



House Education Committee report released on school libraries and teacher librarians in 21st century Australia

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Employment has released a report on school libraries and teacher librarians in Australia's public and private schools. The report investigates the issues of role, adequacy and resourcing of school libraries and teacher librarians in Australia.

The report focuses on the impact of government policies and investments on school libraries, the potential of school libraries and teacher librarians to contribute to improved educational outcomes, and the recruitment and development of teacher librarians. The 163-page report also looks at partnering and supporting school libraries and teacher librarians with other libraries.

Committee Chair, Ms Amanda Rishworth MP, is pleased to be tabling the report to coincide with Library and Information Week 2011.

"The Committee was struck by the passion and enthusiasm that teacher librarians have for their profession. We hope that this report goes some way toward highlighting the issues faced by school libraries and teacher librarians, and showcases the valuable contributions that they make to educational outcomes in schools across Australia," Ms Rishworth said.

The Committee makes 11 recommendations in the report. The first recommendation relates particularly well to the theme for this year's Library and Information Week, *We find stuff*. The Committee recommends the funding of a core set of online database resources to be made available to all Australian schools.

Other areas of interest highlighted by the Committee include:

- Gathering statistical information about teacher librarians for the My School website;
- Commissioning a workforce gap analysis of teacher librarians across Australia; and,
- Examinations of pathways into the profession and ongoing training requirements.

"The perceived value of teacher librarians has suffered erosion and become undervalued at a time when the skills they offer in information seeking and management are increasingly needed," Ms Rishworth said.

The report is available from: <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/ee/schoollibraries/report.htm>

For media comment: contact the Committee Chair, Ms Amanda Rishworth MP on (02) 6277 2293 or 0416 086 019.

For information on the inquiry: contact the Secretariat on (02) 6277 4573 email ee.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/ee>