

"Knowledge and learning are forefront in the progress and advancement of humanity. At no other time in history have we stood before as rich a panorama of opportunity as we do today. Our access to information, knowledge, global conversation, research, and the experiences of generations past provide a firm foundation on which to build the society of tomorrow." George Siemens

Teacher Librarians (TLs) encompass the role of supporting students, staff and parents in their quest to educate each child, *"to facilitate the outworking of the inherent potential embodied within every child, such that their uniqueness can change the world for the better via their active involvement in their community and their ability to be lifelong learners that are self assured; balancing confidence with humility and having the capacity to apply their abilities with wisdom."* Treadwell (2007)

Reference point 1: the impact of recent policies and investments on school libraries and their activities

- This may not be considered recent but it is still current policy and certainly has had a huge impact. **In June 1988 the government announced that funds for budgetary priorities would be achieved through three staffing changes, one being that;**

'Teachers will no longer be required to be present with their class on every occasion when the class is being taken for library and/or other activities (e.g. Craft) by another teacher (normally a specialist). The time thus saved (a maximum of one hour) will be used as part of a teacher's face to face release'

NSW Education 1988/89 budget measures primary schools. Sydney: NSW Department of Education, 1988. p. 5

This policy has had a huge impact on the role of the Teacher Librarian in many schools. Most primary school Principals choose to use the Teacher Librarian as an RFF teacher. Unfortunately it means that some teachers never make it into the library and some do not show much interest in what is to be done in those library lessons. As a consequence many classes feel that the work done in the library is isolated to their "learning" even when efforts are made to try to link library activities to the topics the class are studying. If their class teacher has no ownership then they feel it is not important.

- **Many new BER libraries will have no qualified teacher librarian to run the needed programs.**
 - According to Anderson *"A school library that doesn't have a trained professional, qualified, full-time, well-paid librarian in it is just a room with a bunch of books in it." Teacher-librarians don't just assist students and educators who visit the library, but are now reaching out to global audiences using a variety of formats and methods of*

delivery and emerging technologies. "Teacher-librarians must embrace an expanded definition of their role and the library's physical space in order to meet the needs of the 21st century learner. No longer a place just to house books, the library is evolving to welcome media production, telecommunication events, social networking in order to develop new understandings." The 21st Century Teacher Librarian Saskatchewan School Library Association

Teacher Librarians(TLs) have a huge role to play in providing effective school library programs. They must develop and manage a wide range of resources, provide appropriate and timely information services to staff and students, and they must collaborate in curriculum development at both whole school and individual teacher levels.

- TLs need to
 - * to organise and maintain the library (physical and virtual spaces);
 - * provide access to a range of sufficient resources that cater for different reading levels, curriculum areas and learning styles;
 - * develop curriculum with teachers which integrates a range of resources such as online, print and audio; and
 - * provide access to quality virtual resources in virtual learning environments for access 24/7 for all curriculum programs.

- **The Digital Education Revolution (DER) and the implementation of high cost technologies such as Interactive Whiteboards and data-projectors has increased much needed ICLT, but often to the detriment of the remainder of school library resource budgets.**
 - There is often a funding-loss of money for books which for non-fiction because it is often wrongly assumed by some administrators that students will no longer need such resources. This is a huge concern because many kids just LOVE various non-fiction books especially our younger students and those with Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence who love dancing, physical co-ordination, sports, hands on experimentation, crafts, acting, miming, using their hands to create or build; Visual/ Spatial Intelligence who love puzzle building, reading, writing, understanding charts and graphs, a good sense of direction, sketching, painting, creating visual metaphors and analogies (perhaps through the visual arts), manipulating images, constructing, fixing, designing practical objects, and interpreting visual images.
 - We also still have a significant number of families where students do not have access to electronic resources and as such rely heavily on access to a wide range of stimulating library books being available.

- **The impact of National Partnership Agreements on school library staffing (eg NSW devolved staffing trial)**

The recent trend toward devolved, flexible staffing along with dwindling school budgets has resulted in the increased use of teacher librarians in classrooms and the replacement of teacher librarians with less expensive staff.

Some schools involved in this trial have decided not to employ a teacher librarian and use their money elsewhere. This is not based on sound judgment and impacts negatively on the students. The choice should not have been available. Every school student deserves to have a professional teacher librarian available to support them and the staff at their school library.

