



Dear Ms Gillard,

Thank you for inquiry into school libraries and the role of Teacher Librarians in Australian schools. I make this submission as a recently retrained Teacher Librarian with a background in classroom teaching. I am both a teacher and a librarian.

In the wake of the 'Building Education Revolution' and many new school libraries being built, it is time to ensure that professional Teacher Librarians are employed to staff these new buildings.

We have come to a turning point in education – literacy and digital information technology are at the forefront of educational concern. Teacher Librarians, with their specialised knowledge of both curriculum and information literacy, are in a unique position to successfully lead students into the digital age. Never has the role of the Teacher Librarian been more important or more relevant.

Research has consistently shown that having school libraries staffed with qualified Teacher Librarians has a positive effect on student learning and literacy levels. In addition, Teacher Librarians foster positive attitudes towards literacy and lifelong learning through promotion of recreational reading materials and the organisation of enjoyable specialised reading programs.

I believe it is imperative that all school libraries are staffed with professionally qualified Teacher Librarians. Australian students deserve no less.

It is time to mandate that all schools are staffed with a qualified Teacher Librarian and that these libraries are provided with sufficient funding. It is time to develop and publish a national curriculum for Information Literacy. It is time to develop more training for new and existing Teacher Librarians to ensure best practice.

These changes are essential if we are to move together into the 21st century and develop lifelong learners equipped to navigate the digital information age.

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