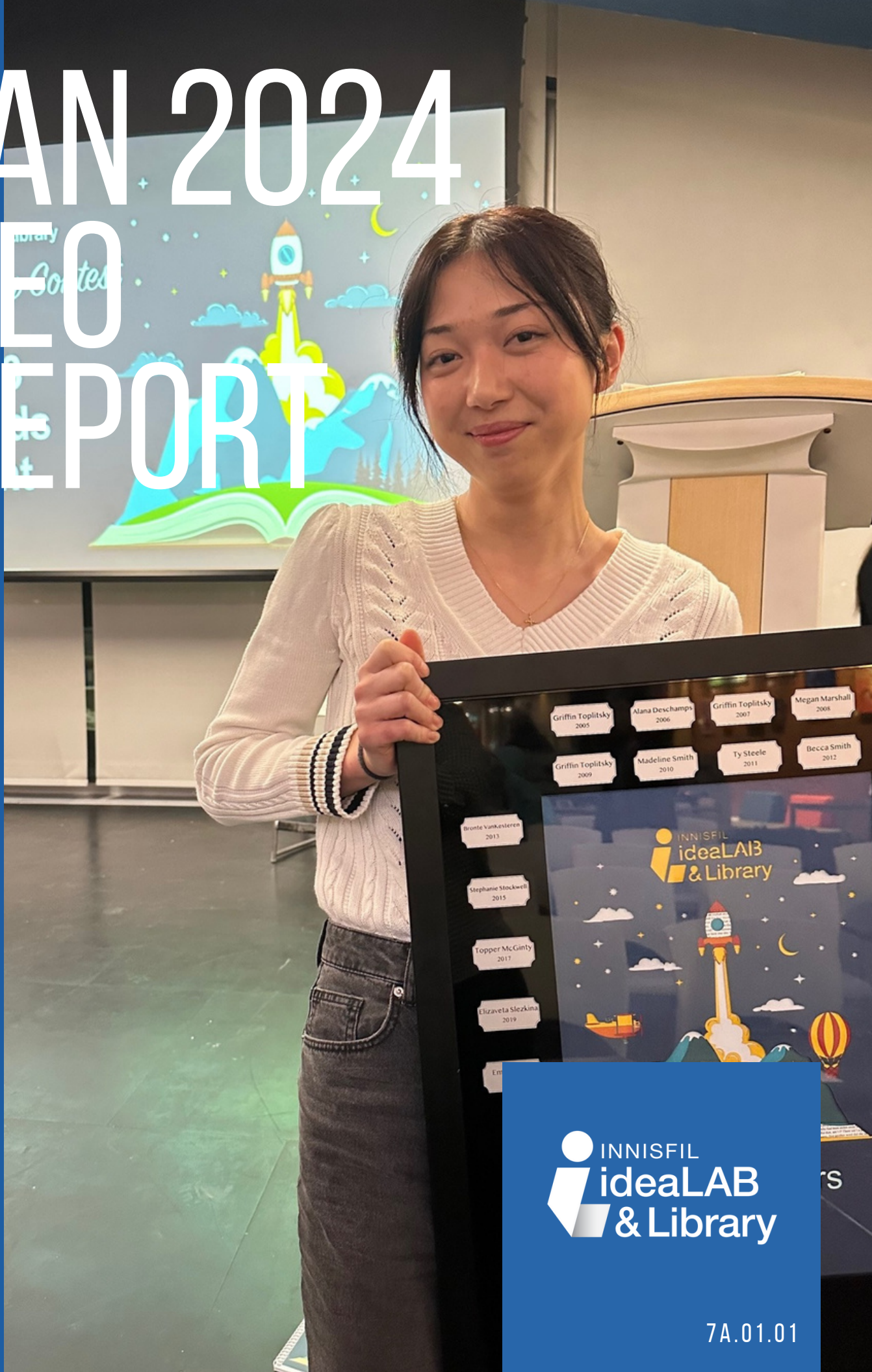
© Bridgeall Libraries Ltd 2024 | Privacy (<https://www.collectionhq.com/privacy-policy/>) | About us (<https://www.collectionhq.com/about-us/>) | Contact us (<https://www.collectionhq.com/contact/>) | [Cookie Settings](#)



(<https://twitter.com/collectionhq>) (<https://www.facebook.com/collectionhq>) (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/collectionhq>)

Bridgeall Libraries Ltd. is a company registered in Scotland (Registered Number: 297736), having its Registered Office at 220 St Vincent Street, Glasgow, G2 5SG.
Site by BCS Studio (<http://www.bcs-studio.com>)

JAN 2024 CEO REPORT



Speak UP for diversity & inclusion

PLANNING FOR 2024

EDI Working Group Updates

The Library's Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Working Group is composed of a variety of Staff and meets regularly. They assist the Library Staff, Management, and Library Board in ensuring that the strategic mandate to **Speak Up for Diversity & Inclusion** is fully reflected in internal operations, as well as external programming. The group aims to create an inclusive organization where everyone is respected and valued for their individual needs and experiences. The EDI Working Group has set a series of priority actions for 2024 to support both the Board and Staff. These include:

- Reviewing and updating the Library's Land Acknowledgement Statement, in partnership with the Board's Truth & Reconciliation Committee;
- Updating the Library's Truth & Reconciliation webpage to address how the Library is continuing to respond to the Truth & Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action;
- Reviewing relevant Library policies with an EDI & Accessibility lens;
- Support the ongoing work of the Collections Diversity Assessment, including ways to ensure members of the community feel they are accurately represented within the Library's collections;
- Seeking and planning for ongoing staff training opportunities; and
- Implementing EDI onboarding for new Staff.

Lakeshore Furniture

Eight new height-adjustable side tables were added to the Lakeshore Branch. The tables can be used with a laptop, or as a side table to hold a drink or personal items while sitting in the Library. Previously, there were only three side tables in the Branch, which were too short to serve as work stations. Staff had observed numerous people seated on benches and armchairs, using their devices on their laps, identifying a behaviour that could be better supported through accessible furniture options.



Open UP opportunities to strengthen connection & engagement with our community

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

2nd Annual Community Partners Brunch

Library Staff attended the *2nd Annual Community Partners Brunch* organized by the Innisfil Lions Club. This gathering consisted of organizations committed to serving our community and was a venue in fostering unity and collaboration of events in Innisfil. Each organization shared their most successful events of 2023 and had the opportunity to discuss their 2024 event plans. The organizations included Innisfil Lions Club, Rotary Club of Innisfil, the Legion, Town of Innisfil, Indians of Innisfil, and CANDY - Children and Youth Entertainment Simcoe County.



Outreach Kits for Lakeside Retirement

Staff provide outreach to Lakeside Retirement on a monthly basis, bringing enriching and engaging activities to senior residents. These outreach visits encourage creativity, socialization, and a sense of pride as participants create a project that can be used or displayed in their living spaces. These visits also enhance residents' connection to their community and Library.

Outbreaks of illness in the winter months have prevented Staff from being able to deliver these valuable programs. To continue to support the senior residents and provide stimulating activities, Staff have adapted project materials into kits that can be delivered, contact free, to Lakeside's reception desk. There is immense value in providing the senior residents with the opportunity to participate in library activities, especially when unforeseen circumstances prevent regularly scheduled programming. Staff will continue to develop activities that can be easily modified into drop-off kits to ensure that the Library continues to meet the needs of Lakeside residents no matter the circumstances.



January's activity, vinyl record clocks, was modified so that it could be assembled without the Library's help; senior residents were provided art materials to engage in the creative process of decorating and personalizing the clocks.

SUPPORTING YOUNG WRITERS

Annual Short Story Contest Awards Ceremony

The annual Short Story Contest had an amazing turn out, featuring all fifteen finalists along with their families and friends. Mayor Dollin, MP John Brassard, and Library Board Chair Anne Smith all expressed that the Short Story Contest is one of their favourite events at the Library as it creates a wonderful, positive atmosphere that celebrates young writers in our community.

Our guest author and judge, Melanie Florence, talked about her time spent visiting schools, promoting the contest, and connecting with the junior authors. She found it challenging to pick the top five stories in each category out of 152 total entries, all of which showcased the writers' creativity. Melanie had many words of encouragement and took the time to share something she enjoyed about their story with the winners as they came on stage to accept their awards. She also connected with many of the winners after the ceremony to encourage them to keep writing and stay in touch with her.

Numerous family members expressed how beautiful the space was and how professional the evening felt with the numerous special guests. One parent also sent a thank you email after the awards night saying: "We are always so impressed with the ceremony - having the mayor and members of parliament there; beautiful certificates; a library bag; a gift certificate from Indigo (for books!!) and the lovely engraved plaque! It is a great opportunity to encourage children and youth to engage in creative story writing, as it gives them a real sense of purpose for their writing, and an audience (a published author!). My daughter looks forward to it every year!"



Build UP our reputation as a trusted community asset

GROWING COLLECTIONS

VOX Books: Books with Audio

A new format was added to the Children's collection late in the month: books with a built-in audio player. The collection currently consists of picture books, high-interest nonfiction titles (dinosaurs, extreme weather, trucks, etc.), and chapter books. This format supports children learning to read, those with learning disabilities, and those who speak English as a second language.



Staff Picks & Display

Staff Picks continue to be very popular with customers. At Lakeshore, a new double-sided display cart was added to display Staff Picks, creating more room on the *Power Wall* (the feature wall of book display at the entrance of each branch) for new books.

A smaller cart has also been added to the HackLAB and features maker-related titles, allowing customers and Staff to make connections between the skills, tools, and programs in the HackLAB with the resources available in the collections.