- **Decisions on how to spend the TL and PT allocations and the allocation of clerical time to the library are made at the Principal's discretion therefore it is imperative that the Principal has a sound understanding of the needs and the programs running in the School Library. The provision of well trained clerical assistance is also vital to the success of the school library program. It is crucial that the TL and the Principal have a good working relationship to ensure adequate support is provided and the work load is feasible.**

Improving student achievement is a vital principal interest, but many principals overlook libraries and librarians as potentially powerful instruments in that work because they have not been educated to the library's value and library media research rarely appears in administrator publications (Wilson & Blake, 1993)

NSW DET Primary Staffing Schedule - Regular Schools 2006

See: http://www.nswtf.org.au/TeacherLibrarians/staffing_primary.html
<http://www.nswtl.net/info/docs/staffing2006.htm>

Senior Administration staff must consider the impact of the formula on the library staff, particularly on the TL.

When Tls have to spend months training clericals so much other work falls behind. When this retraining occurs repeatedly it is soul destroying and work routines fall by the wayside.

The staffing schedule referred to above, is clearly unfair to many. A teacher Librarian can have 13 classes and is only employed for 8 days per fortnight. With the loss of 1 class- the Teacher Librarian is dropped back to 6 days per fortnight. Yes, a loss of 2 full working days!!

How on earth are they supposed to be able to get all their work done with such a huge cut? On the other hand to become full time-10 days per fortnight you have to wait until you have 18 classes!! Even at 17 classes you only get 8 days per fortnight. Why can't part days be organised to allow Teacher Librarians a chance to get their work done?

Over the 10+ years that I have been a member of NSWTL_net and OZTL_net listservs and I have read numerous emails from countless distressed and overwrought TL's who are fighting an impossible task to find time to do all that is required of them. Tls

are often the only one of their kind in their schools and as such often suffer from isolation. It is vital that TLs make contact with other TLs for support and understanding of any school library related issues.

- **The provision of school libraries under BER have not provided school communities with buildings designed to meet the educational needs of 21st C school libraries.**

A well designed 21C library is no longer a place dominated by bookshelves and magazine racks. According to Knezek, a school library today has to deliver and share interactive media and instruction in the most effective way. Administrators should make sure the library center is supplied with up-to-date interactive multimedia equipment, such as video and audio equipment, laptops, netbooks, digital cameras, mobile devices and MP3 players.

Libraries must be spaces where multiple activities can take place simultaneously. Since there are many different learning styles, the library should offer as many different types of environments as possible—quiet study areas, group activity areas, spaces for individual and small group work, spaces for instruction, spaces where students can listen and view to stories, music, videos, podcasts....

The BER plans are rigid and set. There is no variation allowed. The buildings consist of a rectangular open area with no nooks or crannies. The huge glass panels surrounding the office restrict even further the places to display students work. ... I cannot understand the lack of choice that we have faced. For a very short time I was really excited about the prospect of providing a stimulating learning environment for 21C teaching and learning until I discovered that all the great library design features. I know it was a building revolution but when so much is at stake-our students' education why shouldn't we be able to create a suitable 21stC learning space.

"We have no say in it no say in it at all!" It is so very frustrating- to have the opportunity right in front of us but having no prospect of any input about any aspect of providing the community with a 21st Century school library set up to suit our community being considered.

I tried to get a small change- a glass pane in the wall outside the teacher resource room, instead of gyprock, which I plan to use for small groups. The glass pane would mean I could supervise the group in the room with the door shut to decrease any noise. A fair and valuable request I thought.

"Aren't we preparing them, to the best of our ability, to the world into which they will travel, rather than limiting them by the world in which we've been travelling?" Buchanan (2009)

Reference point 2: the future potential of school libraries and librarians to contribute to improved educational and community outcomes, especially literacy

"In good school libraries the two most important things are committed senior

management and well-qualified and enthusiastic librarians.”
— Philip Jarrett

- **At present and in the near future Doug Jenkins, believes we will still need a “book oriented” library for developing good reading skills.**

Stephen Krashen and others maintain that voluntary free reading is the best way for kids to improve their reading skills. Kids will only read voluntarily if they have access to a wide range of materials that are at an appropriate reading level that are stimulating and engaging.

- **Germein 2010, explains that having the teacher librarian read a story has deep ramifications for students for the future-It’s not just story time!**

“We didn’t know that such immersion in literature supported an invaluable love of reading and an appreciation of storytelling, books and the written word. We didn’t know that these things would lead to improved literacy outcomes for us later in life. We didn’t know that our librarian was helping to expand our vocabularies, our general knowledge and our world view. And we didn’t know that by reading to the class as a group, by our sharing the stories together, part of what we were enjoying was a feeling of connectedness and community.”

