

February 5, 2015

Dear ULC Library Executives,

I am pleased to enclose ULC's most recent Leadership Brief.

*Partners for Education* is intended as a brief to use with your local leaders – a conversation starter – helping them understand the great asset they have in their library as an education partner.

As library CEOs, we own our role as critical education and learning institutions for the cities and counties we serve. Yet dangerously, our colleagues – mayors and councils, county executives and supervisors, school superintendents, community and business leaders – are too often unaware of the programs we are providing to every age learner. We need to change their awareness and that is the aim of this brief.

ULC library members who previewed *Partners for Education* at our member breakfast during the Chicago Midwinter activities provided these tips for using the brief with local leaders:

- Highlight the sentences or paragraphs that will resonate with the leader you are meeting with. We are all busy executives and your highlighting key points will help your leader focus.
- Bring concrete examples of what your library is doing and achieving to meet local education goals. What should you bring? Data that describes local education challenges and how the library is addressing these; Stories that exemplify meeting the needs of key populations and age groups; People who have benefited from the library education and learning programs; and Examples of how the library is partnering with other key organizations to best meet local needs.

We discussed the importance of the words we use when we meet with leaders – specifically, do we use the word education or learning? Education is the better word to use when meeting with government and business leaders. Education is perceived as a critical necessity for a strong economy and future; learning is perceived as nice, but not essential.

Finally, to be clear, we are not schools, nor do we aspire to be seen in the school education realm. Our *great* asset is that we come at learning and education with a wondrous variety of approaches, techniques and models that fit the incredibly wide needs of our residents.

I want to thank the ULC members who participated in an Education Conversation that occurred in the late fall of 2014 and who prompted and contributed to the writing of this brief. And, a thank you to Gale Cengage Learning for supporting this work.

I hope that we can continue the Education Conversation on ULC's new e-Discussion group – Education Leaders. To join the conversation, please email Katherine Behrens ([kbehrens@urbanlibraries.org](mailto:kbehrens@urbanlibraries.org)), ULC Member Programs Executive, with the names and email addresses for your team members who should be part of this group. Look for hard copies of this Leadership Brief in your mailbox soon.

All the best,

**Susan**

Susan Benton, President and CEO