Raise UP the Library's identity as an innovative hub

STAFF PUBLIC SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

“How to Shout” at OLA

The Director of Community Development alongside Jamie Hardie, Brand Strategist for Hardie and Company, delivered a presentation “How to Shout: Building an Advocacy Campaign” at the Ontario Library Association Super Conference.

The presentation highlighted some of the strategies the Library uses to advocate for its services with community leaders and stakeholders, while also introducing the importance of marketing for support for the Library versus the traditional marketing for use of Library services. The workshop was well-received and highlighted the continued need for the Library industry to share innovative solutions to common challenges, discuss successful projects, and provide insights that help advance the profession as a whole.



Industry Leadership

The Community Librarian attended the OLA Super Conference in his role as an OLA Board Member, and President of the Ontario Library and Information Technology Association (OLITA), a divisional council of OLA's Board. He attended the Board retreat, which included sessions on integrating an EDI lens into all of the Board's activities, as well as policy development.

In his role as OLITA President, the Community Librarian presented the OLITA Technology Advancing Libraries Award to Halton Hills Public Library during the conference's awards gala. He convened two sessions including OLITA's Spotlight Speaker, Avery Swartz, and a session titled "[Algorithmic Awareness Toolkit: Teaching Algorithmic Literacy in Academic Libraries and Beyond](#)". The toolkit is very comprehensive, with units on understanding targeted advertising, and assessing algorithmic bias.

Avery is the founder of Camp Tech, a Toronto-based digital marketing and tech skills training organization, and her presentation focused on the real world implications of having on demand access to AI tools.



INTRODUCING MAKEIT FAMILY

Building Safer Communities through Family Learning

To support the Building Safer Communities Fund of the Town of Innisfil, we've introduced a new drop-in program, *MakeIT Family*, designed to foster family relationships by providing parents and caregivers the opportunity to complete a hands-on project with their children in the HackLAB. This 2 hour program runs at both Cookstown and Lakeshore to enable more families across Innisfil to take part. By removing the registration requirement and running the program as a drop-in has removed barriers to attendance, thus improving access to the HackLAB. Program attendance has been increasing with promotion and now has over 50 participants. After receiving overwhelmingly positive feedback, *MakeIT Family* will continue through March.

"You should be so proud of what you do here at the Library. This is what this community needs, places for kids and adults to spend time together. I'm so impressed by the quality of these programs and I plan to keep coming and bringing my grandchildren every week."

– Grandfather, participating with grandchildren

Positive feedback has continued to be shared with Staff including this comment from a young participant "Wow, you've put so much time and thought into these programs. Thanks for having something fun for us to do!" Another parent shared "I love that the kids are getting such great exposure to the creative space (HackLAB). This is the future for a lot of these kids and it is so important for them to have an understanding of what you can do at the Library."



Light UP pathways to personal & professional growth

PROGRAMS & WAITLISTS

Managing our Most Popular Registered Programs

Library programs for all ages continue to be very popular in the community, and as such registered programs often have significant waitlists. These waitlists are used by Staff in a number of different ways, including to help guide programming in future sessions and to open up communication with customers looking for specific types of programs.

Programs with significant waitlists are always considered first for additional or future sessions. As spaces and staffing allow, programming Staff will try to create an additional session of a registered program or duplicate stand-alone programs in order to offer priority registration to waitlisted customers before the program is made available to the general public. Staff also communicate with customers on waitlists to ensure they are aware of upcoming registration dates for sessional programs and to inform them about upcoming programs of potential interest based on their past registrations.

In the case of registered sessional programs, which often have significant waitlists, a limited number of spots in the next program session are first offered to those waitlisted for the current session. Waitlisted customers rarely refuse a spot when offered, indicating that interest in programs remains very high even for those waitlisted customers who were unable to attend the current session.

Finally, and potentially the most impactful for waitlisted customers, waitlists are employed by Staff to fill programs when a participant indicates that they are no longer able to attend. Once a customer unregisters using the online system, Staff are then able to fill the program with customers from the waitlist, who almost universally express their excitement about being able to attend the program after all.

Library Staff continue to look for opportunities to offer drop-in programming that serves similar populations for the most popular registered programs. While it is not always possible to deliver the same content or experience in a drop-in format, staff consistently and continuously look for new ways to serve customers and bring the community together with drop-in programs.



CHILDREN & FAMILY PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

Drop-In Storytime Expands Again

The New Year has brought new storytime opportunities for our community. The Library has added an additional *Drop-In Storytime* to the calendar: Thursday mornings at the Cookstown branch. Many families attend on both Wednesday and Thursday mornings. One week, a parent shared that they usually attended EarlyON programming on Thursday mornings, but because the partner program was full, they came to *Drop-In Storytime*. The program also allows Staff to determine if there is a specific age group that would benefit from their own preschool program in the future. For example, a significant number of babies could suggest that a *Baby Bookworms* program could be considered at Cookstown. As word of the new offering spreads, attendance is expected to continue to grow throughout the year. Current attendees have already expressed how grateful they are for additional activities in their community.



Drop-in Storytime is one of our longest running and most popular programs.

PA Day Programming: Snow Science

Friday January 26th marked the first PA Day of 2024, and a group of children (and some of their caregivers) joined us to explore some snowy science. For this special program, the group experimented with fake, fizzing snow and created magnetic snowmen out of JENGA blocks. As always, children and caregivers expressed their gratitude for the activities, especially the messy science experiment. Many families are less comfortable trying messy activities at home, and the Library is the perfect place to explore these kinds of opportunities. PA Day activities appeal to a wider age range than many other after school programs, and for one of the participants, there was some concern about being one of the oldest in the group; however, this expanded age range is an opportunity for older participants to practice some basic leadership and role modeling skills.



Managing BIG Feelings with In Bloom Support Services

The Library welcomed Child and Youth Counsellor, Sheera Perry, who runs In Bloom Support Services, for a workshop on January 5th entitled *Managing BIG Feelings*. The workshop invited children aged 4-8 and their caregivers to learn about what big feelings are, how they present in our bodies, and what strategies children and their families can implement when big feelings take over.

Sheera's approachable, friendly, caring attitude was evident from the moment the program started. She opened her workshop with an icebreaker that invited both the kids and adults in the room to share a bit about themselves. This set the tone for the workshop: caregivers were going to be just as involved as their children. Families worked on identifying how big feelings were uniquely felt by their child because that would enable the child to work through the feeling.

Sheera was an engaging presenter and due to a substantial waitlist and interest from families with older children, Sheera has been invited to return for a second set of workshops over March Break.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING

Ontario Library Association Super Conference

The Ontario Library Association Super Conference (OLASC) is Canada's largest continuing education event in librarianship. The OLASC was held at the Toronto Metropolitan Convention Centre, and Library Staff attended various days over the 4-day conference.



Conference Highlights & Staff Learning

“Meeting the Moment: Bystander Intervention to Create Safer Spaces” presented by Keynote Speaker Julie S. Lalonde. Lalonde presented on the importance of library workers to intervene when able to de-escalate situations that may arise and stand up against hate, harassment and discrimination, creating safe spaces for everyone.

“Technology Spotlight: WTF is AI and Why Do Libraries Need It” presented by Avery Swartz. This presentation focused on the use of generative AI (Artificial Intelligence). Swartz spoke about the most well-known generative AI, Open AI’s ChatGPT, how to use AI as a tool for both the creative process and editing for tone, content, and improving copy for a variety of audiences. Swartz also spoke about Deep Fakes, and how AI tools can use voice AI to interpret and mimic voices, which is an important issue to be aware of for security purposes. Education on AI is at the forefront of knowing how to protect sensitive information while also being able to maximize efficiency and productivity by using AI as a tool.

“We have a Social Worker, Yay!...Now What?” presented by the Orillia Public Library. As one of the only mid-sized libraries to employ a social worker, Orillia presented on the process of acquiring the position, what they hope to achieve with the role, and how they found the right candidate. As Innisfil continues to grow, and we rise to meet the challenges and needs of our community, hiring an LSA with a social worker background would be an asset.

“Sensory Rooms: Creating Welcoming Library Spaces” This session illustrated the value of having sensory spaces to increase inclusivity and accessibility by providing a quiet, soothing environment for those that have sensory issues. Three libraries presented about the spaces they created with different budgets: one converted a small unused space into a sensory space with a water feature, gel pads, texture components for touching, and mood lighting. Ottawa Library is building a new library that will have two spaces, one for children and one for adults. They also noted that their staff uses the sensory room to decompress.

“CBC Still Photo Archive: Combating Dis/misinformation, and Verifying Content Authenticity” presented by CBC Media Librarian Hilary Palmer and Marcos Armstrong. This session was very informative on the collection and verification of images that are collected by the CBC Photo Archive. The CBC is currently working on processes to track content information accredited to photos, in an effort to fight dis/misinformation that are being generated by AI tools. A free database that is specifically designed for public libraries is [CBC Corner](#), which includes a wide variety of CBC and Radio-Canada content including news, TV, radio shows, podcasts, kids’ content, and news in foreign languages.

“Social Media Savvy” This learning lab included strategies for engaging with the community through compelling Instagram content. Tips were provided to create visually appealing stories, ways to engage youth and teens, and how to gain their participation online. These tricks will enable the Library to build its online presence by staying on trend, fostering strong connections with the community, and promoting Library resources and events to the right audiences.

