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Inquiry into School Libraries and
Teacher Librarians

Letter of support from
Joy Payne, teacher-librarian, Head of Library Services, at Genesis Christian College:

I welcome the opportunity to contribute to the Inquiry into School Libraries and Teacher Librarians, as requested by the Federal Minister for Education.

As a teacher-librarian and Head of Library Services at Genesis Christian College, and as a member of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) and the School Library Association of Queensland (SLAQ) I strongly support the principle of 'a qualified teacher librarian in every Australian primary school' or where a school is very small in numbers to have access to a teacher librarian consultant. Every school implies every primary and every secondary school and every public and every private school.

I am in full support of campaigns to reinstate the Federal funding that was removed from Australian school libraries almost thirty years ago, in support of all Australian teachers and students.

I shall refer to the following terms of reference:
To inquire into and report on the role, adequacy and resourcing school libraries and teacher librarians in Australia's public and private schools. Specifically, the committee should focus on:

- the impact of recent policies and investments on school libraries and their activities;
- the future potential of school libraries and librarians to contribute to improved educational and community outcomes, especially literacy;
- the factors influencing recruitment and development of school librarians;
- the role of different levels of government and local communities and other institutions in partnering with and supporting school librarians; and
- the impact and potential of digital technologies to enhance and support the roles of school libraries and librarians.

1. **To inquire into and report on the role, adequacy and resourcing of school libraries and teacher librarians in Australia's public and private schools. Specifically, about:**

- **the impact of recent policies and investments on school libraries and their activities;**

My comments:

Building the Education Revolution (BER) is a $16.2 billion investment that provides world-class educational facilities, through new infrastructure and refurbishments, to all eligible Australian schools.

The impact of recent policies and investments on school libraries and their activities is that many new BER libraries will have no qualified teacher librarian and no new books. BER money provided buildings, but resourcing and staffing are poorly funded. New libraries could be run by library technicians, parents, librarians, teachers or teacher aides all in the interest of short-sighted beaurocrats being too miserly to pay well qualified and competent teacher-librarians to do what they are trained to do: manage libraries and serve schools by facilitating effective learning and teaching through the provision of quality services and resources.

The Digital Revolution has funded much needed Information Technology (IT), but all too often to the detriment of the school library resource budgets. Computer funding for Years 9 – 12 means that more infrastructure needs to be built into managing IT in schools; more training for teacher librarians and their professional development in IT is needed for libraries to be innovative and at the cutting edge of integrating IT into the curriculum. Teacher librarians need to be involved in the management of computer assets, the responsible use of digital resources and the Internet.

The role of school libraries and **teacher**-librarians is crucial for effective learning and teaching. Without **teacher**-librarians schools are left with a set of resources that are not accessible and not much use without the library staff to help students. It is sad that many school libraries in Australia are not run by qualified, excellent teacher-librarians today. I wonder whether in the future the new BER building will just be monuments to Rudd funding and white elephants in the school community because they will be run by well meaning parents, under qualified teacher aides; enthusiastic but not library trained teachers or ITC specialists; or nobody.

The role of a **qualified teacher librarian**, and *not* a **school librarian**, is clearly defined by the ALIA Standards of professional excellence for teacher librarians (See their website at: asla@asla.org.au). All references to 'teacher librarian' in these standards refer to
excellent, highly-accomplished, qualified teacher librarians. The ALIA standards are as follows:
1 Professional knowledge
Excellent teacher librarians…
1.1 understand the principles of lifelong learning
1.2 know about learning and teaching across curriculum areas and developmental levels
1.3 have a rich understanding of the school community and curriculum
1.4 have a specialist knowledge of information, resources, technology and library management
1.1 Knowledge of the principles of lifelong learning
Excellent teacher librarians:
• are well-informed about information literacy theory and practice

• thoroughly understand how all learners develop and apply lifelong learning skills and strategies
• have a sound understanding of how children and young adults become independent readers
• comprehensively understand the role of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in lifelong learning

