



October 23rd, 2019

Dear Minister Fleming,

The British Columbia Library Association (BCLA) was pleased to hear MLA Rachna Singh's announcement about Library Month in the Legislature on October 8th. Information that raises awareness about the work that BC libraries do in their communities and in support of British Columbians is welcomed and appreciated. We also applaud the public acknowledgement of the important work Teacher Librarians do in schools and in communities.

BCLA would like to take this opportunity to draw attention to the example MLA Singh used in her announcement and to suggest that another example may have had a greater impact on people's understanding of the number of children and families reached through BC's public libraries.

MLA Singh announced that "*50,000 children, parents and caregivers attended 2,500 family literacy sessions made possible by Raise a Reader...*" Raise A Reader received \$500,000 from the Ministry of Education to support this work.

The BC Summer Reading Club reached 163,000 children and more than 85,000 adults and caregivers in 200 communities across the province. BC Summer Reading Club received \$65,000 from the Ministry of Education to support this work.

The Government's investment in BC Summer Reading Club, in terms of children, families and caregivers reached, is considerably and notably different from Raise A Reader and arguably more significant to British Columbians who trust public libraries to deliver services they count on.

BC Summer Reading Club is a free program that encourages and supports BC's children to read over the summer months. Libraries across the province shape programs that are inclusive, diverse and responsive to a community's expressed needs. Literacy based library programs are offered regularly in both rural and urban communities and are offered in several languages including American Sign Language. BC SRC focuses on developing programs with Indigenous children, families and communities across the province. BC SRC participants develop a love of reading that enhances the quality of life for all involved.

BC Summer Reading Club brings families into the library, brings the library out to the community, and brings communities together to celebrate reading and literacy.



The BC Library Association submits regular and comprehensive reports to the Ministry of Education demonstrating the breadth and depth of the work public libraries do through BC Summer Reading Club. Please consider these reports and the amazing stories they contain for further examples of what BC's public libraries achieve in their communities.

Thank you again for recognizing Library Month in the BC Legislature.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine Middlemass".

Christine Middlemass
President
BC Library Association

Cc: Minister Carole James
MLA Rachna Singh