- **Australia is a multicultural country with many students arriving at school with little or no English. School libraries and teacher librarians have an important role to play in supporting both ESL staff and students.**

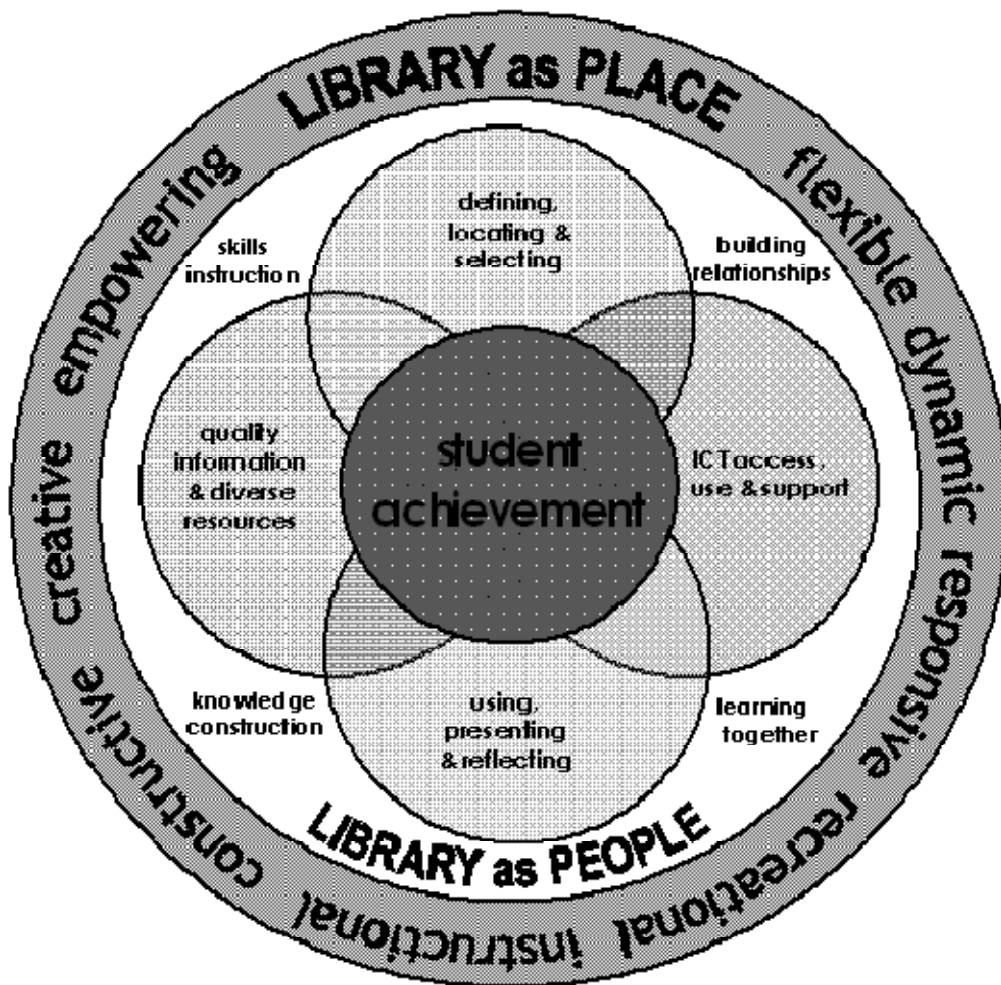
Sophie Masson explains that: “as the child of non English speaking parents (great readers, but not in English) school and public libraries for me were absolutely essential to my growth as a reader and a writer in Australia. Without those wonderful school librarians who set me on the path to discovering more and more books, I doubt I’d be where I am now!”

- **School Libraries help provide equity for families. School and Public Libraries are most important for the students without resources at home.**

Time has taught us many times over that from pre-school to graduation, students with books in their homes will generally do better in school. Increasingly, computers and access to the Internet are required for everyday learning. BC Teachers’ Federation says “Libraries should serve as an equalizer—giving access to quality resources and technology, including software, for students who have fewer resources at home.”

- **A positive learning environment that supports student learning, where students feel comfortable and can pursue their own information, ICT and recreational interests with flexible hours to support equity, is central to students’ view of the school library.**

Figure 1: Model of how students define the school library in supporting their learning from Student learning through Australian school libraries Part 2:



"With regards to ICT access, being given the opportunity to access PCs, printers, the Internet and other resources in the morning before the school day officially begins was mentioned more frequently by students than after-school access.

For some students they saw these times as the optimum time to gain access to the technology and resources rather than competing for these facilities during more hectic times such as in class or at lunch time. Students without PC and/or Internet access at home also valued access as these times: equity of access for those without computers or the preferred software at home."
 Hay, pg 30

- The optimum model is a teacher-librarian with qualifications in both teaching and librarianship. Trained librarians have many skills and knowledge including the following and should be regarded as a highly professional colleague by staff with the library seen as the heart of the school:

Excellent knowledge of research and study skills.