APPENDIX A:

Level UP! Communications Insights

Media Outreach & Social Media Response

DATE PUBLISHED	NEWS OUTLET	TITLE
Jan 2, 2024	Innisfil Today	Got bored kids and a tight budget? These ideas may keep them busy this week
Jan 3, 2024	Innisfil Today	Bestselling author to speak at Innisfil library fundraiser
Jan 5, 2024	Innisfil Today	Four events you have to check out in South Simcoe this weekend
Jan 9, 2024	Innisfil Today	Parks to a pump truck: A look inside Innisfil's \$53M capital budget
Jan 9, 2024	CTV Barrie	Song Circle at Innisfil Library
Jan 10, 2024	Milton FM 101	Time for a New Parking Pass Innisfil
Jan 11, 2024	Simcoe.com	Things to do in Simcoe County this weekend (Jan. 12-14)
Jan 12, 2024	Milton FM 101	Raise Money for the Library While Enjoying a Night Out
Jan 12, 2024	Innisfil Today	Innisfil nets \$962K for community safety, violence prevention
Jan 16, 2024	Innisfil Today Barrie 360	Town opens warming centres amid extreme cold weather

	Milton FM 101	
Jan 16, 2024	Innisfil Today	Polar Bear Dip, snow tubing to highlight Winter Weekends
Jan 19, 2024	Bradford Today	Four events you need to check out in South Simcoe this weekend
Jan 20, 2024	Barrie Today	Innisfil brrrings back polar dip, snow tubing with Winter Weekends
Jan 22, 2024	Innisfil Today Barrie Today	'Talented bunch': Bear Creek student wins Innisfil writing award
Jan 23, 2024	Innisfil Today	New chapter for old Churchill library as site goes up for lease
Jan 29, 2024	Kool FM	Spark Commercial
Jan 29, 2024	Innisfil Today	'Excited to kick off Winter Weekends' Mayor says of Breakfast with Council
Jan 29, 2024	Rogers TV	INFO Simcoe Innisfil Winter Weekends
Jan 30, 2024	Innisfil Today	Dozens attend 'Coffee and Islam' event in Innisfil
Jan 31, 2024	Simcoe.com	Leap year brings special event to Innisfil ideaLAB & Library

Facebook Insights (January 1 to 31, 2024)

FOLLOWERS	# OF POSTS	TOTAL ENGAGEMENT	TOTAL IMPRESSIONS
3,777 (Followers) 3,228 Page Likes	48 during this period	695 engagements (568 reactions, 77 shares, 50 comments)	Posts earned 32.2K impressions over this period (number of times our posts have entered a person's screen)

Top Organic Post (based on reach):
Date: Jan 27, 2024 5K Reach



Innisfil Idealab & Library

Published by Hootsuite · January 27 at 11:00 AM · 🌐

Check out Miss. Sarah's [#StaffPickSaturday](#), *Quit Calling Me A Monster*, by Jory John - a perfect read for the family!

"This book is laugh out loud funny for both kids and adults! Poor Floyd Peterson doesn't like being called a monster. Sure...he has big teeth, he likes to hide in dark places, and he howls at the moon...but he's so much more than that! This is a super fun read aloud the whole family will enjoy!"

[#FamilyLiteracyDay](#)



Top Paid Post (based on reach):

Date: Jan 20, 2024 6.6K Reach



Innisfil Idealab & Library

Published by Hootsuite · January 20 at 5:00 PM · 🌐



We are hiring a part-time Library Programmer for a one year contract!

This position is for our Creative Making & Discovery team, and is responsible for the programs that are run in our HackLAB & MediaLAB spaces.

If you are someone who enjoys teaching others about technology and leading others through the creation of creative design projects, this could be the position for you!

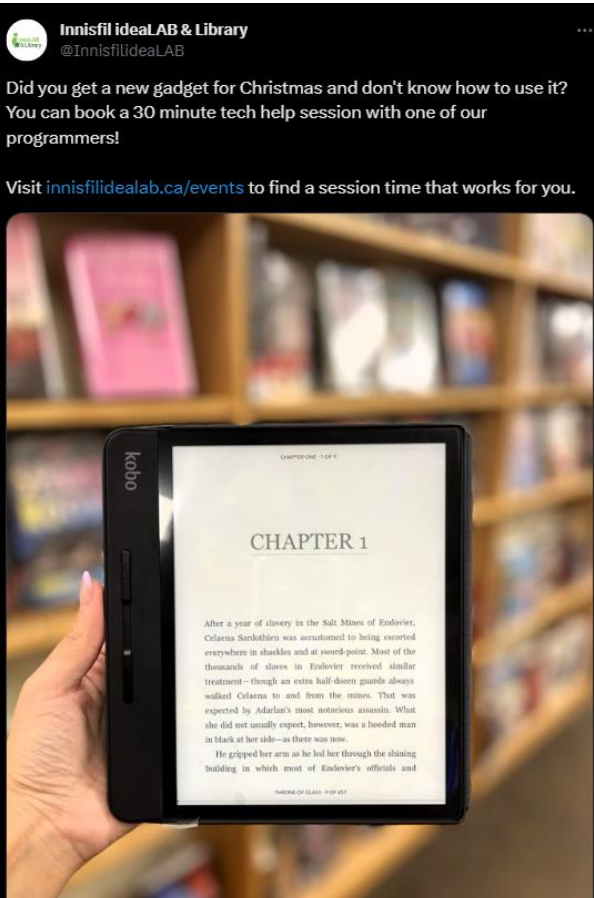
Visit innisfilidealab.ca/employment-volunteering/ to learn more and apply.



X (Twitter) Insights (January 1 to 31, 2024)

FOLLOWERS	# OF TWEETS	TOTAL ENGAGEMENT	TWEET IMPRESSIONS
1,527	26 during this period	15 engagements (12 likes, 2 retweets, 0 quote tweets, 1 reply)	___ impressions over this period (number of times users saw our tweets)

Top Organic Post (based on reach):
Top Tweet earned 343 impressions



Instagram Insights (January 1 to 31, 2022)

FOLLOWERS	# OF POSTS	TOTAL LIKES & REACH	TOTAL COMMENTS
2,139 (+27)	46 during this period	2.556 accounts reached. 794 likes.	24 comments in total on content posted during this period

Top Post (based on engagement): Jan 10, 2024 819 Reach

Them: Didn't you go to the Library yesterday?

You:



innisfilidealab
...

innisfilidealab This moment sums up a lot of #library and #reading experiences. What else makes you feel like this Taylor's version?
 *
 *
 *
 *
 #innisfillibrary #publiclibrary #books #reader #librarybooks #readersofig #readersofinstagram #read #bookmeme #bookish #bookishmemes #TBR #bookholds
 Edited · 3w

caledonlibrary
👍👍
3w · 1 like · Reply
❤️

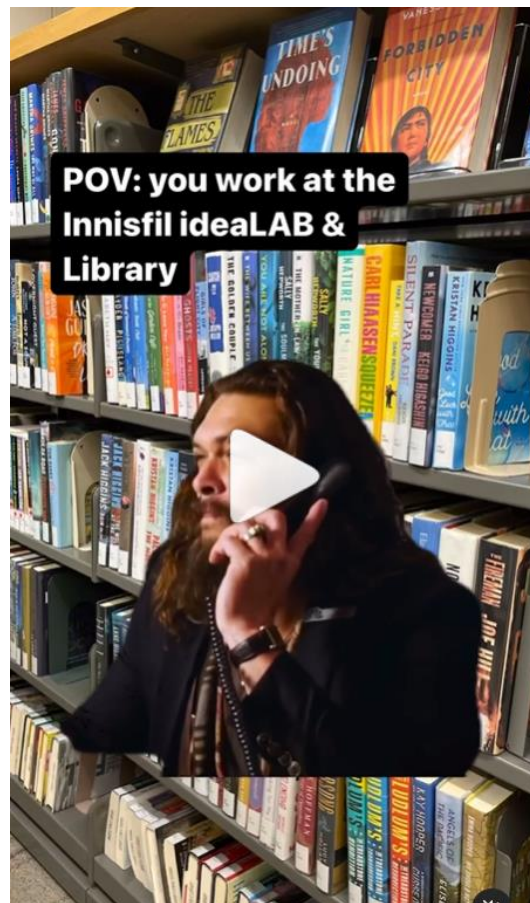
citybrarian
Well done 👍👍👍
3w · 1 like · Reply
❤️

[View insights](#)
[Boost post](#)

👍 💬 📌

🌟👤 Liked by barriepubliclibrary and 84 others
 January 10

Top Reel (based on engagement): Jan 12, 2024 974 Reach



innisfilidealab
Original audio



innisfilidealab Have a question? We got you!

-
-
-
-

#library #publiclibrary #librarian #innisfil #innisfillibrary #ipl
#librarylife #librarylove #librarygoals #books

3w



shangri_law If Jason Mamoia worked there, imagine how many patrons you'd have 🤔❤️

3w 1 like Reply

— View replies (1)

[View insights](#)

[Boost post](#)



Liked by georgiancollegelibrary and 46 others

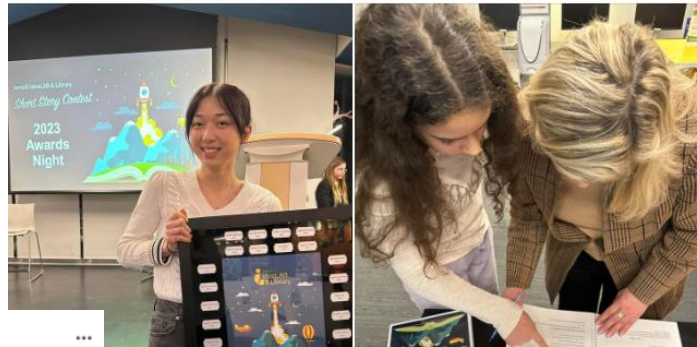
January 12

NEW Community Social Media Highlights (January 1 to 31, 2024)

Highlights from the Annual Short Story Contest

Mayor Lynn Dollin
January 20 at 3:33 PM · 🌐

One of my favourite events of the year is the [Innisfil Idealab & Library Short Story Contest Awards](#). Congratulations to 152 creative youth who were brave enough to enter their work. Congratulations to the Seepe Walters Award winner Riley Ma for her winning story Clockwork Princess. Each year I ask all the authors to sign their work as I have no doubt at least one of them will be a famous author one day.



