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**Subject:** Keep Hantsport Library Open  
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Dear Melissa,

I am devastated and deeply disturbed by the decision to close the Hantsport library branch, along with four other branches across the Annapolis Valley.

In our community, the library is far more than a building filled with books. It is one of the few places in our small town that remains open and accessible to everyone, regardless of age, income, or circumstance. It is a place where people gather, connect, learn, and feel part of something larger than themselves.

As both a resident and a mental health counsellor serving this community, I understand how important spaces like this are. The Hantsport library provides opportunities for connection, learning, belonging, and community engagement. At a time when loneliness, social isolation, and excessive screen use are increasingly common concerns, the library offers something different. It is a place where people come together face-to-face. It encourages curiosity, imagination, literacy, lifelong learning, and genuine community connection.

The value of a library cannot be measured solely through budgets. Its impact is reflected in the child who discovers a favourite book, the senior who finds connection and purpose through a community program, the student who gains access to resources they might not otherwise have, and the countless residents who find a welcoming place to learn, grow, and belong.

I think especially about the impact on children. A library is often where a lifelong love of reading begins. It is where children discover new interests, develop literacy skills, expand their understanding of the world, and build meaningful connections within their community.

This issue is also deeply personal to me. My children are three and one years old, and they have borrowed hundreds of books from the Hantsport library. We regularly walk across the street to the library where the children choose new books, chat with our wonderful librarian, and interact with the community members who gather there at the same time each week. These moments may seem small, but they are the building blocks of community. They are exactly the kinds of experiences that become increasingly rare when public spaces disappear.

What disturbs me most is that this decision appears to measure the value of a library primarily through numbers and costs while overlooking its broader impact on

community wellbeing. Once resources like this are lost, they are incredibly difficult to restore. My concern is not only about the loss of a library today, but about what that loss says about the future we are creating for small communities like ours.

I urge you to do everything possible to prevent this closure. The Hantsport library is not simply a service. It is a gathering place, a learning space, a source of connection, and an important part of the fabric of our community. Losing it would be a significant loss for Hantsport and the surrounding area.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,

Dana Hines