Good knowledge of resources in all formats and the ability to evaluate them.

Understanding of the education system, its aims, pedagogy and the curriculum

Enthusiasm and commitment to create independent learners plus enthusiastic and creative readers

Knowledge of the uses of ICT and understanding of the uses of technology in education.

Training and skills to lead the library including policy, planning and budgeting.

Good communication skills in order to liaise in a positive way with everyone in the school community at any level

Understanding of child development and psychological processes.

Empathy for children and young people from differing backgrounds and the barriers to achievement they may face.

Dynamic and creative in promoting the value of reading and research to the whole school community.

Professional model of good learning behaviour and demonstration of how effective learning strategies bring success

- **In 2002 the Australian School Library Association and the Australian Library and Information Association commissioned the Australian Council for Educational Research to review all research into the impact of school libraries on student achievement. The report, released in March 2003, demonstrates that there is a positive relationship between school libraries and student achievement in the following ways:**

A strong library program that is adequately staffed, resourced and funded can lead to higher student achievement, regardless of the socio-economic or educational levels of the adults in the community

A strong computer network, connecting the library's resources to the classroom and laboratories, had an impact on student achievement

The quality of the collection has an impact on student learning

Test scores are higher when there is a higher usage of the school library

Collaborative relationships between classroom teachers and school librarians have a significant impact on learning, particularly in relation to the planning of instructional units, resource collection development, and the provision of professional development for teachers

A print-rich environment leads to more reading and free voluntary reading is the best predictor of comprehension, vocabulary growth, spelling and grammatical ability and writing-style

Integrating information literacy into the curriculum can improve students' mastery of both content and information seeking skills; and

Libraries can make a positive difference to students' self-esteem, confidence, independence and sense of responsibility in regards to their own learning (Lonsdale, 2003, p. iv).

- **The provision of a safe harbour, a haven, a sanctuary for students from troubles is another very important role of the school library. The pastoral setting of the library addresses social, emotional and work-related needs.**

The school library provides a refuge from many stressful situations and allows TLs to support the needs of students and help develop their resilience and coping strategies for future times. The school library can provide a quiet place for homework, or an adult & resources to help with homework; the need for interesting fiction or non-fiction books that are at the right level for the child, especially for gifted and talented students and special needs students. Teacher Librarians work with every student and staff member in the school and are very knowledgeable about the school library collection. A TL can often put their hand on a particular resource very quickly for a teacher does not mean that teachers should expect TLs to drop their class to accommodate "on the spot requests". In a primary setting where the TL is often on class it is imperative that clerical support be available

- **School Libraries and teacher librarians are a great resource for the enrichment of children and their parents.**

TLs often arrange author and illustrator visits, writing workshops, simultaneous readings, lunchtime clubs, Techno Tuesdays, bookfairs, leadership training etc Many libraries built strategies around national events such as National Children's Book Week. TLs have introduced many excellent initiatives over time, such as themed displays linked to visiting illustrators and authors, 'Top 30 reads', 'Question of the week', KOALA award, Quizzard of Oz, a 'Mad about books' club and family reading events and there is every reason to encourage TLs to create further initiatives for the future.

Lunchtime in the library TLs and their helpers provide a wide range of activities for students to participate in. TLs assist students with research tasks or concerns often at "the point of need" which is considered the optimum learning situation.

- **School Libraries and teacher librarians develop leadership skills in students who, in turn, support the success of the library.**

Student librarians are given the opportunity to develop key skills such as communication, information technology, working with others, improving their own learning and performance, and problem solving. Hay 48 Student librarians or monitors really enjoy the opportunity to develop their personal, social and leadership skills. Students are very keen to apply for the roles and usually respond very well to the responsibilities and are a great support to the younger students. It

makes a huge difference if time is available to ensure adequate training and understanding of the role is delivered. *In the best examples... pupil librarians were used very well and contributed significantly to the success of the library.*
— OFSTED 2006

- **Tls improve communication with the school community by the good use of VLEs (Virtual Learning Environments). Many Tls have created School Library websites, blogs and wikis to enhance learning. Teacher librarians are the lead professionals in their schools on the use of the VLE (Virtual Learning Environment), Web2.0 and information literacy. They are often charged with being the school photographer and the schools promotion officer.**

All of the work mentioned is great for the community but is very time consuming. Administrators and the school community need to Plan for the school just what is valuable and worth the time input. As other staff are trained and become confident more responsibility can be shared and thus lessen the load. Students can also play a role in communicating their learning through various Web 2.0 applications. Many but not yet all parents and carers have internet access & information literacy skills. Inclusion is an issue here and school libraries and teacher librarians can help parents to improve their own literacy, information-literacy and lifelong learning. Open nights or afternoons where parents are invited to learning sessions are an important part of developing community these days. Students can even be selected to mentor at these sessions.