Camden Sings
January 19 at 8:33 PM · 🌐

Seepe Walters Short Story Contest 2023! 📖 🏆

-
Tonight, I went to the ceremony for the Seepe Walters Short Story Contest and placed second in my category, grades 9-12, in all of Barrie-Innisfil! Huge congratulations to everyone who placed, and an even bigger congratulations to my old friend, and the 1st place overall winner, Riley Ma, for her short story 🙌🏻🙌🏻

-
A big thank you goes to the [Innisfil Idealab & Library](#) for running the contest and Melanie Florence for reading and judging the 150+ entries to the competition this year. It's an honour to have you read my writing!

-
You can find my short story, "The Disappearance of the Northern Lights," on the Innisfil Idealab website

-
#shortstory #shortstorycontest #writing #creativewriting #story #stories #seepewalters #seepewaltersshortstorycontest #writingcontest #writer #author #singer #dancer #music #songwriter #singersongwriter #innisfil #innisfilidealab Town of Innisfil Mayor Lynn Dollin John Brassard, Member of Parliament Barrie-Innisfil John Brassard Andrea Khanjin



Municipal Council Report

January 10, 2024 Council Meeting

- [Watch the meeting.](#)
- Council received a delegation re: **Stormwater Management Master Plan and Flooding Strategy**. Flooding and flood mitigation has been a long standing issue in certain areas of Innisfil, and has been increasing in frequency in part due to climate change. The new strategy addresses a number of preventative recommendations.
- Announcements
 - Councillor Richardson noted Spark fundraising event for the Library
 - Mayor Dollin noted an agreement was signed by AMO for federal funding.
 - Deputy Mayor noted that at County Council a submission was made to the Province to request a hearing be held within Simcoe County regarding the ongoing regional government review.
 - Mayor Dollin noted that Innisfil also made a written submission on regional government review
- Council gave consent for the Library Board to move forward with leasing its Churchill facility.
- Council received correspondence from Tollendale Village Innisfil Campus Committee seeking support for the proposed Tollendale Village Expansion Project. This project was previously issued an MZO from the Province, and recently, was put on a watch list for review due to perceived inactivity on the project. Council reaffirmed its support of the project.
- The 2024 Operating and Capital budgets were approved, with an estimated tax rate impact of an increase of 4.95% to the average residential property tax bill.

News from the Community

- [GUEST COLUMN: Riding reflects Ontario's 'unique multicultural mosaic' - Innisfil News](#)
- [Parks to a pump truck: A look inside Innisfil's \\$53M capital budget - Innisfil News](#)
- ['Health and happiness': Leaders share New Year's resolutions - Innisfil News](#)
- [Innisfil council OKs new economic development strategic plan - Innisfil News](#)
- [Innisfil council reaffirms Tollendale Village expansion support - Innisfil News](#)
- [Innisfil nets \\$962K for community safety, violence prevention - Innisfil News](#)
- [Average property tax bill tops \\$5K as town passes 2024 budget - Innisfil News](#)
- ['Strive to feed': Innisfil Food Bank demand surged in 2023 - Innisfil News](#)
- [Barrie, South Simcoe police get \\$500K in crime-prevention grants - Innisfil News](#)
- ['The new normal': Calls to police exceed pre-pandemic numbers - Innisfil News](#)
- ['We're really proud': Innisfil's Rotary club commits \\$20K to RVH - Innisfil News](#)
- ['A tough year': Christmas for Kids sees demand for service spike - Innisfil News](#)
- ['Perfect excuse not to cook': InnisFULL returns to town - Innisfil News](#)
- ['Excited to kick off Winter Weekends' Mayor says of Breakfast with Council - Innisfil News](#)
- [Board determining boundary for new Lefroy Catholic school - Innisfil News](#)
- [Innisfil cashes in with nearly \\$1.5-million payment from OLG - Innisfil News](#)

Municipal Council Report

- [Year In Review: Innisfil Mayor Lynn Dollin](#)
- [Year In Review: MPP Andrea Khanjin](#)
- [Inaugural Black History Month Gala taking place in Innisfil](#)

News from the County:

- ['Huge benefit': Bradford and Innisfil push for police in schools - Innisfil News](#)
- [Oro-Medonte slams poll claiming support for Barrie expansion](#)

News from the Province

- [Librarians propose provincewide digital library - Newmarket News](#)
- ['More is more': Librarians propose provincewide digital library - Innisfil News](#)
- ['Perfect timing': Innisfil blows by provincial housing target - Innisfil News](#)
- [Push to get legislation passed to hold elected officials accountable against workplace harassment gains momentum | CTV News](#)

JHSC Meeting Agenda

MEETING DATE: Thursday, January 18, 2024

TIME: 1:00PM

LOCATION: Ops Meeting Room 2 and Teams

CO-CHAIRS: Management Co-Chair – Eric Chudzinski
Worker Co-Chair – Jennifer Sheremeto

MINUTES: Jennifer Miyasaki

ATTENDANCE: Eric Chudzinski, Jennifer Sheremeto, Elishia LaRose, Jennifer Miyasaki, Kristi Prentice, Paul Tomaszewski, Sierra Warren

REGRETS: Nick Ayres, Ken Schuyler

APPROVED MINUTES:



Worker Member Acting Co-Chair
Jennifer Sheremeto



Management Co-Chair
Eric Chudzinski

Item	Agenda Item	Lead	Item Details	ACTION & NOTES
1.	<u>Call Meeting to Order</u>	Chair	- Time – opened	- Meeting started at 1:03 p.m.
2.	<u>Approval of Previous Minutes</u>	Chair	2023.12.14 JHSC Meeting Agenda Minutes Draft.pdf (Desktop, Web, Mobile)	- Sierra W. motioned to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. - Seconded by Jen S. - All in favour; Motion Carried.
3.	<u>JHSC members</u>	Chair	2023.12.14 JHSC Members December 2023.docx (Desktop, Web, Mobile)	- No changes since the last meeting.
4.	<u>Workplace Inspections WHIMIS LOTO</u>	Chair	Roundtable discussions	Jennifer M – Completed all inspections, minor housekeeping items that were corrected; no deficiencies noted Nick – Absent; Inspection done at IBP with minor deficiencies noted. Paul – Fleet – tires piled in front of fire exit – moved out of way. YMCA – still outstanding issues but corrections are in progress

				<p>Jen S. – No open deficiencies – has approached supervisors for any repeat/chronic issues at Rizzardo; café is still vacant; should have a tenant within the year; fan is still running – they are aware; Town Square is fine – Janitor room needs to be tidied up; EcDev – proposed booking inspections when EcDev is present so issues can be discussed and remedied. Ensured all JHSC Boards are current.</p> <p>Kristi – Will complete inspections next week; Eric to assist with Ladder inspections</p> <p>Sierra - Ops was good; parking lot was icy - needed crew to sand; Knock was ok; Churchill Community Centre - office was cluttered, cords, etc. In the way; needs to be remedied</p> <p>Elishia – Salt dome – sensor light on bay doors is malfunctioning; reported it to staff. Fire extinguisher uncharged sitting in facility; general housekeeping items remedied on site. Lefroy arena – still open cases with pails still sitting in front of electrical panels – no effort to remedy has been noted; oil pails still there. Steel pad for Zamboni still an issue (icing); Will do Stroud arena this month.</p> <p>Eric – During your next inspection, please remove all 2023 inspections and meeting minutes, except for December.</p>
5.	<u>SOP's Corporate Policies</u>	Chair	Any updates for discussion?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No updates at this time - SOP for CDSB and Fire when doing inspections with respect to animals (pets) present
6.	<u>Workplace Incidents & Accidents</u>	Chair	Report on accidents since last meeting accidents (December 2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Five incidents in December (2 vehicle/equipment; 1 first aid, 1 injury (no first aid), 1 near miss) - Section 51 Notice (Lost Time; Jan 9th) sent out to committee members – Worker struck in the head by salt spreader cover, requiring medical attention.
7.	<u>Budget & Training</u>	Chair	1. Budget (status update) 2. Member Certifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - \$7,500 budgeted for 2024. - All members certified and current. No certification training required for 2024. - Review/discuss JHSC Member training matrix.
8.	<u>JHSC Other Business</u>	All Members	1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oliver Jerschow (CAO) is planning to attend February's meeting.
9.	<u>ACTION ITEMS Follow up</u>	Chair	Review of Action items from December 14, 2023 meeting minutes.	<p>ACTION – IRC: washer/dryer issue – need to determine if the venting is legal/to code. EC will follow up with CDSB/Fire – Confirmed that venting is required by the Building Code.- This action can be closed</p> <p>ACTION – coordinate Compressor Room Training for committee members in the coming month. - In progress – Action remains open</p>

				<p>ACTION – for buildings with MySDS.ca implemented, inspectors to audit 2-3 chemicals to ensure SDS is in the system/binder. There will be a question added to MOAR for this. – In progress – Action remains open</p> <p>ACTION – members to start thinking about new safety Slogan and Theme for 2024. Perhaps for 2024 we commit to another event around the National Day of Mourning (e.g. speaker). Everyone to brainstorm ideas and we will produce a plan for 2024. - In progress – Action remains open</p>
10.	Close Meeting	Chair	Enter the time of the meeting closed.	The meeting closed at 2:18 p.m.



