

Save Saskatoon Public Libraries

Just months after a hard fought campaign to restore provincial funding to public libraries in Saskatchewan, management at the Saskatoon Public Library is cutting staff and services.

Earlier in 2017, the jobs of three regular public library staff were eliminated. In May, 20 library workers, including subject specialists, library assistants, and staff who worked with inter-provincial loans, were laid off “due to a budget shortfall”.

At the same time, the Saskatoon Public Library has continued to advertise and fill non-unionized managerial positions, including two new branch managers and a director of human resources who began working at the library within the past three months.



So why the cuts?

All of these cutbacks come at a time when the Saskatoon Public Library has not had its actual budget reduced. The library has stated that it is moving forward with layoffs and cuts in anticipation of a budget shortfall in 2018. It is premature to cut services and lay off staff in anticipation of future budget challenges.

The Saskatoon Public Library provides valuable services to the people of Saskatchewan. Last year, the library issued 12,662 new library cards and saw a 31 per cent increase in program attendance, a 35 per cent increase in active members, and a 15 per cent increase in circulation of digital material.

With use increasing, it is unacceptable that the Saskatoon Public Library lay off staff and cut services. We need to fight to ensure that the Saskatoon Public Library continues to provide exceptional service to the people of Saskatoon.

Libraries are a community gathering place for many and offer countless free programs for all ages. Staff cutbacks affect the quality and quantity of programs.

What will service cuts mean for library users?

- The jobs of library staff who check out your books and who process loans for the Saskatchewan Interlibrary Loan Service (SILS) have been eliminated. The result? Longer wait times, reduced service, and impacts on provincial public library lending.
- There will be longer wait lines to receive generic service in the library and far fewer library workers there to help you.
- Library services have changed because there are no longer subject specialists working at the library. The jobs of two legal librarians, business librarian, music selector, film specialist, literacy librarian, local history coordinator, information services coordinator, fine arts coordinator, and teen services library assistant have all been eliminated.
- Subject specialists are important resources that many library users rely on, including students who are looking for materials for their research paper or book report, teachers who need help finding education films to show to their classes, and newcomers who are learning English.
- Safety will become an issue at the downtown library with fewer staff to attend to problems. Safe public library spaces are important for our community.
- Without qualified staff to order materials for specialist collections, the public library's collection will become more generic.

Take action today

The Saskatoon Public Library's CEO, directors and library board members are responsible for public library services and for the elimination of these jobs while the library remains fully funded.

Want to help?

Write the board of directors today. Contact your city councillor.

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Together we can save Saskatoon Public Libraries.

Learn more at www.2669.cupe.ca.

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