

InsideOLBA

MESSAGE FROM YOUR 2026 OLBA PRESIDENT



Alex Hilson

2026 OLBA President

Spring is on its way, but not soon enough, in my opinion.

My name is Alex Hilson, and I am honoured to serve as your 2026/2027 President for the Ontario Library Board Association (OLBA).

A little about me - I live in Acton, Ontario, the home of the former Olde Hide House which used to attract quite a bit of attention in the day. I'm a Town Councillor on Halton Hills Council and I serve on the Halton Hills Public Library Board. I have a wonderful partner who is my travel companion and I am an active volunteer, serving with my local Optimists Club and church.

I am the child of a teacher and an administrative assistant but was slow to learn to read. The thing that really helped me was my library's Summer Reading Program. It got me really excited about reading. I don't know where I would be without it.

When I ran for President of OLBA, my priorities were

1. connecting and providing a forum for library boards,
2. working with groups that share common concerns, and
3. promoting and advocating for government support.

I see these priorities becoming reality through InsideOLBA newsletters like the one you are reading, ONLibChats which allow us to discuss these issues virtually and through one-on-one presentations to library boards. I was grateful to spend some time with Norfolk County Public Library last month and look forward to meeting more of you during my term.

[Read More](#)

NEWS



Motion to Reconsider or Motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted

Nathan Etherington

For people who are interested in governance and procedure to ensure a smooth meeting and that things are being done correctly, this is an interesting tale of something that occurred at our October Library Board Meeting and highlights differences that may exist between your library board and the municipality's rules of procedure. [Read more.](#)



This Is Not a Time for Censorship

James L. Turk

Director, Centre for Free Expression Toronto
Metropolitan University

We are at a time where most societies are experiencing greater polarization and, in which, intolerance for diverse ideas is growing. The popularity of censorship is rising once again. [Read more.](#)



Reconciliation is a Governance Responsibility: Reflections from a Library Board Working Session

Charmaine McGraw

Reconciliation is often framed as programming — speaker series, land acknowledgements, partnerships, or events. In a recent working session with library board members at this year's OLBA Boot Camp, that framing was intentionally challenged. [Read more.](#)



Library Board Bootcamp Afternoon Session Recap
Nathan Etherington

This year OLBA organized its annual bootcamp thanks to OLBA Council Members Charmaine McGraw and Nathan Etherington on January 31st at the Intercontinental Hotel Ballroom in Toronto. After OLBA's Annual Update by Outgoing President Nathan Etherington, we got the day started with our Key Note Speaker Dr. James Turk, followed by a library board's role in Truth and Reconciliation. [Read more.](#)

ASK YOUR OLA TEAM



Dr. Sabrina Saunders
OLA Deputy Director

I am happy to be invited to participate in the InsideOLBA publication in a column to respond to our members' questions. As a former 20+ year CEO in our public libraries, I have worked with seven Boards and Councils, and am happy to provide insights to our members, as well as bring these insights to Ontario Library Association (OLA) as we work to provide new services to you and your boards.

Changes to the OLA Organization

Since this is our first column, we will bring some updates on how we are growing our services to our Boards and Board members. A number of new initiatives have just landed at OLA and our team is excited to announce these changes. As part of our 2026 AGM on January 28th, our by-law was amended by members which included sunsetting the Divisions and creating five Sectors which can be described as the places the member "works": school, academic, health, special, and of course public libraries. Our Public Library Sector continues to have 2 Councils which serve those members: The Ontario Public Library Association Council (OPLA) and Ontario Library Boards' Association (OLBA), which this readership are members of.

Each Council is still elected, the same way they were in the past. These Councils, as committees of the OLA Board with a purpose to serve and work as intermediaries between the sector members and Staff/Board, are governed by a Terms of Reference (ToR) and no longer by individual by-laws. This ToR is reviewed regularly by your Council and is sent to the Board for any recommended revisions for a quick and responsive amendment.

[Read More](#)

LEARN AND EXPLORE



ONLIBChat
Library Board Governance
March 23, 2026
4pm - 5pm ET

As candidates campaign and new leaders emerge, library staff and boards must be ready with clear policies and advocacy strategies that protect and strengthen their vital role. [Register here.](#)



OLA Community of Practice Groups
Public Library Boards

The newest layer to OLA's model are the community of practice groups. The Public Library Boards Forum is a place where members can connect with others who work or have an interest in their library sector. [Continue the conversation.](#)



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