1.2 Knowledge of learning and teaching

Excellent teacher librarians:
• have a detailed knowledge of current educational pedagogy
• are thoroughly familiar with the information literacy and information needs, skills and interests of learners
• fully understand the need to cater for the social, cultural and developmental backgrounds of learners in program
implementation and curriculum resourcing

1.3 Knowledge of curriculum

Excellent teacher librarians:
• have a comprehensive understanding of literacy, literature for children and young adults, curriculum and specific programs in their schools
• have a detailed knowledge of how to promote and foster reading
• have a sound understanding of current assessment theory and processes

1.4 Knowledge of library and information management

Excellent teacher librarians:
• understand that professionally managed and resourced school libraries are crucial to the achievements of the school community
• have a rich professional knowledge of national standards for library and information management
• have a comprehensive understanding of national standards for information retrieval

2 Professional practice

Excellent teacher librarians…
2.1 engage and challenge learners within a supportive, information rich learning environment
2.2 collaboratively plan and resource curriculum programs which incorporate transferable information literacy and literature outcomes
2.3 provide exemplary library and information services consistent with national standards
2.4 evaluate student learning and library programs and services to inform professional practice

2.1 Learning environment

Excellent teacher librarians:
• create and nurture an information-rich learning environment which supports the needs of the school community
• provide access to information resources through efficient, effective and professionally-managed systems
• foster an environment where learners are encouraged and empowered to read, view, listen and respond for understanding and enjoyment
• appreciate the dynamic nature of ICTs and their role in education

2.2 Learning and teaching

Excellent teacher librarians:
• collaborate with teachers to plan and implement information literacy and literature programs that result in positive student learning outcomes

• ensure that their programs are responsive to the needs of learners in the school community
• support learning and teaching by providing equitable access to professionally-selected resources
• assist individual learners to develop independence in their learning
• teach the appropriate and relevant use of ICTs and information resources

2.3 Library and information services management

Excellent teacher librarians:
• ensure that the library's policies and procedures implement the school's mission
• provide exemplary reference and information services to the school community
• strategically plan and budget for improvement in library and information services and programs
• apply information management practices and systems that are consistent with national standards

2.4 Evaluation

Excellent teacher librarians:
• monitor teaching practice to ensure improved learning and teaching
• evaluate student learning to provide evidence of progress in information literacy and reading
• measure library resources, facilities, programs and services against current policies, standards documents and benchmarks
• use evidence to inform programs and services

3 Professional commitment

Excellent teacher librarians…
3.1 model and promote lifelong learning
3.2 commit to the principles of education and librarianship
3.3 demonstrate leadership within school and professional communities
3.4 actively participate in education and library professional networks

3.1 Lifelong learning

Excellent teacher librarians:
• empower others in the school community to become lifelong learners
• undertake research which informs evidence-based innovation in school library programs
• engage in debate on educational issues within the school community
• create and foster library-related professional development opportunities for staff

3.2 Commitment

Excellent teacher librarians:
• are dedicated to excellence in professional service
• emphasise a learning and teaching focus in school library programs and services
• promote the profession of teacher librarianship in their schools and the wider community
• foster a reading culture through the active promotion of literature
• participate in continuing professional development

3.3 Leadership

Excellent teacher librarians:
• actively engage in school leadership and participate in key committees
• promote and nurture a 'whole school focus' on information literacy policy and implementation
• build and foster collaborative teams within school and professional communities

• provide effective and transformational leadership to school library and information services staff

3.4 Community responsibilities

Excellent teacher librarians:

• model the sharing of knowledge
• actively participate as members of professional communities
• demonstrate collegiality and mentor colleagues
• promote library and information services to the school and the wider community

2. **To inquire into and report on the role, adequacy and resourcing of school libraries and teacher librarians in Australia's public and private schools. Specifically, about:**

▪ **the future potential of school libraries and librarians to contribute to improved educational and community outcomes, especially literacy;**

My comments:

As an integral partner in the school's teaching and learning team, the teacher librarian has a role in the planning, implementation and evaluation of education policies, curricula, learning outcomes and programs, with particular reference to the development of research and information literacy.

