



**Inquiry into School Libraries and  
Teacher Librarians**

**Letter of support from Pledger Consulting Pty Ltd.**

We are a small business that provides directories of websites, fiction titles, posters and books to school libraries throughout Australia. With the Australian School Libraries Association, we co-sponsor the Australian Teacher Librarian of the Year Award.

We believe that it is essential that each school have a teacher librarian. The role of a teacher librarian as a teacher is a crucial one in improving the research skills, literacy levels and overall academic achievement of all students.

Existing research shows that school libraries can have a positive impact, whether measured in terms of reading scores, literacy or learning more generally, on student achievement. There is evidence to show that a strong library program that is adequately staffed, resourced and funded can lead to higher student achievement regardless of the socioeconomic or educational levels of the adults in the community.

Lonsdale, M 2003, *Impact of school libraries on student achievement: a review of the research, report for the Australian School Library Association*, ACER, Camberwell, Vic., p. 27.

When a school library is stocked with interesting books, chosen by a teacher librarian who is trained to promote literature and enthuse children with the love of reading, then literacy levels will improve.

The teacher librarian's knowledge and skills are also vital in the selection and management of resources, ensuring that both school students and staff have easy access to the materials that they need. With so many new libraries being funded by the Government, it is essential that the new and refurbished libraries be organised by a teacher librarian who has the skills and abilities to facilitate resource development and ensure that the buildings are used for the educational benefit of the school community.

As students receive more computers and the national broadband network expands, the role of the teacher librarian in teaching about accessing safe and appropriate websites and using the Internet safely will become even more important. They will be the ones who introduce new technologies like e-books and digital materials and keep their school communities up to date with technological innovations.

The school library, staffed by a trained teacher librarian, is the vital place where children are guided to learn about books, how a library operates and how to get the best information from the Internet and how to use computers. Courses in universities for teacher librarians must be available and requirements for the adequate staffing of school libraries mandated.

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