



First Nation Library Service—Service Summary

Moving to a single support option for First Nation Services

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First Nation Library Service—Service Summary

First Nation libraries across the province have indicated a desire to operate as one First Nation Library Community. The threads of this argument are seeded as far back as the “Aboriginal Library Information Service” in 1994. The idea resurfaced formally in the Ministry Consultations with the First Nation Library Community in 2002-2006. However it has never been far from the surface. There are currently 30 First Nation Libraries in Northern Ontario. There are 104 First Nation Communities in Northern Ontario and First Nation people are the fastest growing segment of the population. We need to have a service that can assist both on-reserve and off-reserve librarians in serving this clientele.

There are 24 communities in Southern Ontario, with 18

The Recommendation...

OLS-North would like to recommend that it take responsibility for the First Nation Library Service to serve First Nation Libraries across the province.

This would meet the need of the First Nation Libraries to collaborate within an existing OLS agency and thus assure accountability for Ministry

operating libraries.

The OLS agencies have continued for some time to support collaborative efforts with First Nation libraries. With the agencies each leading some of the collaborative projects. In 2004 OLS-North received a Library Strategic Development Fund Grant to assist the First Nation Libraries in developing a strategic plan.

This project was ambitious, but led to several positive initiatives including an advocacy kit and the current Speak up for First Nation Libraries Campaign.

The desire to collaborate is embedded in all the provincial projects taken on by First Nation Libraries: Our Way Forward- the First Nation Strategic Plan, First Nation Public Library Week, First Nation Community Reads and Speak

contributions and support of the provincial interest in First Nation Libraries.

OLS-North would expand its organizational structure to include a service unit designated for First Nation Library Service. This unit would be managed by a Director responsible for First Nation Service with



FN Library Conference

Up for First Nation Libraries to name but a few. First Nation librarians desire a venue to share a common experience and a common voice.

However, First Nation clients have occasionally been frustrated by the differences in service priorities between the two agencies.

OLS-North wishes to offer a solution which will assist the collaboration of First Nation clients across the province, and remove some of the perceived barriers they have encountered.

three First Nation Advisors.

It would benefit from the advice of two panels: one of librarians, the other from the broader First Nation Community. Both panels would include representation from across the province.

What follows is a service plan, structure and proposed budget for the unit.

From the First Nation Voice

Challenges (as identified in Ministry Report, Planning for our Future, May 9, 2006)

- *Space:- the need for new buildings, adequate space, appropriate space, space separate from schools, how to better organize current space, set up space for different client groups, use space to facilitate effective programming and schedule programming in shared space*
- *Staffing- need for adequate staffing, librarians training, adequate support staff, trained volunteers, need for job descriptions commensurate with librarians responsibilities, make best use of librarians time; succession planning*
- *Leadership-how to garner support of Chiefs and Councils, encourage involvement of library boards, put political spotlight on libraries*
- *Partnerships—how to ensure there is cooperation rather than competition with other community service regarding funding and volunteer support, seek the elimination of fees for use of community centres, partner with First Nations communities with similar histories, the need to network with First Nations across provincial and international boundaries, partner with broader society, stronger partnerships with non-First Nation libraries, partner with schools and daycare centers, colleges regarding training for librarians to view their diplomas; communication among First Nation librarians*



First Nation Library Service: Background

Current Situation

First Nation Library Service—Service Summary

The relationship of the First Nation Libraries, the Ministry and the two OLS agencies, has had its ups and downs.

Currently the relationship of OLS-North and the First Nation Libraries is strong and the two are working on projects to move forward together.

- In 2009, OLS-North was able to redirect funds from a previous year to a First Nation Leadership Summit. This was attended by 24 librarians and was very well received. We have been getting many excited queries about level two which will be held in March of this year
- OLS-North has taken the lead on First Nation Public Library Week designing and distributing this year's poster with a financial contribution from OLA
- OLS-North assisted the First Nation Libraries in bringing their "Speak Up for First Nation Librarians" creating the booklet, calendar, brochure and webpage for the speak up campaign
- First Nation librarians and managers from OLS-North and SOLS have recently met together to discuss next steps for the strategic plan. Their recommendations will now go forth to the First Nation Strategic Plan Liaison committee.
- OLS-North has traditionally held a conference each year for the First Nation Librarians. This year the clients have chosen to have a

separate stream within the larger OLS-North conference. For a few years OLS-North had included Southern First Nation Librarians in this conference, through OLS-North funds gapped from a previous year and at times with a contribution from SOLS and the Ministry. Financial and service priorities do not always make this possible. The proposed structure would ensure that this occurred on an annual basis. There would also be two annual networking meetings, one held with the conference and one held with a fall training event.