- **School Libraries help to create Learning Communities. They offer parents resources to support their role. Special resources are often placed in a dedicated Parent section. Parent borrowers are most welcome as are their young pre-schoolers. Some libraries have been able to offer Pre-school sessions in preparation for "big school".**

All local communities are distinct and have their own unique challenges and problems. Librarians should be aware of their own demographic and have a good understanding of their customer profile and be flexible in adapting to their changing needs as it's a vital part of the job. SLA Submission

Children become better readers (and spellers and writers) by reading. Teacher librarians are specialists in encouraging literacy through free voluntary reading, a guaranteed way to help kids become more literate (Krashen).

60 studies have shown that free voluntary reading is at least as effective as conventional teaching methods in helping children to do well on standardized tests. Reading for pleasure provides a great deal that these tests don't measure. Study after study has confirmed that those who read more know more. Their vocabulary increases and grammar and spelling improves (Krashen).

Reference point 4: the role of different levels of government and local communities and other institutions in partnering with and supporting school librarians

NSWDET leaves decisions regarding:

- # the amount of administration time that shall be allocated to the Teacher Librarian,
- # amount of the budget is provided to the School Library each year
- # whether to use the teacher librarian as part or all of the RFF component
- # how much time trained or untrained clerical support is supplied

up to "discretion of School Principal.

This has spelled disaster for the School Library program in many schools and is often simply a consequence of many Principals not being aware of the potential value of the school library due to lack of education and exposure to over 50 yrs of research evidence about effective library programs. Wilson & Blake (1993) Hartzell (2010)

"Improving student achievement is of vital interest to Principals, but many Principals overlook libraries and librarians as potentially powerful instruments in that work because they have not been educated to the library's value and library media research rarely appears in administrator publications." Wilson & Blake (1993)

"Consequently, principals often leave library potential untapped despite fifty years of research evidence that effective library media programs-when led by active, involved librarians-can have a discernible positive impact on student achievement regardless of student, school and community demographics." Hartzell Gary (2010)

- There needs to be the instigation of a Principal Training Program at Federal level in conjunction with the arrival of the National Curriculum, to enlighten Principals about the ways which School Librarians and Teacher Librarians can enhance student outcomes across curriculum areas. Common policies for school libraries and information literacy are needed across all states.
- Tls need to collaborate with staff and work towards clear expectations and vision. Tls need to know the results that are expected, not in an innovation-limiting sense ... big picture visions for the school community. All stakeholders need to understand how success is to be measured?

Reference point 5: the impact and potential of digital technologies to enhance and support the roles of school libraries and librarians

- *“This is probably the most exciting time to be a librarian or in charge of information management within a school. The demands on schools to supply both high quality and large quantities of information resource to both educators and learners, and make them easily searchable, will considerably enhance the role of the librarian/information manager. This dramatic change in the information landscape, coupled with the capacity to easily access these resources underpins the emerging new education paradigm, and if this change is not brought about quickly, or managed well, the framework for 21 century thinking, teaching and learning will fail. Our inevitable conclusion is that the role of the librarian/information manager has never been more critical.” Treadwell (2010)*
- *“Dynamic information needs to be searched differently to static information.” Information Generation 3 is here!!*

Treadwell, pg1, explains that “at the moment the internet is like a giant library except some madman has ripped off all the covers of the books and thrown all the books into a pile in the middle of the virtual floor. There is a need now for a new management ecology based on this emerging tidal wave of information, and librarians, if they can adapt within this expanding environment, have a highly significant role to play.”

- **The types of information, resource and communication tools which a school encourages learners to use is bound up in the attitudes and values of the community which that school services. This suggests that both the role and the significance of libraries and librarians will increase accordingly.**

In order for learners to become lifelong learners they must:

- Be able to articulate a moral and ethical framework around their information gathering and its application.
- Learn to manage information effectively and efficiently.
- Be aware of the various formats that information comes in, and know which one(s) is/are the most effective and efficient for each situation.
- Have a wide range of literacy’s that reflect the cultural trends of the 21st century.
- Be able to search information resources effectively and efficiently.
- Be able to synthesise and construct understanding from a wide variety of resources.
- Display and demonstrate their new knowledge and understanding in a wide variety of formats ranging from oral through to multimedia.
- Be able to access a wide range of information resource and knowledge providers.
- Be able to access appropriate virtual libraries of information and resources and be able to communicate with local/national and international experts

and to be able to obtain assistance in the construction of their information and communication networks.