INNISFIL PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF REPORT

STAFF REPORT NO.: LIB-03-2024

DATE: February 20, 2024

TO: INNISFIL PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

FROM: Mandy Pethick, Director, Public & Information Services

SUBJECT: Collection Usage 2023

RECOMMENDATION:

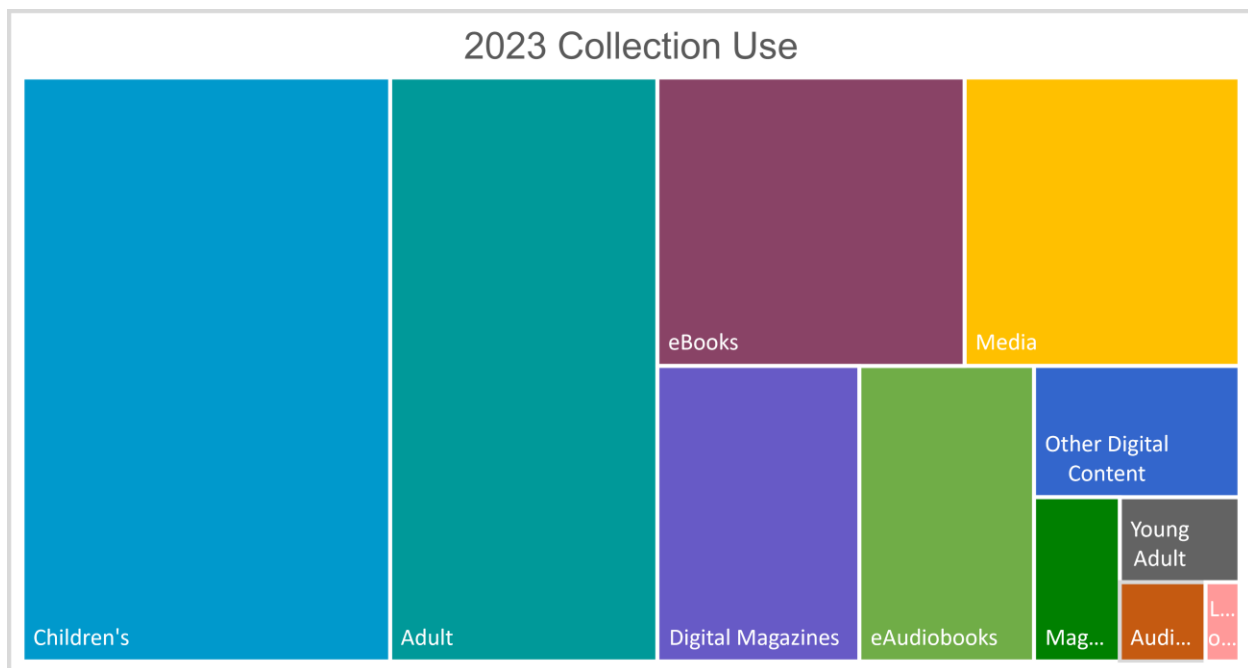
THAT Staff Report LIB-03-2024 2023 Collection Usage 2023 be received as information.

BACKGROUND:

This report will provide an analysis of annual collection usage during 2023. Since the onset of the pandemic in 2020, use of the Library's physical materials was in recovery mode as people returned to visiting the buildings and spending more time in public spaces. 2023 was the first year that use of the physical collections returned to what can be considered a normal state.

Conversely, the pandemic had the opposite effect on use of the digital collection, which increased dramatically when individuals needed to seek alternatives to physical materials. The data below demonstrates that once people discovered the digital content available at their Library, they have continued to make use of it even after they could access physical materials.





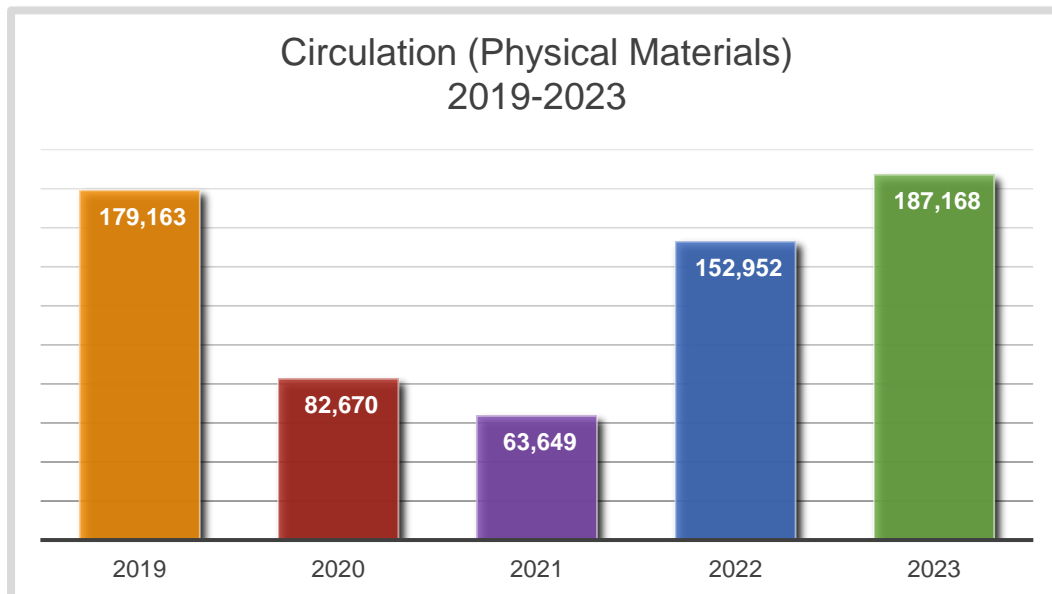
	FORMAT	CIRCULATION
	Children's Books	82893
	Adult Books	60257
	eBooks	34210
	Media (DVDs, video games, etc.)	30634
	Digital Magazines	23016
	eAudiobooks	19934
	Other Digital Content	10408
	Magazines	5450
	Young Adult Books	3931
	Audiobooks (CD)	2611
	Library of Things	1034

Throughout this report, data from 2019 is used as a comparator because it better reflects normal use of Library collections than the years heavily impacted by the pandemic. However, at times the 2022 data will also be used to present a more fulsome understanding. The data in this report will inform decisions the Collection Services Team makes about collection size, content, and budget allocation.

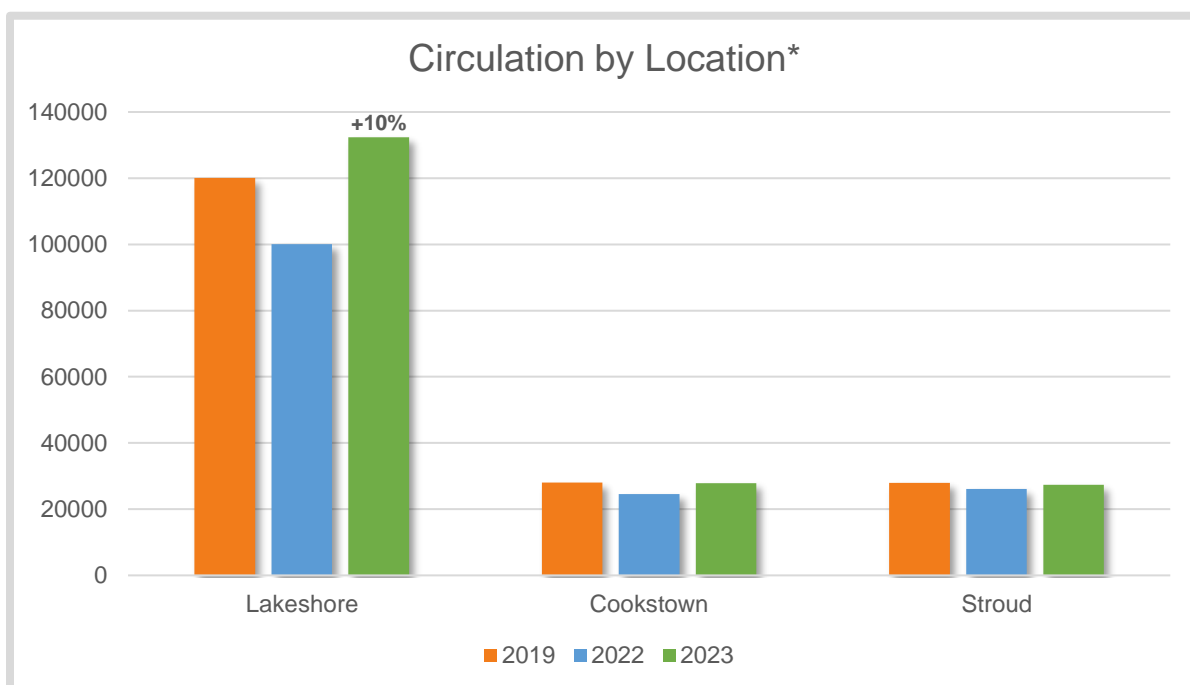
ANALYSIS

PHYSICAL MATERIALS

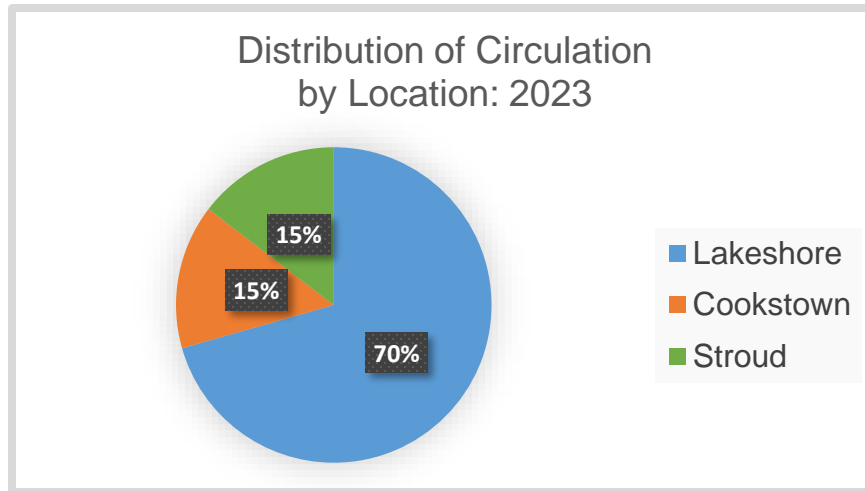
Circulation of physical materials (items checked out on a member's Library account), demonstrate the effectiveness of the Library's collection. Use of physical materials was 4% higher in 2023 than 2019, which is largely a result of increased use of children's materials. Additionally, in 2023, customers borrowed 22% more items than the year prior.



