

October 2011

Dear Principal,

The Australian School Library Association (NSW) Inc. is pleased to direct your attention to the House Standing Committee on Education and Employment report on the inquiry into school libraries and teacher librarians in Australian schools. Tabled earlier this year, the report is entitled *School libraries and teacher librarians in 21st century Australia*. The committee examined a wide range of issues in Australia which have had an impact on school library services. The report's eleven recommendations may be viewed at < <http://tinyurl.com/427thmu> >.

In NSW, these issues include training, funding, staffing, and scheduling of teacher librarians along with the provision of school library support services. In the 21st century, what is the role of the teacher librarian in teaching and learning, in digital and information literacy and in improving literacy?

Recommendation 9 calls for the minister to "establish a national dialogue...on the role of teacher librarians today in schools and into the future". Whilst we await the federal government's response to the report as the peak body in NSW for school libraries and teacher librarians, ASLA (NSW) commends this report to you now suggesting that the report can be used to initiate discussion of the role of the school library and the teacher librarian in the school community. The report may well trigger dialogue with colleagues on developing excellent school library services to improve student learning and literacy.

It is the hope of our members that it will initiate a national dialogue.

The full report can be found on the Parliamentary website at:  
<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/ee/schoollibraries/report.htm>

The report is particularly relevant given that 2012 is the National Year of Reading, an initiative supported by the federal government. You can find out more at: <http://www.love2read.org.au/>.

We also recommend the website Connect2tIs: <http://www.connect2tIs.info/>. This website is designed to assist principals, teachers and teacher educators to connect with teacher librarians.

On behalf of the committee of the Australian School Library Association (NSW) Inc., thank you for your attention.

Yours faithfully

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