- **Our school community members all need to become transliterate. To expand this totally, skills will need to be taught explicitly, explored and applied within the various curriculums in the school context. A whole school approach needs to be led by the Teacher Librarian after in-depth Professional Development and planned for the school then adopted - "Planning for schools."**
- **Teacher Librarians in collaboration with other staff will need to develop strategies and activities that explore the range of literacies which are required in order to develop transliterate lifelong learners.**

"Transliteracy is The ability to read, write and interact across a range of platforms, tools and media from signing and orality through handwriting, print, TV, radio and film, to digital social networks."

A **transliterate** person is one who is literate across multiple media. Wikipedia

as:

- **Basic Literacy:** Language proficiencies using conventional literacy²
- **Information Literacy:** The ability to search for and access appropriate information across a range of genre, formats and systems. The ability to sift, scan and sort information.
- **Technological Literacy:** The innate ability to discover how a new or evolved technology operates; recognising its limitations and benefits. The ability to choose the most appropriate tool to access and process information, and present new knowledge & understanding.
- **Media Literacy:** The ability to synthesise a wide range of viewpoints/interpretations from a variety of media, and build a concise model of understanding of those ideas.
- **Cultural Literacy & Global Awareness:** The ability to manage information in the "global village".
- **Critical Literacy:** The ability to identify key aspects of information validity such as accuracy, objectivity, authority, currency and coverage.
- **Scientific Literacy:** Knowledge of scientific concepts and processes.
- **Cognitive Literacy:** The capacity to build cognitive models/frameworks of understanding
- **Metaliteracy** is an overarching and self-referential framework that integrates emerging technologies and unifies multiple literacy types. It places a

particular emphasis on producing and sharing information in participatory digital environments.

- As stated in the SLA Primary School Library Charter: Teaching information literacy skills and the associated ICLT skills in association with their curriculum is essential. To ensure that our students maintain an unquenchable enthusiasm for learning we need to guide and encourage them to become creative, curious, confident and flexible learners with their own effective strategies for managing information.
- Tls must be aware of the implications of recent key trends like those identified in the Horizon report (2010)
- Technology is increasingly a means for empowering students, a method for communication and socializing, and a ubiquitous, transparent part of students' lives.
- Technology continues to profoundly affect the way we work, collaborate, communicate, and succeed.
- The perceived value of innovation and creativity is increasing.
- There is increasing interest in just-in-time, alternate, or non-formal avenues of education, such as online learning, mentoring, and independent study.
- The way we think of learning environments is changing.
- **School libraries as a "place" will continue to be important, but Teacher Librarians will expand programs beyond the library walls and create virtual learning environments (VLES) capable of reaching and serving students wherever they are, both at and away from school 24/7.**
- **Teacher Librarians are the people who will integrate the digital world into today's classroom and throughout the curriculum. In Australia we need to ensure ongoing professional development and support is organized to ensure Teacher Librarians are trained and knowledgeable in the use of information technology. Tls empower students to be critical thinkers, enthusiastic readers, skillful researchers, and ethical users of information,"**
- **Teacher librarians willingly update their skills in IT, develop library web access points, digitize data, network with colleagues, review and select online websites, learning objects, webquests, online databases, social networking tools, etc. This is part of their collection development role, their teaching and curriculum support role and their role in improving literacy.**

- *Search engines like Google really are remarkable, but they do not offer reliable information in all cases. Without training in search logic, many users wander about drowning in data that may be distorted, inaccurate, irrelevant or biased. McKenzie (2010) Teacher Librarians will teach critical literacy skills so that when students search Google they can make educated decisions about which sites to use.*

Recommendations

- Recognise that the functions of a 21st century school library are complex, and as such, Rolf emphasised school libraries need to be carefully designed or redesigned. The library must have comfortable chairs, a pleasant ambiance, and a friendly, low-stress, safe, and forgiving atmosphere. It must contain flexible spaces that can be used by individuals, small groups, and whole classes.

Over the next five years, the size of print collections will undoubtedly either remain static or get smaller as we rely more heavily on digital information. But this will not, in turn, mean smaller school libraries. In fact, we should consider providing more space for instructional purposes.

Increasingly learning from text based resources is going to be largely replaced by pod/vod-casts and multimedia online resources as these technologies are so much more efficient and successful as a learning medium. Create conference rooms, small lounge spaces, and tables where talking is not just allowed, but expected. Relaxation and meditation areas should be available where practical.

The library needs to be the space where all steps of the information process are practiced – including communication. Every library needs a presentation/storytelling area with multimedia equipment and seating for groups larger than a class. Encourage storytelling, puppetry, live debates and demonstrations be held in the library.

