

Library Funding

Rural branches

Small cities, towns, villages and surrounding rural municipalities fund their local libraries. They own and maintain library buildings, pay for staff and sometimes purchase extra library materials (books, CDs, DVDs, etc.) Each local government also sets a levy to provide per capita funding to their regional library system.

Provincial grants

Each year, Regina and Saskatoon, the regional library boards, and the northern library system board receive grants from the Ministry of Education. *The Public Libraries Regulations, 1996* states that these grants are to be used to support resource sharing: in order to qualify for the grant, boards must participate in the inter-agency catalogue (ILS), reciprocal borrowing in the province, and Saskatchewan's interlibrary loan system.

What has changed: Regional library systems

Regional library systems used the grants to ship materials throughout their own regions, to purchase books and other resources for that region, and to pay staff at the regional headquarters who provided centralized services to all the local branches in the region (300+ across Saskatchewan).

The total amount of the grants provided to the regional library systems in 2016 was about \$6M. In 2017, the Government of Saskatchewan provided each of the seven regions with \$2.5M in operating funding, a reduction by as much as 58 per cent for some regions, and an overall decrease of \$3.5M.

What has changed: Regina and Saskatoon

Regina Public Library and Saskatoon Public Library are funded primarily through each city's mill rate (that is, property taxes). A small, but important, portion of their funding has traditionally come from the grant provided by the Government of Saskatchewan. In 2017, the Government of Saskatchewan eliminated municipal library funding for Regina and Saskatoon. The total amount was just under \$1.3M.

What has changed: Saskatchewan Information and Library Services Consortium (SILS)*

The grants to the consortium were reduced from \$114,000 to \$64,000. Of this amount, \$50,000 is a membership fee and \$14,000 supports innovation.

What has changed: Multitype library initiatives*

The grant for multitype library initiatives for province-wide database licencing was reduced from \$138,000 to \$103,000. This is of particular concern because individual library systems on their own can't afford database licencing, and yet this is what prompted the notion of equal access across the province, not only for public libraries, but also for schools, universities and more.

What has not changed:

- Funding for Pahkisimon Nuyeyáh Library System in the north remains at \$974,000.
- Funding for shipping materials between the north, regional headquarters and the two urban libraries remains. This doesn't include costs to ship materials within each regional library system.
- Funding to provide free access to the Internet remains at \$2.38M.
- Funding for out-of-province interlibrary loans (ILL) remains at \$100,000.
- Funding for services for people with print disabilities remains at \$100,000.

* See RPL's Library Governance Fact Sheet for further descriptions.