Teacher librarians support and implement the vision of their school communities through advocating and building effective library and information services and programs that contribute to the development of lifelong learners.

The development of literacy skills is crucial for students' future participation in the Australian economy and society. Teacher librarians are instrumental in supporting this important goal. The Australian Bureau of Statistics' report Adult literacy and life skills survey (ABS 4228.0, 2006), found that slightly less than half of the Australian population, approximately 7 million, failed to achieve the minimum required level or higher in prose and document literacy.

There is much research evidence that students attain higher levels of achievement when there is an adequately resourced school library staffed by a teacher librarian.

> 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 staff, 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.

▪ Children become better readers (and spellers and writers) by reading. Teacher librarians are specialists in encouraging literacy through free voluntary reading, a guaranteed way to help kids become more literate (Krashen).

- 60 studies have shown that free voluntary reading is at least as effective as conventional teaching methods in helping children to do well on standardized tests. Reading for pleasure provides a great deal that these tests don't measure. Study after study has confirmed that those who read more know more. Their vocabulary increases and grammar and spelling improves (Krashen).
- As life-long learners, students need to be information literate. Teacher librarians specialize in teaching information literacy.
- Information literacy includes critically reading print, graphics, video, and all learning objects to build knowledge. The information literate seek diverse viewpoints. Information literacy includes the ethical use of information and responsible use of social networking tools.
- Funding for research in Australia on the role of school libraries and teacher librarians in improving educational outcomes is needed.
- Library is not just a resource centre, it has a service mentality:
- To facilitate effective learning and teaching, thinking, deep knowledge, meta-cognition, the process of thinking about how we learn.
- Life-long readers for pleasure, lifelong learning, independent learners, 21st century learning, guided inquiry, values education, teaching students to value thinking, ask questions, seek answers, question answers and engage in ethical research.
- Teacher librarians for the 21st Century are innovators, providing information rich, technology rich environments.
- Literacy is information literacy, literacy, love of reading and learning not **aliteracy** which is a phenomenon of the 21st century.
- Community: need thinking, caring, life-long learners with Australian values – bring in values education, not economic rationalist point of view but caring individuals, learners who are discerning, critical – not gullible.
- Emotional quotient – teacher librarians play a vital role in the development of empathy and compassion through stories and quality literature.
- Now even more important for librarian to teach the full information process so students are information savvy regardless of whether resources are print or digital.
- Ethical, responsible use of information – need teacher-librarian not IT technicians or aides.
- Future potential – 21st century learners, digital natives, integrated into the curriculum, linked to assessment, ethical and intelligent research,
- Consistency across the curriculum and subjects in teaching the research process and referencing, needs to be linked to assessment criteria.
- Information Literacy: should be integrated, not taught in isolation, should be collaborative, include authentic learning experiences, meaningful contexts.
- Information Management – accountability for asset management – now also doing music, IT, auditorium, asset register, insurance purpose. Genesis - had to re-do cataloguing because not done properly originally. Need qualified teacher-librarian to manage resource database has have integrity so students can access and find resources. Resource management needs to have continuity, authoritative, and be curriculum driven.

- Future potential – asset management of more than books, digital resources – catalogue and manage for accessibility and integrity. Teaching - Key term searching, discerning, efficient researchers
- The library is the hub of the school, the heart of learning, information literacy is integrated into the curriculum and align with assessment criteria that relate back to curriculum descriptors, teacher librarians provide individual help one on one with students; all assessment across all curriculum needs to include IT and information skills.
- The teacher librarian has a holistic view of curriculum – they see all of curriculum and how it works together; knowledge of curriculum informs how you can facilitate teaching and learning.
- Teacher librarians need a deep understanding of legalities: Copyright – print, digital, multimedia; Duty of Care – digital world as well as physical library space esp. cyberbullying, creating wise digital citizens.