- For many years OLS-North has administered the Ministry's First Nation Salary Subsidy. This means that OLS-North has long standing relationships with most of the Southern First Nation librarians.
- In recent years OLS-North has been focusing on

Partnering with SOLS

Both OLS-North and SOLS have supported their own consulting service for their First Nation clients and integrated other services within their agencies differently. However in addition, they work together on a number of projects :

- First Nation Strategic Plan including but not exclusively the First Nation Advocacy Tool kit and the Speak Up for First Nation Libraries Campaign

Community Capacity Building and the libraries' role in community development. We have a First Nation Advisor who has expertise in this area

- Technology remains an area of concern. Some of the libraries have joined JASI, others remain intimidated by technology and all need advice and assistance
- Our other First Nation advisors focus on the library skills needed by First Nation librarians to succeed.
- OLS-North has in house expertise in developing new First Nation Libraries, projects like VOCAL offer new creative ways to service unserved communities
- First Nation services will be a growing area of service for Ontario Library Service –North for many years both in First Nation libraries and in non-First Nation libraries.
- This model will also be beneficial for the continued development of a centre of expertise on First Nation Library Service for Ontario.

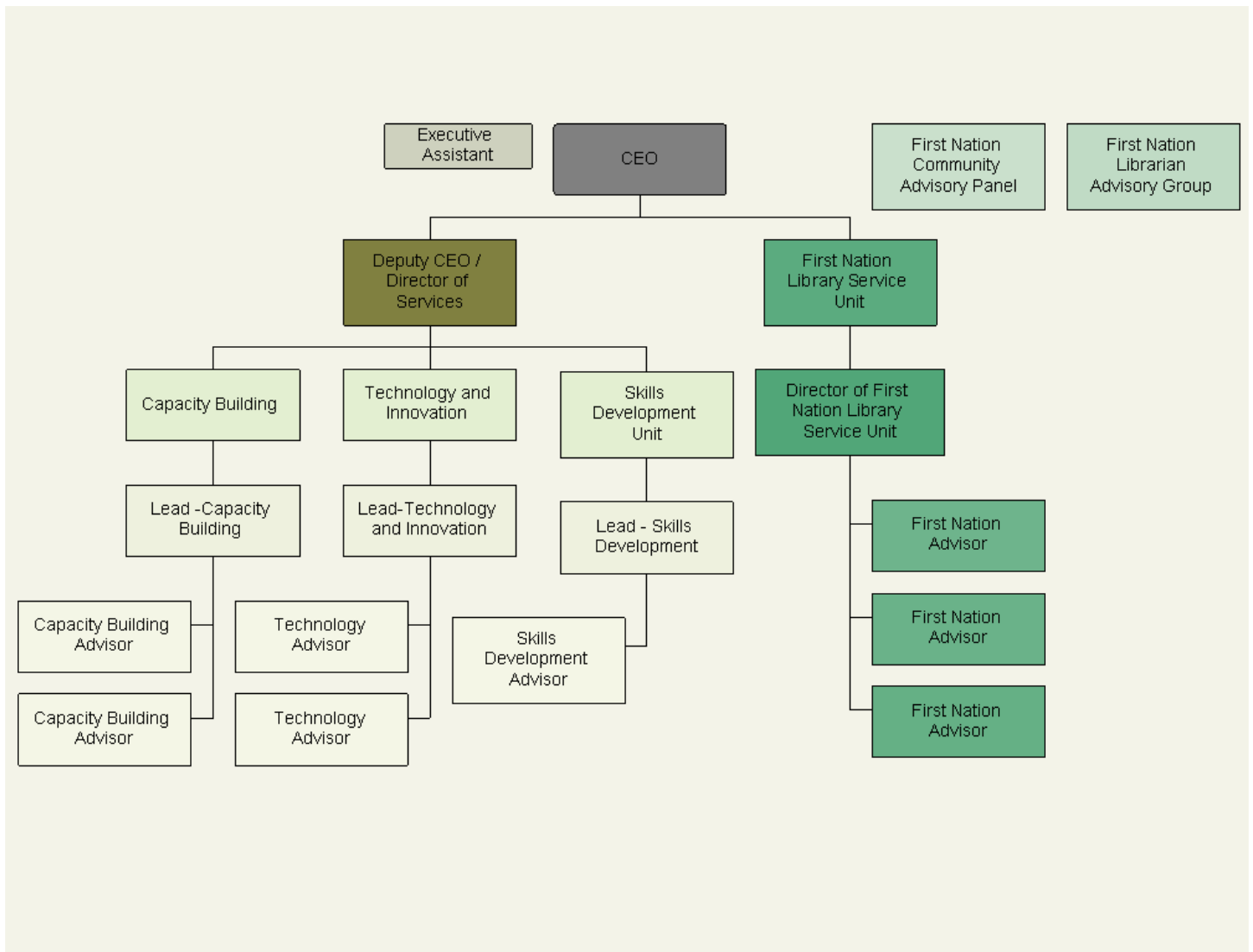
From the First Nation Voice

Challenges (as identified in Ministry Report, planning for our future, May 9, 2006)

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- *Culture-need to support First Nations language use, preserve traditional stories, preserve First Nations history and other materials*
- *Technology-need for adequate number of computers, basic introduction to technology, need for training on use of computers, technical training to troubleshoot and repair computers*
- *Sustainability- need long term core funding commitment, level of funding which ensures that all First Nations have libraries, need to increase the salary supplement, eliminate uncertainty in operating funding and salary supplement, funding for new books and literacy materials, funding to attend workshops, eliminate taxes and duties on books from U.S.*
- *Planning-need to develop systems for long term planning, need to involve First Nations librarians in planning process*

First Nation Library Service: A division of Ontario Library Service -North



Note:

Each of the three advisors will have an area of specialty: Capacity Building/Community Development; Library Skills; Technology

The Director will be an active member of the management team involved with organizational planning

This gives the First Nation librarians a dedicated voice in OLS-North planning



First Nation Library Service—Service Summary

Leadership

First Nation Librarians have taken large strides in the past few years in the area of advocacy and communicating the value of their library in the community.

However these activities are being undertaken by a few emerging leaders, with many of the librarians not feeling equipped with the skills to take on a vocal role either in their community or within the broader First Nation Community.

