



Dear Friend,

Below are some things that I believe ought to be done in order to improve school librarianship in all schools around Australia. However, the main thing is that libraries should simply exist! Too often, and this is the case especially in WA, school libraries are being replaced by computer rooms and books are being abolished.

Books are essential in students' lives, and librarians more than ever need to be employed to help students access books, computers and other literacy resources. Every school in Australia ought to have a library and at least one librarian who is working full-time in that library. That ought to be the minimum standard. What has happened here in NSW is that teacher-librarians have become relief from face-to-face teachers, teaching a whole range of subjects that do not involve librarianship. Many teacher-librarians work part-time at two or more schools. This is not satisfactory at all.

Here are other things I believe ought to be done as a matter of priority:

- \* collect national data on school library staffing, funding, and scheduling;
- \* tie funding so that states can and must adequately staff and fund school library programs and services;
- \* require that literacy programs and other national curricula should explicitly recognise the central role school libraries have in student achievement, literacy attainment, and preparation for post-secondary success;
- \* develop national school library standards;
- \* increase teacher librarian training positions in university programs.

All the best,  
Dianne (Di) Bates