3. **To inquire into and report on the role, adequacy and resourcing of school libraries and teacher librarians in Australia's public and private schools. Specifically, about:**

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

My Comment:

- Teacher librarian training programs have decreased in number from 15 to 3-4 in the past two decades. There is very little national data on teachers undergoing teacher librarian training.
- The recent trend toward devolved, flexible staffing along with dwindling school budgets has resulted in the increased use of teacher librarians in classrooms and the replacement of teacher librarians with less expensive staff.

Recruiting:
- Employ qualified teacher-librarians to run libraries NOT aides, parents
- Need both teacher training and experience as well as studies in library management and provision of services. – bring cataloguing back into the training programmes for teacher librarians.
- Need understanding of pedagogy, research process, deep thinking skills, holistic understanding of the school curriculum.
- Flexible timetabling so that can be available in a just in time basis to support teaching and learning.
- Many highly qualified teacher librarians are unemployed as many schools employ less qualified and therefore less expensive staff to run expensive libraries; many teacher librarians stay in their jobs until they retire because it takes a life time to learn your resources, fellow teachers, learners and keeping up with ever changing technologies and different curriculae.
- In my experience collaborating with teachers and management with regard to student learning impacts positively the learning culture in the school

- The teacher librarian (T/L) should be part of management, middle manager equal to HOD and paid accordingly.
- Need for PD to be cutting edge in information literacy and literature, relevant to curriculum initiatives, 21st century learners
- Need for networks for support locally, nationally and internationally (only 1 in school)
- Employment of teacher librarians should not depend on the teacher/student ratio of the school, neither be non-contact time in schools, primary.
- Eroding teacher librarian time by giving them classes is a poor use of a T-L's time
- Economic choices mean library run by aides with T/Ls being used for non-contact, or having classes which take them away from the library, collaborative teaching and being available to support learning

4. **To inquire into and report on the role, adequacy and resourcing of school libraries and teacher librarians in Australia's public and private schools. Specifically, about:**

- **the role of different levels of government and local communities and other institutions in partnering with and supporting school librarians;**

   My Comment:

   - Good educational planning relies on good data. We have no complete national workforce data on teacher librarian numbers and use. We have no government school data on school library budgets (only surveys such as ASLRP).
   - Educational leaders need easy access to the research on the contribution of school libraries and teacher librarians to improved educational outcomes.
   - Educational leaders need support in developing excellent school libraries and excellent teacher librarians (PD in use of Standards for Excellence, IL Standards, Library Standards).
   - Quality teachers and pre-service teachers need easy access to the research on guided inquiry, information literacy, collaborative planning and teaching with teacher librarians.
   - We have no current national government standards for school libraries to guide their development. HIstorically they did exist. (Books and Beyond: Guidelines for library resource facilities and services. Canberra: Schools Commission, 1977, 2nd ed. 1979)
   - State DET support services virtually no longer exist in terms of consultancy services. Some curriculum support services remain. Professional associations have had to assume the majority of professional development, yet dependent on volunteers, this is dwindling. Newly appointed untrained school library staff are often dependent on local teacher librarian networks for their training.
   - A big push was made in the 1970s to develop secondary school libraries. A similar push was never carried out fully for primary libraries.
   - Common policies for school libraries and information literacy are needed across all states. The Universtiy of Queensland Library (UQL) Cyberschool is a great example of other institution that support school libraries. Public libraries, the Moreton Bay and Brisbane libraries, and the State library support school

libraries. The DETA supports state school libraries and needs to help private school libraries free of charge, too, as tax payers monies support them.

The library is a Gateway to information from institutions other than the school library. The TL sources resources from the local communities – our home economic students visited local restaurants, our industrial technology students sourced information about solar heating systems from local businesses. TL's point students to E-smart school resources, value education, Netalert, and involve students in book week themes and promote reading for pleasure with author talks.