The Lakeshore Branch saw a greater increase than the other branches, compared with years prior on a location-by-location basis. People borrowed 10% more materials from the Lakeshore Branch than they did in 2019 (+32% compared with 2022). The changes in usage rates at the Cookstown and Stroud Branches was statistically insignificant, representing only typical fluctuations.



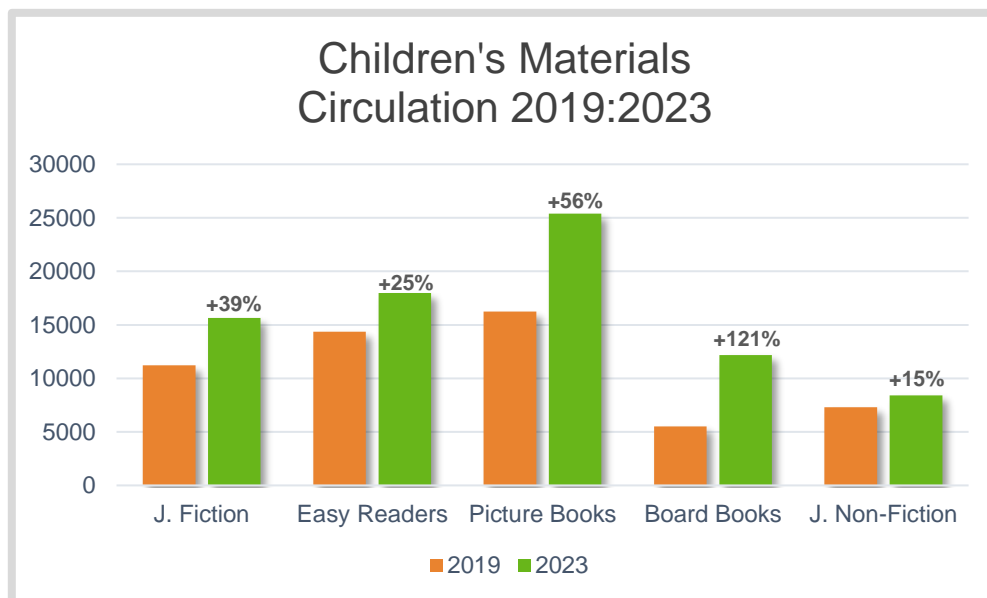
Just over 70% of all materials borrowed from the Library are checked out at the Lakeshore Branch. The remaining 30% is distributed evenly between the Stroud and Cookstown locations.



Children's Collection

This part of the collection is primarily responsible for the overall gains compared with pre-pandemic data, showing a 46% increase compared with 2019 (30% over 2022). Circulation of all formats within the Children's Collection increased, with the most growth happening in the Board Book collection, which was more than twice that of 2019. This unprecedented rise in use is likely related to a number of factors, including but not limited to:

- An increase in population over recent years, with more children residing in the community now. The higher population correlates with more visits to Library Branches, with 2023 seeing 15% more visits than in 2019.
- The creation of more face-out display for children's materials and the reorganization of the Children's Collections at Cookstown and Lakeshore.
- The new family book bag service.
- An increase in the number of partnerships with community service agencies.



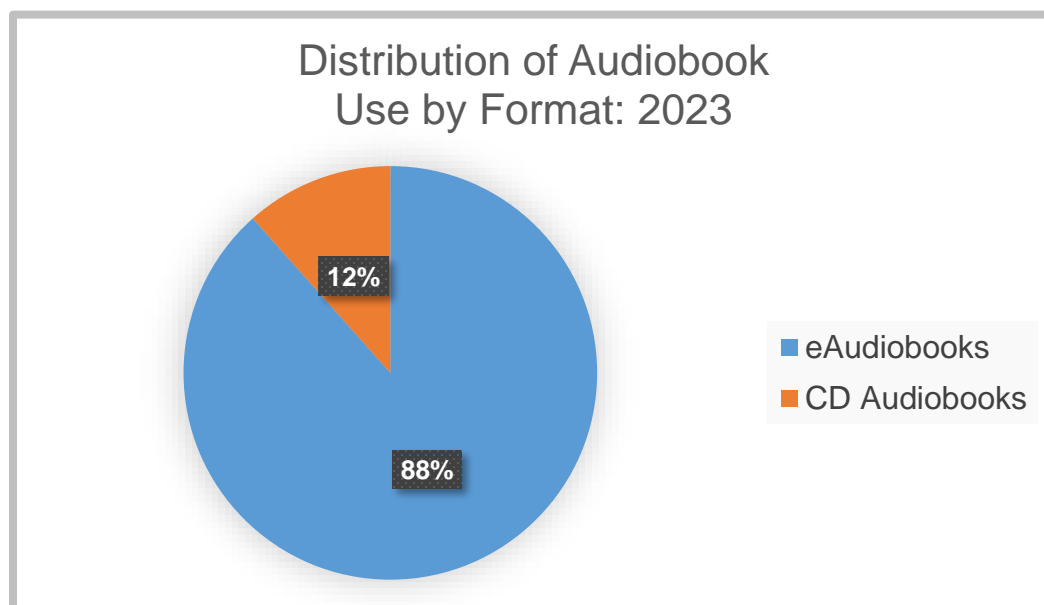
In order to continue meeting the demand for all types of children's materials, the size of this collection was expanded last year. Collection Services Staff reallocated funds from less popular formats, such as DVDs, to children's materials in order to purchase more items and replace worn out ones. Fewer items were removed during the regular deselection process, and the arrangement of the collection was changed at the Lakeshore and Cookstown Branches. The addition of new shelving at the Cookstown Branch created more space for children's materials as well as face-out display.

Adult Collections

Use of adult collections was slightly less than in 2019 (-2%), with significant reductions in the use of audiobooks, magazines, and paperback books. Use of adult fiction was approximately equal to the rates seen in 2019, while use of large print books was up by 28% (3933:3066). Circulation of large print materials through the Home Library Service largely drives fluctuations in the demand for this format, and is dependent on the needs of the individual clients.

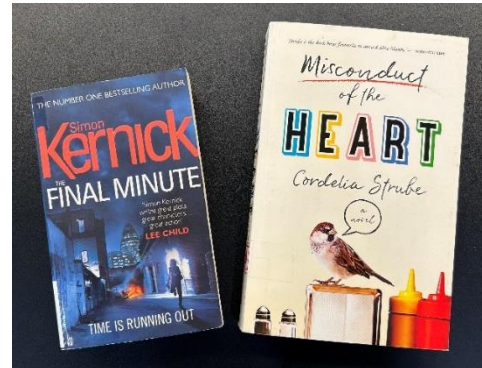
Several formats are becoming widely obsolete, not just in libraries but in the wider consumer market. This is driven by the ease of access and availability of digital formats to everyone with internet, across numerous operating systems and platforms.

Use of audiobooks on CD was 37% less in 2023 compared with 2019, and will continue to decline. The Library will continue to offer this format throughout 2024 to ensure everyone who needs it for accessibility reasons has access to audiobooks, while Collections Staff seek alternative options. The Library's eAudiobooks are very popular, and while they suit the needs of many customers, some people still rely on the CD format for various reasons.



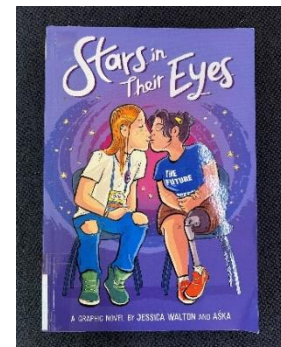
Print magazines are also becoming obsolete. The publishing of print magazines started to decline approximately ten years ago, with fewer titles published every year; as a result, the Library's collection has decreased in size and will continue to shrink. While the popularity of print magazines is down, use of digital magazines is on the rise. The Library provides access to approximately 7000 periodicals online via PressReader. The service includes both magazines and newspapers from around the world in multiple languages. See the section on Digital Resources for usage data.

Paperbacks, also called "mass market" books, are yet another format that appears to be in decline. Fewer titles are being published in this format, with publishers opting for the larger trade paperback (same size as adult hardcover books) or ebook formats instead. As a result, the size of the Library's paperback collection has shrunk in recent years, and therefore circulation has decreased. In 2023, customers borrowed paperback/mass market books 4436 times, compared with 5803 times in 2019, a decrease of 24%.



Young Adult Collection

Young adult materials were borrowed 28% more in 2023 than in 2019. This was driven mostly by the Lakeshore Branch which saw a 50% increase, while the Cookstown Branch saw a 17% increase. The collection includes both young adult fiction (novels) and graphic novels. The graphic novel collection grew in size as part of the Collection Services Team's plan to better serve readers of the format, which continues to grow in popularity.