The librarians need to build skills in the areas of public speaking, meeting participation, developing written tools and making presentations.

The First Nation Service Unit would work

with individual librarians on their leadership plans and connect them to the training and coaching they require.

Staff would work with the First Nation Library Community to develop effective tools to be used by all First Nation Librarians in their communities.

OLS-North would develop ongoing leadership summits to build on the skills offered in Level One.

A mentor program will be introduced to assist First Nation clients in receiving the support of a colleague.



Leadership Summit Level One

Community Capacity Building

The need of First Nation librarians to be able to effectively partner with others within their communities, other librarians and the broader sector has been discussed.

The First Nation Library Service Unit would assist librarians in developing the skills and tools to effectively create long lasting partnerships.

It would encourage them to become partners in their social and economic development of their community.

It would assist them in eliminating the feeling of competition between community groups in favour of a feeling of partnership within their community.

We would continue to provide assistance on building grantsmanship skills.



Marketing

OLS– North will continue to support both individual First Nation libraries and provincial First Nation committees in their marketing efforts.

We will provide marketing products which portray the cultural uniqueness of First Nation Libraries.

First Nation Libraries will have access to the marketing tools and kits developed by the agency.

OLS-North has in house marketing expertise which is sensitive to FN culture.

OLS-North has designed the FN Public Week poster for the last 2 years.

OLS-North also designed the original strategic plan and many of the products which have been initiated from the plan.



First Nation Public Library Week Poster 2010





Library Skills Development / Conference/ Training



First Nation Drummers
OLS-North Conference

OLS-North will continue to offer training to meet the needs of First Nation clients in a culturally sensitive manner.

Training includes areas of interest specific to First Nation libraries –i.e. First Nation languages and heritage.

Our training is geared to the training needs and skill level of First Nation libraries.

An annual conference or conference stream will continue to be offered. First Nation clients have a desire to meet together, but it has not always been possible to integrate two

unique budgets and two sets of priorities .

We have for the last couple of years offered area workshops for First Nation libraries and a series of FN specific webinars is in the planning stage.

As First Nation populations grow, non-native librarians are interested in learning from their First Nation clients and OLS-North is well placed to facilitate this.

OLS-North is capable of being a centre for expertise on FN library services for Ontario.

Culture and Language

The First Nation librarians are eager to position their role in the preservation of culture and language.

OLS-North is currently developing a toolkit to assist librarians in helping their communities preserve their language.