- **Tls need clear expectations. Tls need to know the results that are expected, not in an innovation-limiting sense ... just final expected outcomes. How is success to be measured?**

Treadwell , pg 1, recognises that we are a crossroad. *"Whether libraries will increase in significance or decrease into obscurity is a source of concern and debate amongst librarians, library organisations, schoolsall of whom are struggling to identify the role of the library in this radically and exponentially changing information and communication landscape."*

This Inquiry has come none too soon for many TLs. Many educators, parents and community members have been very upset and worried about the huge changes that have been occurring over the digital and information landscapes but there did not seem to be an answer as to which direction school libraries and teacher librarians were headed.

In individual school examples many TLs were not really sure what their role was any more. The time allocated to TLs, especially Primary TLs made it impossible to manage many tasks that Secondary TLs could, yet nowhere did anyone or anything explain just what was acceptable. What was enough? What was the most important? What could be left?

- **Professional Learning that has a focus on understanding and developing critical thinking skills, successful wide reading programs, visual literacy, critical literacy, running literature-focused events and using ICLT in promoting literature must be widely promoted and plenty of sessions need to be advertised and provided in a wide range of centres to ensure equity for all TLs.**

Professional Learning is important but often TLs in rural and regional centres are less able to participate due to distance and therefore cost. In this day and age of accelerated change it is vital that Professional Learning opportunities are increased to ensure all TLs have the opportunity to develop the necessary skills. Video Conferencing and webinars can help bridge the need for continuing professional learning but face to face is really important in some instances.

- **Ensure primary schools have a well trained library technician or clerk to support the school library because without their assistance to competently manage circulation and shelving and collection management duties the professional role of the teacher librarian is wasted undertaking the necessary clerical duties.**

- **Ensure Teachers know what TL's role is- what we can do for them:**

To help teacher librarians fulfill their professional role, here are a few things we'd like you to know about the library, its program and the TL that can help both of you to form a great partnership.

1. The library staff don't own the library. It belongs to the entire school community. You can recommend materials and have a voice in library policy making. Volunteer to become a member of your school's library advisory committee, if there is one. This will also give you a greater understanding of existing library policy.

2. The library should be considered a research and learning centre. It's not a study hall, detention centre or baby-sitting service. The students in the library, including the ones you send, should have a reason for being there. Whether for academic

purposes or personal use, students should be in the library because they need the library's resources, not just because they need to be somewhere.

3. The best resource in the library is the teacher librarian. Tls can help you plan a project, solve a technology problem, find professional research, give insight into an ethical problem, or answer a reference question. And if we can't do it, we will help you find someone who can. We can help find or "inter-library loan" materials you need that are not in the school library itself. Helping others gives us a huge sense of satisfaction so please never hesitate to ask.

4. Planning is a good thing. Advanced planning with the TL will greatly increase you and your students' chances for success with projects that require information resources. A well-planned research unit or technology project will greatly decrease frustrations for everyone involved. With our experience, we can let you know what strategies work and don't work.

5. Recognize that the library provides access to both print and electronic information. We can determine which one best suits your and your students' needs. Students do not always realize that print resources are the best for many purposes. It breaks our heart to watch a student spend a frustrating hour trying to find the answer to a question on the Internet that could have been answered with a print resource in minutes.

6. The teacher librarian can be helpful in evaluating the information found on the Internet. One of the greatest challenges of using the Internet is determining whether the facts and opinions found there are credible. We have the training and tools to do just that. And it is our mission to teach students effective evaluation skills as well.

7. The teacher librarian can help create assessments for your students' projects. The findings of research projects presented in electronic form, conclusions drawn from primary resources, and research that calls for higher-level thinking to be demonstrated, all call for good authentic assessment tools rather than a simple gut-reaction comments or an objective test. We can help you find examples of these sorts of tools as well as help you create and administer them yourself. Let's work together to make your students' learning experiences as meaningful as possible.

8. The teacher librarian can be your technology support centre. We are no technical gurus, but can help you and your students with technology applications. Need to use a scanner or digital camera? We can probably show you how. Need to create a multi-media presentation? Let us give you a quick lesson. Looking for effective ways to search the web? Ask us. We are not technicians, but we can sometimes help locate that kind of help for you as well.

9. The library can help your students' performance on standardized reading tests. Research has proven that children become more adept at reading by extensively practicing reading at or just below grade level. The library contains a wide range of material in print format that students can use to improve reading skills. And we can help match just the right book or magazine with just the right reader. If you need a book talk for your class or help with a student struggling to find something of interest, just say so.

