



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
*Georgina, Ontario, March 11th, 2011 —*

### **Georgina Public Library Seeks Increase in Provincial Operating Grants**

The Federation of Ontario Public Libraries proposes that the provincial government significantly increase its annual operating grants to Ontario public libraries from \$18.7 million to \$43.9 million over two years. The incremental new provincial funding will enhance services and programs that support provincial priorities such as economic development, employment, early literacy, and integration of new Canadians.

For Georgina Public Library specifically, it would mean an additional \$58,000 in year 1, which would be spent on new collections, digitization resources, and online subscriptions, enhanced programming, and to support our ongoing partnerships within the community.

Public libraries are much more than books. “They transform communities,” said Paul Nicholls, Chair of the Georgina Public Libraries Board. “Today’s libraries are community gathering places filled with valuable print and digital resources and equipped with technology that individuals and families can use free of charge to empower themselves and attain personal goals. The new generation of users accesses their local library by downloading e-books, searching a vast array of databases, browsing genealogy information, borrowing learning resources, reviewing historical photos, and attending programs. Materials, equipment, services, and facilities must constantly be updated to keep pace with changing needs and support the growth of our knowledge-based, 21st Century global economy.”

“Provincial operating grants have not changed since the mid 1990s when they were cut by almost 40%,” said Mary Baxter, CEO/Director of Library Services of Georgina Public Libraries. “The province, at present, funds only \$58,000 of our library’s operating budget. We must rely increasingly on municipal funding to support our operations. Additional provincial operating funding for our library would help assist the library system fulfill the mandate of the Public Libraries Act, ensuring equitable access to information services regardless of a person’s financial abilities.” Access to information is the cornerstone of a truly democratic and healthy society.

“New provincial operating funding allocated to our library would be based on a consistent per capita rate.”

The Federation proposes that the total funding envelope for provincial annual operating grants to Ontario's 388 public and First Nations library boards be increased to reflect the inflation rate and population growth since 1996 when the operating grants were last modified, and to reinstate drastic cuts made to the grants at that time by the provincial government. In a formal vote by the Federation's membership during the week of January 10, 2011, 100% of the ballots cast fully supported this funding proposal developed by the Federation.

Chief Librarians have been asking the government to address the 40% cut the province imposed during the 1990s – it's the public's turn to contact their MPP or the Premier and ask the province to renew its investment in public library service. Your assistance would be appreciated – make the call, send an e-mail, support public libraries.

For additional information, please contact:

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