This theme is integrated into OLS-North’s ongoing training programs.

OLS-North is taking the lead in a First Nation repository project which will facilitate the development of a repository in Whitefish

Lake First Nation while developing a manual for other First Nation libraries.

OLS-North continues to approach activities and services to our First Nation clients with respect and cultural sensitivity.



First Nation Library Service Development

The secondary role of the First Nation Library Service Unit has to be the broader development of library service to First Nation residents of Ontario. This includes:

- Become the centre of expertise on First Nation Service.
- Initiate creative delivery methods to expand library service in 70.2% of First Nation communities which have no library.
- Use internal expertise and the expertise

of FN librarians to build a program for training of non native librarians in off reserve libraries to better service the growing FN population.

- Continue to support broader FN library initiatives such as FN Public Library Week, FN Community Reads; and FN Strategic plans.
- OLS-North will continue to work with the Ministry and the libraries to administer the First Nation Salary Subsidy.



Wasauksing First Nation Library



Technology

First Nation Librarians are very cognizant of the need to continue to develop technical skills. Hands on training and advice in this area continue to be requested.

First Nation Librarians were amongst the First adopters of JASI and continue to join as they can gain support. We will continue to work with First Nation libraries to ensure that they all have access to an automated system.

The proposed model would provide continued technological growth through the use of in house expertise. They would have specialized training, help desk support and assistance with the development and maintenance of websites.



OLS-North Conference 2008

First Nation Library Service - Advisory Panels

First Nation Community Advisory Panel

OLS-North will seek nominations from various groups to develop a panel of First Nation Community Experts. This panel may change from time to time depending on the needs of First Nation librarians. We would hope to gain expertise on First Nation governance and knowledge of First Nation community priorities from this panel. It would be limited to 3-5 individuals.



First Nation Library Advisory Panel

OLS-North will seek nominations from First Nation Librarians for a panel of First Nation Librarian Advisors. The purpose of the panel is to provide advice on OLS-North's First Nation Services. It will be comprised of Two First Nation Clients from the North, Two from the South, and one chosen at large. This panel will sit for a two year period. The participation of this panel will be crucial in the transition to the new structure and would continue to provide recommendations for service beyond this period.



First Nation Library Service Budget 2010-2011

Income

FN Salary Subsidy Grant	653,000	A) Same as previous Years
First Nation Library Development Grant	295,800	B) Combined total of current grants to OLS-North and SOLS
OLS-North Contribution	58,649	C) 25% of director's salary; 20% of advisors salary
	1,007,449	

Expenditures

Salary Subsidies to First Nation	653,000	D) Same as previous years
Management	82,935	E) Director's Salary
Advisor Salaries	210,307	F) 3 Advisors' Salaries
Staff Travel	30,000	
Clients' Professional Development including travel	31,207	
Total	1,007,449	

Conclusion and Next Steps:

OLS-North would recommend that the Ministry look to change the structure of service to First Nations in the coming fiscal year. The budget included here is for the 2010-2011 year. There are several steps that would need to take place as the transition took place:

Consultations:

OLS- North supports a consultative process which would focus on the positive aspects of this change, including:

- The ability of First Nation clients to function as one group sharing a common experience and voice, without geographic barrier
- The ability of First Nation clients to have a voice in management planning through a dedicated Director of First Nation Services
- The ability of First Nation clients to gain expertise of the First Nation Community Advisory Panel
- The ability of First Nation clients to have a voice through the First Nation Library Advisory Panel
- In house expertise in Community Capacity Building, Technology and Library Skills Development. A service team with complementary specialties working as a team to meet the needs of First Nation Services.
- Ongoing support of collaborative initiatives
- Delivery of training and consulting services in a culturally sensitive manner

In order to make the transition successful there would need to be consultations with Ministry Staff, Southern Ontario Library Service Management and ongoing consultation with the First Nation Client Libraries. These consultations would centre on the structure and services which the new unit would offer. It would include the setting of short-term and long-term goals for the unit. It would also include discussion on the type of representation which should be on the two advisory panels.

If at all possible, the advisory panels should be in place prior to the inauguration of the new service unit to assist with the transition.

Internally, once a decision is made consultations with staff and union would need to take place regarding changes to the organization, service delivery and advisory structures.

- OLS-North would need to work with its union to incorporate the changes to the organization

A clearly defined and transparent consultation process will ensure an easy transition. OLS-North is pleased to submit this proposal for a new model to work with First Nation Libraries in making their way forward.

Submitted: Leanne Clendening
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