
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

School libraries and teacher librarians in 21st century Australia

House of Representatives

Standing Committee on Education and Employment

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Foreword

On behalf of my colleagues I wish to thank all those who contributed to the inquiry.

We are especially grateful to the hundreds of teacher librarians from across Australia who submitted evidence or appeared at hearings in each state and territory.

The Committee was struck by the passion and enthusiasm that teacher librarians have for their profession.

The Committee is also thankful to the national library organisations ASLA and ALIA, who have appeared before the Committee on numerous occasions throughout the course of this inquiry to represent school libraries and teacher librarians.


I also want to thank my colleagues on the former Standing Committee on Education and Training for the hard work they undertook in the previous Parliament.

The Committee hopes that this report goes some way toward highlighting teacher librarians' concerns; showcases their valuable contributions to educational outcomes in Australian schools; and starts to examine their evolving role and place in Australia's education system.

The Committee was advised that Charles Sturt University's second semester intake of students into its Master of Education (Teacher Librarianship) had doubled in 2010, and, it was suggested that the publicity surrounding this inquiry may have been a factor in the increased numbers being attracted to the teacher librarian profession. We would be delighted if this were the case.

Ms Amanda Rishworth MP

Chair



Membership of the Committee (42nd Parliament)

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Mrs Yvette D'Ath MP

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Dr Andrew Southcott MP (to 03/02/10)


Dr Sharman Stone MP (from 03/02/10)

Mr Mike Symon MP (from 17/06/09)

Mr Tony Zappia MP

Committee Secretariat 42nd Parliament

Secretary	Dr Glenn Worthington
Inquiry Secretary	Mr Justin Baker
Senior Researcher	Mr Raymond Knight
Office Manager	Mr Daniel Miletic
Administrative Officer	Ms Tarran Snape



Membership of the Committee 43rd Parliament

Chair Ms Amanda Rishworth MP

Deputy Chair Mr Rowan Ramsey MP

Members Mrs Karen Andrews MP

Mr Mike Symon MP


Mrs Yvette D'Ath MP

Mr Alan Tudge MP

Ms Deborah O'Neill MP

Committee Secretariat 43rd Parliament

Secretary	Dr Glenn Worthington
Inquiry Secretary	Ms Sara Edson
Senior Researcher	Dr Deborah King
Researcher	Ms Larisa Michalko
Office Manager	Mr Daniel Miletic
Administrative Officer	Ms Tarran Snape



Terms of reference

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, 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.



List of abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
ACER	Australian Council for Education Research
ACMA	Australian Communication and Media Authority
ACSSO	Australian Council of State School Organisations
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AEU	Australian Education Union
AISWA	Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
ALIA	Australian Library and Information Association
ASLA	Australian School Library Association
BER	Building the Education Revolution
CBCA	Children's Book Council of Australia
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CSU	Charles Sturt University
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DER	Digital Education Revolution

EBP	Evidence Based Practice
ECU	Edith Cowan University
EdNA	Education Network Australia
ERA	Electronic Resources Australia
ESA	Education Services Australia
ESL	English as a Second Language
FTE	Full-time equivalent
FOLA	Friends of Libraries Australia
ICT	Information and communication technologies
IKC	Indigenous Knowledge Centres
MCEECDYA	Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NT	Northern Territory
NSW	New South Wales
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
QUT	Queensland University of Technology
P & C	Parents and Citizen bodies
P21	Primary Schools for the 21 st century
PD	Professional development
RFF	Release from face-to-face teaching
SA	South Australia
SBM	School Based Management
SCIS	Schools Catalogue Information Service
ScOT	Schools Online Thesaurus
SPP	Specific Purpose Payments
TAS	Tasmania
TLs	Teacher Librarians

VIC Victoria

WA Western Australia

WATL Western Association of Teacher Librarians NSW



List of recommendations

2 Impact of recent Commonwealth Government policies and investments on school libraries

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government partner with all education authorities to fund the provision of a core set of online database resources, which are made available to all Australian schools.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government work with the states and territories to develop a discrete national policy statement that defines the importance of digital and information literacy for learning in the 21st century, which can be used as a guide by teachers and principals.

3 Potential of school libraries and librarians to contribute to improved educational and community outcomes

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority include statistical information about the breakdown of all specialist teachers, including teacher librarians, on the My School website.

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government support additional initiatives to promote reading, such as a National Year of Reading. The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations should collaborate with the Australian School Library Association, Australian Libraries and Information Association and other education stakeholders in developing these initiatives.

Recommendation 5

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government initiate an Australian-based longitudinal study into the links between library programs, literacy (including digital literacy) and student achievement, including their impact on improving outcomes for socioeconomically disadvantaged students.

Recommendation 6

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government support promotional activities undertaken by ASLA and ALIA that demonstrate to the school community the valuable work that teacher librarians are doing in respect of e-learning in their schools, including those that highlight their leadership capacity.

4 Recruitment and development of teacher librarians**Recommendation 7**

The Committee recommends that the rollout of the new national curriculum, which is to be made available online, include a component of training for teacher librarians.

Recommendation 8

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government commission a thorough workforce gap analysis of teacher librarians across Australian schools.

Recommendation 9

The Committee recommends that the Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth, through the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs, establish a national dialogue, including with tertiary providers, on the role of teacher librarians today in schools and into the future. The dialogue should include an examination of the adequacy of the pathways into the profession and ongoing training requirements.

5 Partnering and supporting school libraries and teacher librarians

Recommendation 10

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government, through the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood and Youth Affairs, discuss ways to enhance partnerships with state and territory and local levels of government to support school libraries and teacher librarians.

Recommendation 11

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government partner with ASLA and ALIA to produce a document that showcases some of the successful partnerships and programs between school libraries and other libraries, and joint-use libraries. The document should be made available to government and non-government education authorities and school principals.

