Inquiry into school libraries and teacher librarians in Australian schools

- **the impact of recent policies and investments on school libraries and their activities.**
  - Thank goodness for new improved facilities for school libraries including better connectivity.
  - Libraries are much more functional and attractive places to work in & use now that SSoT(State) & BER (Federal) money has been invested in refurbishing/ rebuilding them. No longer Public Libraries second cousin.
  - Better access included in new designs and various meeting/ conference rooms added provide for more varied use.

- **the future potential of school libraries and librarians to contribute to improved educational and community outcomes, especially literacy**
  - Teacher Librarians with their extensive knowledge of Children's literature are invaluable in sourcing resources to back up class teacher's literacy programs and in guiding students to read worthwhile literature recreationally.
  - With teacher workload increasing; the support of a resource/ literature specialist is great for that "just in time" learning. Teachers are so pleased when they can send a child or small group to library to find just the right book to match their interest and or the answer to that question they have just asked.
  - Teacher Librarians are **trained teachers** as well as Librarians and so have the skills to teach students as well as organise the purchase and processing of suitable resources. All the TLs I know have good knowledge of all curriculum changes :e.g. Essential Learnings & ACAR draft curriculums.

- **the factors influencing recruitment and development of school librarians**

  - very limited institutions offering post graduate Librarianship courses
  - originally the state Education Departments offered 6 month secondment course – some of which got credited towards Post Graduate Degree (this was discontinued to the detriment of availability of TL for schools) Needs to be reinstituted.

- **the role of different levels of government and local communities and other institutions in partnering with and supporting school librarians**
  - Federal Govt has provided funds for buildings; local government has good public library facilities that welcome schools as members and are happy to invite schools to hear visiting guest author etc; but State government , which is responsible for employing staff in its schools has been very short

sighted in not providing training or advertising sufficiently training incentives for future librarians

- **the impact and potential of digital technologies to enhance and support the roles of school libraries and librarians**
  - Most School libraries have welcomed digital technologies as they are very engaging for students; but it would be a great mistake to assume that books are no longer needed. Students in low socio economic areas cannot afford to personally own palm pilots. Ebook readers etc. and appreciate being able to get onto computers and www. at school as well as being able to take home a physical book.
  - Digital technologies support the role of TLs in that enquiries can be made via school library database much faster than by old manual means.
  - SCIS is a very useful tool for TLs in schools , when processing resources; but it is still essential that a person with the knowledge of local ways that people search for materials to suit units of work or recreational interests e.g. "jobs" instead of "careers", SOSE etc