

## Regulatory Registry Response

# **Proposal for amending the education act related to school board accountability, transparency, safety and rights**

Submitted by the Ontario School Library Association (OSLA)

June 2025

The Ontario School Library Association (OSLA) is responding to the regulatory proposal, as posted by the Ontario Ministry of Education, intended to amend the Education Act as it relates to school board accountability, transparency, safety and rights.

As the collective voice of elementary and secondary school library professionals, OSLA supports the Ministry's efforts to strengthen school board accountability and transparency in delivering provincial education priorities. We especially recognize the importance of stronger financial oversight to ensure public funds are used as intended to support long-term student success, including funds allocated for school libraries. As affirmed in [OSLA's response](#) to the Ontario Human Rights Commission's consultation for [Right to Read](#), its report on student literacy in Ontario, school libraries and trained library staff are critical elements for curriculum achievement and student success. Additionally, this aligns with the Government's back-to-basics prioritization, as renewed recognition for the work of school libraries will be essential to correcting the decline in student literacy.

Over the last six years, OSLA has engaged closely with the Ministry of Education to ensure that school library funding is maintained and protected. In 2021, this work resulted in the introduction of accountability measures that required school boards to report on how they were funding school libraries in accordance with the provincial formula as outlined in the Grants for Student Needs (GSN). For the first time in decades, the Ontario Government acted to confront the steady erosion of access to school libraries and library-based resources across the province. These new accountability measures recognized the contribution of school libraries and library staff in fulfilling Ontario's curriculum objectives and ensuring that existing provincial funding was used for its intended purpose.

Unfortunately, the Ministry's introduction of the Core Education Funding model in April 2024 eliminated the previously protected funding envelope for school library staff, as well as the recently implemented accountability and reporting requirements. As a result, there is currently no oversight of how Ontario's school boards are funding school libraries. Without either accountability or enveloped funding, school boards will continue to cut school library funding when faced with budget shortfalls or competing





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interests. Rather than provide parents and families with greater transparency in how their tax dollars are serving students, the new model potentially facilitates cuts to school libraries, with serious repercussions on student success, well-being, and post-secondary preparedness.

The OSLA would like to take this opportunity to reiterate its recommendations to restore and enhance school board accountability for how provincial funds allocated for school libraries and library are used—an objective that aligns with the Ministry’s current proposal to amend the Education Act:

1. Revise the Core Education Funding model to reflect and respect the critical contribution to student success performed by teacher-librarians by establishing a defined sub-allocation for all school libraries and staffing funding within the Learning Resources Fund;
2. Update the Core Education Funding Model to fully protect (envelope) these allocations for library staff and resources to ensure their integral contribution to student learning;
3. Restore the accountability framework implemented for school libraries and improve its effectiveness by implementing the recommended enhancements submitted by OSLA to the Ministry of Education in Fall 2023.

Through the implementation of these three recommendations, the Ministry can reinforce its commitment to transparency, accountability, and student achievement through well-supported school library programs.

Sincerely,

Wendy Burch Jones  
2025 OSLA President

Michelle Arbuckle  
Executive Director, Ontario Library Association (OLA)

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Founded in 1900, the **Ontario Library Association** (OLA) is the oldest continually operating non-profit library association in Canada. With more than 3,500 members, the OLA is the largest library association in the country. We offer opportunities for learning, networking, and providing input into public policy. The **Ontario School Library Association** (OSLA) is a division of OLA consisting of 1,300 members who work in Ontario’s school libraries.