The role of government is crucial in prioritizing funding, linking funding to more than adequately resourcing and staffing private and state school libraries. The Federal government needs to work out the exact cost of getting quality information to learners – teacher-librarins and auxiliary library staff, print and digital resources, internet access, online databases, library management programmes like AIMS and cataloguing expenses like: SCIS.

5. **To inquire into and report on the role, adequacy and resourcing of school libraries and teacher librarians in Australia's public and private schools. Specifically, about:**

▪ **the impact and potential of digital technologies to enhance and support the roles of school libraries and librarians.**

My comment:

Role of digital technologies have a huge impact on learning and teaching - so much more information fast and efficiently, gateway to massive amount of information . Students need to know how to manage information that is: process it, discern its accuracy and quality; analysis and synthesis of data in a technological age is now even more crucial than ever. IT also allows for a massive variety of professional outputs – multimodal assessments, academic essay, create, edit, cut and paste, add images, graphs,
Students spend less time in production and more time in analysis and processing – rather than just reproducing information.
If student access to digital technologies is seamless, problem free, fast, wireless, broadband, digital resources available such as electronic databases then there is great potential for teacher librarians and libraries to enhance learning.
IT labs displaced libraries – but this is not wise use, as information literacy extends from the print format to the digital formats; knowing how to use information still needs to be explicitly taught by teacher-librarians
Controlling digital technologies – uncontrolled, uncensored, cyberbullying, rather promoting wise use, ethical, respectful use
Must have balance with using print resources, literature etc with digital technologies
Adequate resourcing of school libraries with digital technologies – software, hardware, wireless, infrastructure

PD for Teacher-librarians – in IT and be part of cutting edge of innovators without losing sight of basics – using information literacy and pleasure of reading

Potential for digital technologies to usurp pleasure of reading a book – values education, independent learning, reading for life long pleasure.

- Books will continue to exist in many formats, printed, e-books, CDRoms, etc. Quality information, for example through online databases, is not free. Teacher librarians, in collaboration with teachers, will still be needed to select, purchase, organize and guide access to books and information.
- Teacher librarians willingly update their skills in IT, develop library web access points, digitize data, network with colleagues, review and select online websites, learning objects, webquests, online databases, social networking tools, etc. This is part of their collection development role, their teaching and curriculum support role and their role in improving literacy.

As a teacher-librarian and Head of Library Services at Genesis Christian College, and as a member of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) and the School Library Association of Queensland (SLAQ) I am committed to promoting: information literacy (Sourcing quality information; the analysis and synthesis of data in print and digital formats; applying and presenting new knowledge); literary competency (A love of reading for pleasure and the value of literature to build the emotional quotient in people; the free flow of information and ideas in the interest of all Australians and a thriving culture, economy and democracy.

I strongly support the principle of 'a teacher librarian in every school'. Every school and that implies every primary and every secondary school and every state and every private school.

School library and information programs and services are integral to the mission, objectives, and teaching and learning goals of every school.

Teacher librarians are at the forefront of teaching essential information and digital literacy skills in our schools. The successful implementation and use of the national broadband network depends upon Australians having these skills. The development of information literacy skills -- seeking, evaluating, using and creating information effectively to achieve personal, social, occupational and educational goals – is essential to Australia's long-term economic development.

Teaching young Australians about values, cybersafety and the important messages about how to stay safe online, particularly with the growth of social networking, is one of the most effective ways of protecting our children. Teacher librarians are key to cybersafety education programs in schools.

I urge the government to recognise the vital role of school libraries and teacher librarians, particularly in the areas of literacy, lifelong learning, cybersafety, information literacy, a love of literature, and digital literacy skills. Collaboration between teachers

and teacher-librarians, adequate facilities, resources (Print and digital) and funding together with educational and professional development opportunities are essential to achieve the best educational and social outcomes for young Australians.

