



The Honourable Jill Dunlop, M.P.P.
Minister of Education
5th Floor, 438 University Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2A5

Sent via email on September 11, 2024

Dear Minister,

I write to you on behalf of the 2900 members of The Writers' Union of Canada (TWUC), the majority of whom live and work in Ontario. A great many of the Union's members, including myself, present our work during classroom visits in Ontario public schools, and our books are regularly collected in school libraries.

As the national association for professional book authors, TWUC is concerned about the recent change to Ontario's education funding, specifically the removal of school library costs as a discrete category of that funding. We agree with our colleagues at the Ontario Library Association that mixing school library funding into a larger budget category excuses school boards and individual institutions from staffing and maintaining libraries within the school.

Researchers the world over have found that professionally staffed school libraries improve educational outcomes for students, and assist classroom teachers in supporting individual learning styles and challenges. Increasingly, Ontario's students are losing this benefit as school boards and individual schools are given implicit permission to deprioritize library funding.

Canada's authors value our role as partners in education. We ask you to fully protect a discrete budget allocation specifically for the maintenance and professional staffing of school libraries. Your leadership in identifying school libraries as an investment Ontario school boards *must* make will ensure the next generation of Ontario's students receives the educational benefits of their school library as a critical learning space.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Danny Ramadan, Chair