

We, the Teacher-Librarians of Pennant Hills High School, wish to address the Inquiry into School Libraries and Teacher Librarians into Australian Schools.

The impact of recent policies and investments on school libraries and their activities.

“School library and information programs and services are integral to the goals of the school and the aims of the school curriculum” (ALIA/ASLA joint statement on library and information services in schools, 2001 from *Learning for the Future*).

We see this as our essential role regardless of changing information technologies:- in fact because of the resulting explosion of information this role is even more vital.

Recent policies continue to reinforce the contribution teacher librarians make within the whole school community - policies such as *Information Skills in the School*, *NSW Quality Teaching Model*, *NSW ICT 7-12 Syllabi content*, *KLA's syllabi incorporating information skills* and *HSC: All My Own Work*. We have active teaching roles in line with these policies across the school curriculum.

Our library is seen by our teaching staff and school support staff as a hub for teachers and students where huge investments have been made in infrastructure, such as the Connected Classroom hardware, Clickview 24-7 server and DER facilities.

Our parent body has invested in an extension to the library of a Senior Study, equipped for digital learning. As a result senior students view the library as a hub of learning and as a support centre and younger students learn from their example.

The future potential of school libraries and teacher librarians to contribute to improved educational and community outcomes, especially literacy.

In co-operation with teachers, we are endeavouring to address the needs of literacy and improve NAPLAN results through appropriate collection development and teaching programmes and by supporting the *Peer Tutoring Programme*.

We are continually re-aligning our roles to support the digital revolution, where students “surfing” of the web, without guidance and support from a Teacher Librarian, can be fruitless and pointless. We see our role as information specialists who can educate students to become critical evaluators of both digital and hard copy sources of information and have the skills to become life-long learners in a rapidly changing world.

Our school staff still place great value in the school library as a resource centre and teacher librarians as mentors for teachers and students.

The factors influencing recruitment and development of school librarians.

Academic training to be a teacher Librarian requires teacher training as a pre-requisite. The Teacher librarian graduate course is rigorous and specialised with the requirement of training and continued development in the evaluation of children's, young adults', and adult literature, as well as the skills in digital information technologies and their application. As the digital world develops at a fast pace teacher librarians are well placed for continued professional development which they can pass onto students, teaching and support staff.

The formula driven allocation of teacher librarian positions in NSW does not take into account the specific teacher librarian needs within the school.

The role of different levels of government and local communities and other institutions in partnering with and supporting school librarians.

We, as professionals, continue to liaise with public and special libraries to support teaching and learning within our school, including visiting

representatives, demonstrating access to specialised information sources. We are seen to be a supporting and guiding link to academically recognised sources of information outside the school.

The impact and potential of digital technologies to enhance and support the roles of school libraries and teacher librarians.

While the technology of information storage is shifting away from hard copy to digital the skills to access and evaluate information still needs to be acquired and developed over a student's life at school. Our role may eventually become more intellectual but this change will be gradual as education assessment in Australian schools gradually moves into the 21st century. We will need to continue to attend professional development to enhance our skills and support the whole school staff as these changes occur.

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