I urge the government to endorse the principle of 'a qualified teacher librarian in every school' and to implement the actions necessary to achieve this.

The results of the jointly sponsored Australian School Library Survey Project undertaken in 2007, are beginning to be available. Of Australia's 9612 schools, 692 participated in this online survey. While this does not represent a large proportion, it does provide much needed data on the state of Australia's school libraries. A joint media release by the sponsors states, "The studies reveal that 50% of Australian school libraries surveyed are trying to do their job on an annual materials budget of under $10,000 per year, while teacher librarians are under pressure to spend more and more time outside the school library." In fact, 50% of government schools have budgets of under $5000, while 3/4s of Anglican school libraries have budgets over $20,000 (10% over $100,000!).

In regards to staffing, 35% of Australian school libraries responding to the survey have no or limited professional staffing. (Many more without staff would not have even responded.) This included 20% of schools with no professional staff at all. In the Northern Territory,   95% of schools, most of them remote, have no teacher librarian. Tasmania, WA and Victoria had the lowest number of TLs employed although one third of Anglican schools have 2 or more teacher librarians.

In fact, Anglican and Christian schools have more full time professional staff in their libraries with TLs receiving higher salaries than TLs in other school types.

The picture is bleak for government schools. The decline in staffing and funding shown in the 2003 research review on school libraries by Michele Lonsdale has continued. Commissioned by the Australian School Library Association and published by the ACER the Lonsdale Report (Read excerpt here. Full Report here.) included statistics on school library staffing in South Australia collected by the Australian Education Union in 2002.

As Sue Spence reported, "Research shows that students perform better where there is collaboration between teachers and teacher librarians. Despite this, more and more schools in South Australia are inadequately staffed with qualified teacher librarians." Sue found that "89% of South Australian state secondary schools were understaffed by the Department's own staffing formula. Even worse, staff without teacher librarian qualifications filled forty percent of all positions" (Spence, S. 2005. "Teacher Librarian Toolkit" in Henri and Asselin eds The Information literate school community 2. Wagga Wagga, CSU CIS). See Survey highlights major problems with library staffing

- In Tasmania only 50% of schools have teacher librarians, Victoria and ACT 65% (probably lower)
- In Western Australia, teacher librarians are not mandated in primary schools.
- In Queensland too, teacher-librarian numbers are dwindling. Seven large state high schools on the Gold Coast alone have no teacher librarian. Others have teachers or even library aides in charge who have no formal training.

- Since 1983, the number of primary school libraries in Melbourne staffed by qualified teacher librarians has dropped dramatically from 55% to 13% (Reynolds and Carroll, 2001). 12% of the school libraries in their survey are managed by someone with no formal qualifications of any kind.