MULTI-MEDIA

The use of DVD and Blu-Ray video formats continued to decline in 2023 as people turn to online streaming services, including paid (Netflix, Prime, Crave, etc.) and free models (YouTube, CBC, etc.). Compared with 2019 levels, 2023 saw 46% less use of these collections. The Library offers an online video service through the Digital Collection, called Kanopy. This service has increased in popularity; however, it cannot compete with the content offered through private streaming services. The Collection Services Team will prioritize providing access to independently produced, and non-fiction video content going forward, as this content is not as available through other internet services.

Use of the video game collection increased by 72% last year, driven largely by the addition of the Nintendo Switch format.

IN-LIBRARY USE

Following the last upgrade of the Library's integrated library system (Evergreen) in 2022, Library Services staff implemented a new procedure for tracking use of materials in the branches. Customers frequently use materials during a visit to the Library, which is not captured in the circulation data.

While some materials left sitting on tables or at the end of the book stacks, such as adult novels, are inspected and then rejected for borrowing, others are actually read in the branch. Formats with content that is quick and easy to read, or which might be needed for a small section of information within the work, are magazines, adult non-fiction, and most children's materials (excluding novels).

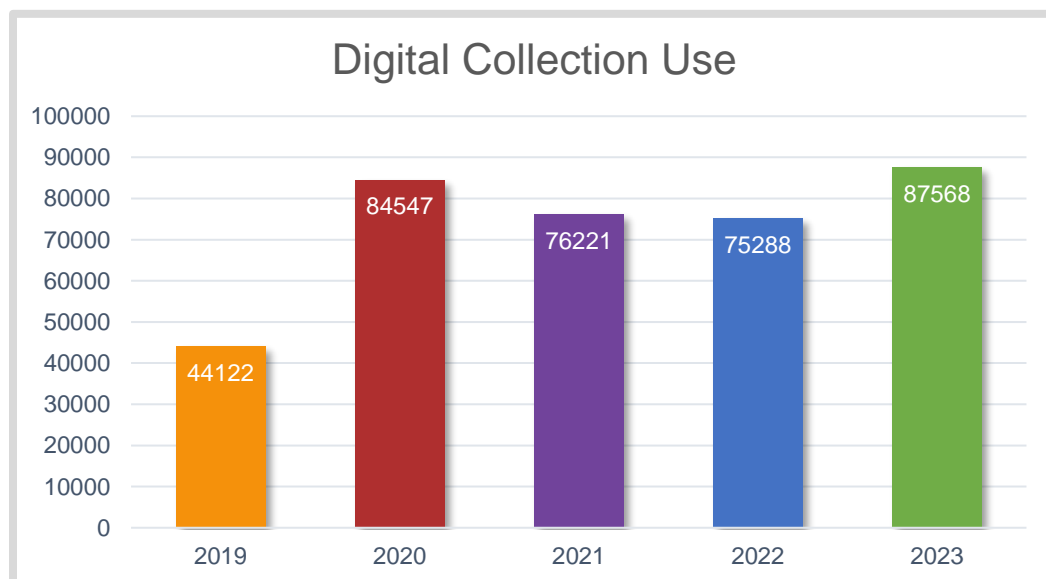
Magazines	565
Board Books	649
Easy Readers	2236
J. Non-Fiction	2216
Picture Books	2774
Non-Fiction	1660
YA Graphic Novels	259



The above numbers reflect in-library use system-wide, however 86% of all in-library use occurs at the Lakeshore Branch.

DIGITAL RESOURCES

Use of the Digital Library (excluding databases) increased by 16% in 2023 compared with the year prior, and was nearly double the usage rate of 2019. This demonstrates that people that only discovered the Library's online resources due to the pandemic have continued to use them even as they are able to access physical collections.



The Collection Services Team made it easier for people to find many digital resources by adding records to the online catalogue that appear alongside lists of books, ebooks, and other formats. For example, when someone searches for “language learning”, the list of results will include not only books, but Transparent Languages also.

The following formats demonstrated a significant increase in use, compared with 2019:

DIGITAL RESOURCE	INCREASE
eAudiobooks	+42%
eBooks	+39%
PressReader (online magazines & newspapers)	+53%
Digital Videos	+93%
Transparent Languages	+139%

The Library also provides access to 18 online databases and services on a variety of subjects to support personal and educational needs. Use of these resources can vary greatly month to month, influenced by a few heavy users and school assignments. As a result, year over year comparisons of usage data for a single resource do not necessarily reflect their value.

Some of the most popular databases and digital services offered by the Library are:

DIGITAL RESOURCE*	2023 USE
HelpNow	992
JobNow	118
Ancestry	262
Historical News: Globe and Mail	374
Historical News: Toronto Star	258
Novelist Plus	572
Masterfile Plus	295
World Book Encyclopedia	3600
Transparent Languages	599



*Due to the method of access in place for LinkedIn Learning (via the County’s system), data for individual libraries in the County is not available; therefore, it is not included.

LIBRARY OF THINGS

Items in the Library of Things collection are selected to support access to Library services, and to extend learning started in Library programs. Items in this collection circulated a total of 1034 times in 2023. This is a relatively young collection; therefore, comparison to usage rates in prior years is not a reliable indicator of popularity or demand. The collection is divided into six categories, each containing a variety of items. The following chart shows the types of materials, as well as the most used item of 2023 for each category.

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF ITEMS	TOTAL USE	MOST POPULAR
DML Equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Audio Recording Kits▪ Camera Kits▪ Microphones▪ Tripod Kits▪ Video Camera Kit	9	93	Camera Kit (x2): 50
Outdoor and Leisure <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Garden Tools▪ Fishing Rods▪ Fishing Tackle▪ Ontario Provincial Parks Passes	24	228	Ontario Parks Passes (x9): 178
Lendable Tech <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Laptops▪ Light Therapy Lamps▪ Cables & chargers▪ Wifi Hotspots	22	194	Laptops (x3): 44
Coding and Robotics Kits <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Blue Bot Kits▪ Lego WeDo Kits▪ Makey Makey Kit▪ Sphero Kits▪ Wonder Pack Kit	30	130	Lego WeDo (x9): 130
Toys and Instruments <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Storytime Kits▪ Board and Card Games▪ Puzzles and Toys	26	130	Storytime Kits (x6): 20

Assistive Devices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DAISY Players ▪ CD Players ▪ Magnifiers ▪ Book Stands ▪ Reader Pens 	24	70	Reader pens (x2): 10* *added in August
---	----	----	---

FORECAST

Based on usage data and factoring in ongoing demographic changes in the community, the following is forecasted for 2024:

	DESCRIPTION	ACTION
1.	Usage of some categories of physical materials that have been climbing since 2021 may plateau	Monitor
2.	Use of audiobooks on CD will continue to decline	Staff are researching alternate physical formats
3.	Use of eaudiobooks will continue to grow	Allocate more funds from lower use collections
4.	Promoting the Library of Things collection and making it more visible in the branches will result in increased use	Monitor demand for different types of items
5.	Demand for physical materials in more languages will grow as demographics of the community continue to change	A project to analyze community needs is underway
6.	Strategic approach to merchandising and promotion, and readers' advisory will increase circulation of previously under-utilized materials	Samples will be evaluated to determine effectiveness

CONCLUSIONS

Usage data for 2023 makes it clear that people have returned to the Library, borrowing more materials than before the pandemic. People have established new reading habits that include using digital formats on a regular basis. The dramatic increases seen in 2023 can be viewed as a new baseline for those collections, and are unlikely to continue at such high rates in the future.

The Library's collections, whether physical or digital, are serving the community well. Collection Services Staff will continue to monitor needs and interests; making data based decisions around content selection and formats.

PREPARED BY:

Mandy Pethick

Director, Public and Information Services

Policy Changes Summary

10a.01.01 EMPLOYMENT – Dress Code Policy #E-2024-03

- Updated definition for whom the policy applies
- Change in wording for Guidelines section including the addition of PPE wording
- Other minor wording and format changes

10b.01.01 EMPLOYMENT – Professional and Associations Memberships Policy #E-2024-04

- Minor wording and format changes

10c.01.01 EMPLOYMENT – Recognition of Life Events Policy #E-2024-05

- Updated definition for whom the policy applies
- Addition of “d) Another life event that is deemed to be essential for the Library to provide recognition, at the discretion of the CEO.” Under Guidelines section
- Minor wording and format changes
- Increase in recognition amount

10d.01.01 EMPLOYMENT – Staff Recognition Policy #E-2024-06

- Minor wording and format changes



SUBJECT: EMPLOYMENT - DRESS CODE POLICY

Policy No: E-2024-03

Date: February 20, 2024

Review Date: February 2028

Pages: 3

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and to clearly communicate what is considered to be appropriate work attire.

POLICY

General

The Library encourages all employees to bring their authentic selves to work, dress comfortably and foster a professional image that upholds public confidence, in accordance with the duties performed. The professional image includes good personal hygiene and grooming. While adhering to the dress code, employees are allowed flexibility to make choices that align with their personal styles, cultural practices, and religious beliefs.

Application

This policy applies to all Library employees including, but not limited to, full-time, part-time, contract, seasonal, casual, student/co-op employees, and volunteers.

Guidelines

Employees shall exercise good faith and judgement in determining the appropriate clothing suitable for performing their duties and presenting a professional demeanor, while abiding to Health and Safety standards. The following guidelines will assist you in making appropriate choices in your working wardrobe.

- Employees may be required to wear Personal Protective Equipment in the course of their duties.

