



12.

To: Toronto Public Library Board – September 15, 2003

From: City Librarian

Subject: **Ontario Works Incentive Funds, 2004 - 2005**

Purpose:

To provide the Toronto Public Library Board with information on eleven Toronto Public Library projects to be funded through the *Ontario Works Incentive Funds, 2004 – 2005*.

Funding Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no implications for the Library's operating budgets for 2003, 2004 and 2005 arising from this report. The eleven Library projects, totalling \$621,200 are fully funded from the remaining portion of the one-time provincial incentive funds paid to the City in recognition of the achievement of Toronto Social Services (TSS) of the Ontario Works targets set by the Province. A cost for each of the eleven Library projects is provided in Attachment 1.

There will not be any City funding for these projects beyond 2005. In the event that the Library wishes to continue any of them beyond 2005, alternate sources of funding, e.g. grants and sponsorships, will be sought.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Toronto Public Library Board receive the *Ontario Works Incentive Funds, 2004 – 2005* report for information.

Background:

TSS received one-time provincial funding as a result of the City of Toronto exceeding its Ontario Works Community Participation (workforce) targets. The City decided to use this money for projects supporting children and youth. A portion of the funding was used for the Kids@Computers scholarship program. The Library participated in Kids@Computers in 2001, 2002 and 2003. The possibility of extending this program beyond 2003 is currently under review. In addition, the Library received incentive funding in 2002 to develop the Teen Zone Gateway.

Building on these earlier programs, the 2004 – 2005 portion of the incentive funding is to be used to support complementary initiatives targeting at-risk youth. Eleven projects from the

Library were submitted to TSS and were approved by Council at its meeting of July 22, 23 and 24, 2003 as part of 85 projects for the City.

Comments:

The 2004 – 2005 projects for the Library were developed to meet library service goals in reaching at-risk youth in high needs and/or under serviced areas of the City, in accordance with criteria adopted by City Council at its meeting held on May 21, 22 and 23, 2003.

There are four main thrusts to the Library projects.

1. Young Voices Writing Conference: Read, Write Create: A 2-3 day writing symposium connecting youth writers with established authors through workshops, feedback and literary support, will be offered in 2004 and 2005. The symposium will complement, enhance and extend the reach of the existing Young Voices program which encourages youth writing through an annual publication.
2. Youth Homework Clubs: These clubs will be run on a pilot basis in 2004 and 2005 in six locations. This initiative will address youth homework needs by providing a quiet workspace, access to information resources and trained volunteer support. It will also provide youth employment opportunities.
3. Study Centres: Study centres will be introduced on Sundays in 2004 and 2005 in three locations on a pilot basis. This initiative will transform meeting room space into quiet, safe and accessible study areas in neighbourhood locations with significant youth populations in high need communities. The funds will provide for the purchase of furniture for each location.
4. Teen-Parent Program: Young Families Reading Together: This initiative will take the library out into the community, reaching teen parents with young children. The program will promote reading, parenting skills and use of library resources.

Conclusion:

Ontario Works Incentive Funding for 2004 – 2005 will provide the Toronto Public Library with an opportunity to enhance service to at-risk youth during this period. It will also enable the Library to pilot projects with a view to assessment for future needs.

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List of Attachments:

Attachment 1: Toronto Public Library Projects Receiving Funding from Ontario Works
Incentive Funds, 2004 – 2005.