- Teacher librarian training programs have also decreased in number from 15 to 3-4 in the past two decades. We have no national data on teachers undergoing teacher librarian training.
- The Australian School Libraries Research Project (ASLRP) by ALIA, ASLA and Edith Cowan University, provides us initial "snapshots" on the current state of school library services in Australia (Barbara Combes, 2008) .
- What it shows is a great inequity between school library staffing and funding across Australian schools.
- Budgets abysmal
- The survey found that the majority of school library budgets are abysmal! Half of the government school budgets are under $5000, and one in six budgets are under $1000. In NT schools, most of which are remote, over half have budgets under $500!
- Staffing in declline
- The survey showed that 35% of government school libraries have no teacher librarians. Approximately two thirds of all schools have either no teacher librarian or less than one Full Time Equivalent (FTE) working in their school library. After the Northern Territory (5%), Tasmania (50%), Western Australia (almost 60%) and Victoria (65%) have the lowest number of TLs employed K-12 across all sectors. Instead there are high numbers of library technicians in Tasmania and Victoria and library officers in Western Australia.
- Previous state surveys illustrate the downward slide. A discussion paper from the State Library of Tasmania noted a decline of nearly fifty per cent in the number of teacher librarians in Tasmanian schools in the period 1996-2000. ("Enhancing Student Outcomes with Improved Information Services and Provisioning", 2000).
- A position paper by the AEU Tasmanian Branch noted in 2000 that teacher aides were increasingly replacing teacher librarians, with one third of schools surveyed not having professional TLs. ("Leading the way: The changing role of the teacher librarian"). The ASLRP survey now places this at almost 50%.
- While the ASLRP survey shows Victoria employs TLs in 65% of its schools, figures for Melbourne metropolitan primary schools may be even lower. Reynolds and Carroll in 2001 found that only 13% of primary schools had teacher librarians. ("Where have all the teacher librarians gone?" Access May 2001)
- In South Australia in 2002, apart from those very small schools with no teacher librarian entitlement, a third of school libraries around the state were understaffed and/or staffed with unqualified personnel (Spence, "Survey highlights major problems with library staffing", AEU Journal, 4 December 2002).
- As Michelle Lonsdale stated in 2003, the "devolution of financial management to schools means that funding for school libraries relies on the resource allocation priorities established by the school community, which might or might not place a high priority on the need for a well-staffed library system." (Impact of school libraries on student achievement, ACER). There is pressure in all state departments of education for this devolution, flexibility and choice in school staffing. Teacher librarians, where they have existed, are often being "cashed in"

for classroom or other specialist teachers, or pushed increasingly into the classroom themselves.

- In 1988, the Australian Library Summit deplored the lack of statistics relating to school library services. There is still no systematically collected national data. ALIA and ASLA together with ECU have given us the beginning of those statistics to work with. The ASLRP has provided a complex set of results, with many variables yet to be analysed, but little in it paints a good picture of the state of school libraries in this country, especially government schools.
- Anne Hazell stated in 1988, after the initial regression of the 1980s in school library staffing, that unless (TLs) … act as advocates for their chosen profession, it is unlikely that the profession will survive into the 21st century."

Things the Federal and State governments can do:

- Raise the status of the qualified teacher-librarian by noting that their role is as a Head of Department (Library Services); it is not a connected with teaching other subjects; and is not connected with the teacher/pupil ratio of the school when factoring in their salary
- collect national data on school library staffing, funding, and scheduling;
- ensure and tie funding so that states can and must adequately staff (Every school with a qualified teacher librarian) and fund school library programs, resources and services;
- require that literacy programs and other national curricula should explicitly recognize 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;
- develop and publish a national information literacy curriculum;
- provide research funding on the effect of school library programs and teacher librarians on literacy and learning;
- provide grants for improving literacy through school libraries;
- facilitate national licensing of online databases for school libraries;
- declare a national school library day;
- and a National Information Literacy Awareness Month!

I am in full support of campaigns to reinstate the Federal funding that was removed from Australian school libraries almost thirty years ago, in support of all Australian teachers and students. The recent news about the coal carrier Shen Neng 1 vessel that ran aground on the Great Barrier Reef earlier this month can be likened to the neglect that libraries and teacher-librarians have suffered with the lack of funding from federal and state governments. "The ship's Captain Jichang Wang and chief officer Xuegang Wang took more than 90 minutes to alert Australian authorities to the crash, investigators have said. " How many years and studies is it going to take to alert the Australian government to the damage that learners, in this so called first world country, are and will suffer at the expediency of unthinking governments. "The crash left a two-mile scar on the reef, damaging a shoal so badly experts estimate it may need up to 20 years to heal." (http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/worldnews/article-1266460/Great-Barrier-Reef-Captain-coal-carrier-took-90-minutes-alert-authorities.html#ixzz0lG75jXNV , viewed on 16 April 2010). If the Federal government rises to the challenges presented to it in this inquiry then it will commit to funding libraries and pay qualified and excellent

teacher-librarians to restore information literacy and begin to heal the scars of many years of neglect in the areas of teaching reading for information and reading for pleasure.

Yours truly,

Joy Payne