



Enquiry into school libraries and teacher librarians in Australia.

Impact of Recent policies and Investments on school libraries.

My experience within the school I work in is that there has been no constructive impact. The library I work in is crowded, too small to cater adequately for the student population, and in need of serious repairs. If there were no carpet you would fall through the floor. Lack of funds means limited resources and the inability to meet student's needs and to encourage them to perform to their best potential. There has been no major investment in the library.

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

School library should be the central hub of a school. School libraries should provide access to information to support subject content, to support teachers in their teaching and students in their learning. The role of librarians is to assist and educate students in accessing the information they need and in gaining the skills to access this information. While there has been considerable changes in the range and ways information is stored in the last twenty years many of the principles relating to finding and accessing information remain the same. Research skills based on understanding concepts of subject and key words are still important and need to be taught. Literacy is the basis for this and again libraries offer the opportunity to provide resources that offer students the opportunity and encourage reading both of subject related material and recreational material. Reading books, reading online, graphic novels, any reading needs to be encouraged. Reading information is the start, whether it be in a book, magazine or on the Internet. Encouraging reading is basic to the development of literacy.

Libraries such as the State library of Victoria are fabulous examples of how vibrant and attractive the library environment can be. School libraries unfortunately vary vastly. Some are well resourced and staffed, some have very limited resources and low levels of staffing or unqualified staff.

If we truly want to encourage improvements in literacy and educational outcomes, well resourced and staffed libraries are essential.

Factors influencing recruitment and development of school librarians.

I believe there has been a decline in school libraries, and the lack of recognition of the value of qualifications of teacher librarians. This has not been conducive to encouraging recruitment into the profession. There is a perception by some that librarians are simply housekeepers of books and supervisors of private study, and that books are no longer of value.

Libraries are about information, providing access to information in many forms, in schools to teachers and students and encouraging the joy of reading and enquiry.

The role of government and local community's and other institutions in partnering with and supporting school libraries

Funding by government is vital to building and the maintenance of well-resourced libraries. Communication and access to the catalogues and resources were possible of other institutions, would help to broaden the resources of school libraries.

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

The Internet has vastly expanded the amount and range of information sources and amount of information availability. It has also created the necessity for users to be more discerning and selective, to think critically about what they read.

Knowing how to select and use the information found is more involved than in the past. On the Internet, students may find pages of website references. It is even more important that students learn skills so that vast amounts of time are not wasted on simply trawling websites. The teacher librarian has skills to teaching student to select websites and also to create selected lists of relevant websites for subject area.

The growth of social websites has increased the level of communication by students with organizations and those outside the school. This creates great opportunities for students, but also mean there has been an increase in risks. Recent incidents of Internet bullying have highlighted another area that indicates student may need for assistance in learning to be to use the internet well.

Blogs, wikies, are also among the ways in which information dissemination has changed and improved, and changed teaching and ways of learning. Digital technology has enhanced education, However literacy, the ability to understand, critically review and interpreted what is written are still the bottom line for any learning.

Teacher librarians have a role to play in educating students to use digital technology well.

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