- Some activities may require a different form of dress to perform different job functions (e.g. custodial work, outdoor events, etc.)
- Branded clothing may be worn by employees at any time, but is recommended when representing the Library at external community events and outreach activities.
- When attending Board or Council meetings, or when representing the Library in a formal capacity, employees shall wear traditional business attire or business casual attire as appropriate.
- Examples of clothing or accessories that are generally considered **not** acceptable include, but are **not limited** to the following:
 - Athletic wear such as sweat-pants, spandex, workout attire, sports shorts;
 - Strapless and spaghetti strap tops/dresses, halter tops, tube tops, crop tops, muscle shirts;
 - Clothing which exposes the stomach, back, chest/cleavage and/or under garments;
 - Clothing that is revealing, such as short dresses, skirts and shorts;
 - Clothing or accessories that display commercial or political logos, slogans and advertisements, or words and images that may be offensive to others;
 - Hats (baseball, toques, or any other form of hat), unless worn for safety reasons, as part of the Library's branded items, or as a head covering for religious purposes or cultural tradition;
 - Clothing and footwear that is dirty, excessively worn, torn or frayed.

If employees are unsure of the appropriateness of a clothing item, they are encouraged to speak to Library Management.

The Management team will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate work attire standards are maintained and evenly enforced in their departments.

Related Policies

Employment – Injury & Illness Prevention Policy

Employment - Respectful Workplace, Harassment & Violence Prevention Policy

Approved by the Innisfil Public Library Board, February 20, 2024, Motion Number: 2024.XX

Supersedes Policy #E-2020-05, approved February 10, 2020, Motion #2020.14
and Policy #2016-08, approved March 21, 2016, Motion #2016.32 &
Policy #E-2014-16, approved June 16, 2014, Motion # 2014.50; &
Policy #2012-01, approved January 16, 2012, Motion #2012.15; &
Policy #2009-07, approved March 9, 2009, Motion #2009.24; &
Policy # 2006-18, approved May 8, 2006, Motion #2006.50; &
Policy # 2003-02, approved May 5, 2003, Motion #2003.31.



SUBJECT: EMPLOYMENT – PROFESSIONAL AND ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIPS POLICY

Policy No: E-2024-04

Date: February 20, 2024

Review Date: February 2028

Pages: 2

PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines to assist in the selection of professional and association members for the Library, its Board and its Staff.

POLICY

General

Employees of the Library and the Library as a whole benefit from memberships with external organizations. The Library recognizes the importance of maintaining these memberships as discussed in this policy.

Application

This policy applies to all Staff and Board Members who may become members of external library-related organizations and/or participate in events sponsored by those organizations.

Definitions

Association Fees – *There are two types of association fees: individual association memberships and corporate association membership.*

Guidelines

Relevant Corporate and Board memberships in provincial or national Library organizations will be purchased by the Library.

An individual membership for Staff may be approved for payment by the CEO provided that the employee and/or the Library will derive a direct benefit from this membership.

Approvals for workshops or conferences must be obtained prior to registration in accordance with the Education, Training and Development Policy. If reimbursement is authorized, receipts and proper documentation must be submitted to the CEO or designate.

Approved by the Innisfil Public Library Board, February 20, 2024
Motion Number: 2024.XX

Supersedes Policy #E-2020-06, approved February 10, 2020, Motion #2020.15; and Policy #E-2016-02, approved January 18, 2016, Motion 2016.19; and Policy #E-2011-19, approved October 17, 2011, Motion #2011.65



SUBJECT: EMPLOYMENT - RECOGNITION OF LIFE EVENTS POLICY

Policy No: E-2024-05

Date: February 20, 2024

Review Date: February 2028

Pages: 2

PURPOSE

The Library Board is committed to recognizing specific life events for all Staff, Volunteers, and Library Board Trustees, with an appropriate gift or charitable donation.

POLICY

Application

This policy applies to all Library employees including, but not limited to, full-time, part-time, contract, seasonal, casual, student/co-op employees, long-term volunteers, and Board Members. For the purposes of this policy, the reference to “employees” will include all individuals outlined in the statement above.

Guidelines

The following life events will be recognized through a floral arrangement, gift basket or charitable donation of not more than \$80 (excluding taxes and delivery):

- a) Birth/Adoption of a child;
- b) Death of a current or retired employee or Trustee, their spouse/partner, child or parent;
- c) Hospitalization of an employee or Trustee.
- d) Another life event that is deemed to be essential for the Library to provide recognition, at the discretion of the CEO.

Each team leader will advise the CEO or designate of the event and administration will arrange for the item or charitable donation to be sent.

A card may be sent on behalf of the Board and Staff to acknowledge a Staff wedding or other life events not covered under the Guidelines section.

Related Policy:

Staff Recognition Policy.

Approved by the Innisfil Public Library Board, February 20, 2024, Motion Number: 2024.XX

Supersedes Policy #E-2020-07, approved February 10, 2020, Motion #2020.16; and Policy #E-2016-05, approved February 16, 2016, Motion#2016.22; & Policy #2012-12, approved October 15, 2012, Motion #2012.70 & Policy #E-2011-05, approved March 21, 2011, Motion #2011.20 & Policy #2008-03, approved February 19, 2008, & Policy #2005-03, approved June 13, 2005.



SUBJECT: EMPLOYMENT - STAFF RECOGNITION POLICY

Policy No: E-2024-06

Date: February 20, 2024

Review Date: February 2028

Pages: 4

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Staff Recognition Policy is to recognize the invaluable efforts and accomplishments of Staff which contribute to the success of the Library.

The Library recognizes the value of having a formal recognition culture acknowledging staff excellence and contributions on an ongoing basis as a means to:

- Support the Library's values, objectives and strategic plans by developing an inclusive work environment;
- Enhance staff engagement, build morale and promote teamwork;
- Promote organizational development, learning, leadership and innovation; and
- Enhance staff productivity, contribution and satisfaction.

POLICY

Application

All Library Staff, unless specified as applying only to Permanent Full-Time and/or Permanent Part-Time Library Staff.

Definitions

Service Recognition – Awards for Permanent Staff who complete a specific length of ongoing employment.

Retirement Appreciation – An acknowledgement of commitment and dedication upon the retirement of long-term Permanent Staff.

Resignation – Acknowledgment of Contribution – An acknowledgement of the contributions of Staff, in good standing, who resign.

Organization-Wide Recognition – Recognition given across the Library to individual Staff or teams who demonstrate excellence or innovation in meeting the objectives of the Library’s mission, vision and values.

Service Area Level Recognition – Recognition given within the individual Library service areas to individual Staff or teams for outstanding contributions and accomplishments.

Peer-to-Peer Recognition – Informal, genuine and meaningful expressions of appreciation between co-workers for daily contributions.

Staff Recognition Committee – A group of Library Staff members who have volunteered and/or been recommended by other Staff to represent all Staff in the area of staff recognition.

Guidelines

- Management team organize the annual service recognition ceremony;
- Management team is responsible for the communication and administration of Library specific awards;
- The Team Leader of each area is responsible for communication and administration of service area level recognition according to this policy;
- All Staff are encouraged to support the Library’s culture of recognition by actively seeking opportunities to provide peer-to-peer recognition.

Recognition of New Staff

Flowers or an alternative, and a card with a total value of not more than \$20.00 (excluding taxes) will be given to all new Staff on their first day of employment.

Service Recognition

Service milestones for *Permanent Full-Time and Permanent Part-Time Staff* are based on reaching the milestone within the period from January to December of the award year and are calculated from the year during which the Staff Member was employed by the Library.

Staff Members achieving service milestones are provided with a gift card with a value assigned to the various years of service categories as outlined below:

Milestone (years of service)	Gift Value (maximum)
5	\$70.00
10	\$100.00
15	\$130.00
20	\$160.00
25	\$190.00
30	\$220.00
35	\$250.00
40	\$280.00
45	\$310.00
50	\$340.00

On behalf of the Board a card, and flowers or alternative, will also be presented.

These milestones will be recognized during a Staff meeting.

Retirement Appreciation

On retirement, Permanent Full-Time and Permanent Part-Time Staff will receive a gift or cheque which will be determined and valued on a basis of \$25.00 plus \$15.00 per year of continuous service (eg. 20 years of service $\$300.00 + \$25.00 = \$325.00$).

On behalf of the Board, a card, and flowers or alternative, will also be presented.

This milestone will be recognized during a Staff meeting and may also be acknowledged during a specific ceremony.

Resignation Gift – All Staff

Staff, in good standing, who leave the Library will be presented with:

Length of Service	Gift
one to five years of service	A card, flowers or an alternative of not more than \$20.00 (excluding taxes)
Over five years of service	Gift Value = \$10.00 per year of service.

This milestone will be recognized during a Staff meeting and may also be acknowledged during a specific ceremony.

Culture of Recognition

The following three types of recognition acknowledge that celebrating the value our Library Staff bring to the organization is part of our culture.

1. Organization-Wide Recognition

From time to time, the Library may acknowledge specific individuals or teams for important contributions in the areas of leadership, and excellence relating to the vision and values of the Library; customer service and innovation as directed by the CEO or Designate.

2. Service Area Level Recognition

The Team Leader of each service area recognizes Staff and the team with meaningful informal recognition throughout the year with non-monetary rewards to show appreciation. Team Leaders are encouraged to acknowledge outstanding work performance, customer service, contributions to special projects or tasks, innovative ideas, going above and beyond, being a role model (team spirit/positive attitude/values), etc.

3. *Peer-to-Peer Recognition*

All Staff are encouraged to support the Library's culture of recognition by actively seeking opportunities to provide peer-to-peer recognition by expressing appreciation for fellow Staff.

Related Policy:

Recognition of Life Events Policy

Approved by the Innisfil Public Library Board, February 20, 2024

Motion Number: 2024.XX

Supersedes Policy #E-2020-08, approved February 10, 2020, Motion #2020.17; and Policy #E-2016-04, approved February 16, 2016, Motion #2016.21; & Policy #2012-11, approved October 15, 2012, Motion #2012.69; & Policy #E-2010-12, approved May 17, 2010, Motion #2010.41.