10. The teacher librarian will be your partner when trying new things. It's been said that some teachers during their career teach one year, 30 times. Can you imagine how long those 30 years must have seemed? If you need somebody to share the glory or the shame of a new unit, activity, or methodology, we're the one.

These tips are adapted with permission from Doug Johnson's "[Top Ten Things ... Teachers Should Know About School Libraries](#)" – April/May 2003

- **Make sure Principals are educated and up to date about the importance and the value to their students of a good quality school library program run by a professional Teacher librarian. "You can only lead a horse to water, you can't force it to take the time to drink." There has to be motivation for them to spend time as they have so many important issues competing for their time.**

Ten things you can do to support quality school libraries for quality teaching and improved student learning from The Hub <<http://hubinfo.wordpress.com/principals/>>

- Buy your own copy of [Learning for the Future](#) for a vision of what an excellent school library service can do for your students and teachers. Include an annual report on your school library and its contribution to student learning in your annual school report.
- Develop staff awareness of the role an excellent teacher librarian might take in your school and develop a plan to facilitate this.
- Familiarize yourself with the [Research](#) which shows that quality school libraries with qualified teacher librarians can make a difference.
- Work toward developing Fullan's culture for change, a culture for sharing and collaborating. [Facilitate teacher and teacher librarian collaborative teaching](#).
- Ask your teacher librarian to speak to staff about [information literacy](#) models and programs
- Develop [a school-wide a school-wide program for information and technology literacy](#) across the curriculum, embedded in all subjects and taught in context.
- Organize regular discussion times with your teacher librarian to discuss plans, policies, programs and improvement of professional practice.
- Ensure your teacher librarian can participate in year and faculty meetings, in school professional development and [curriculum planning](#).
- Recruit and hire professionally qualified library staff.

Keep up professional reading on best practice in teacher librarianship and advocate for this.

Start with McGhee, M and Jansen, B. 2005. *The Principal's guide to a powerful library media program* (Linworth Books, Worthington, Ohio).

[Getting the Most from Your School Library Media Program](#) by Doug Johnson, in *Principal*, Jan/Feb 2005

For Australian principals, these articles:

Lyn Hay and Colleen Foley, "[School libraries building capacity for student learning in 21C](#)" in *Scan* Vol 28 No 2 May 2009.

Sue Spence "[Creating 21st century learning communities](#)". *Principal Matters* VASSP, Melbourne, Victoria. Issue No. 67, Winter 2006, and "[Teacher librarians, an under utilised asset in schools,](#)" in *Curriculum Leadership*, Vol 3 Issue 14, 20 May 2005.

Kerry Neary "[School libraries: making a difference](#)" published in its original form in *The Queensland Principal: the Journal of the Association of State School Principals Inc.*, Vol. 3, No. 3, September 2007. Some minor changes have been made here to accommodate a wider audience. Also republished in *Connections* Vol 69 Term 2 2009. Updated and republished for an Australia wide audience: *The Australian Educational Leader 2009*

A recent article from *Australian Educational Leader* (Vol 30 No 3 2008), [Are you the Principal of an information literate school community?](#), is provided here with permission of the author, Marlene Filippi.

Also, Gary Hartzell's article "[Why Principals Should Support School Libraries](#)" (ERIC, 2002) is an excellent reference.

In 2000, the American Association of School Librarians sent this [Principal's Manual brochure](#) to every primary principal in the US to help them evaluate their school library program.

Taken from: <http://hubinfo.wordpress.com/principals/>

References

- Hay, L (2005) 'Student Learning through Australian School Libraries. Part 1: A Statistical Analysis of Student Perceptions' in *Synergy*, 3 (2) pp. 17-30. [Online] <<http://www.slav.schools.net.au/synergy/vol3num2/hay.pdf>>. Accessed 14 April 2010.
- Hay, L (2005) 'Student Learning through Australian School Libraries. Part 2: What students define and value as school library support. In *Synergy*, 3 (2) [Online] <http://www.slav.schools.net.au/synergy/vol3num2/hay.pdf>. Accessed 14 April 2010
- Johnson, D Teachers "[Top Ten Things ... Teachers Should Know About School Libraries](http://doug-johnson.com/dougwri/baby-teachers.html)" [Online] <http://doug-johnson.com/dougwri/baby-teachers.html> April/May 2003 Accessed 12 April 2010
- Johnson, D & Erikson, R *DesignShare Designing for the future of learning*. Imagining the Future of the School Library. [Online] <<http://www.designshare.com/index.php/articles/school-library-future>> Accessed 12 April 2010
- Kent, P(2009) Keynote speaker: Leading a Digital School conference Gold Coast, September 09
- Lonsdale, M (2003) *Impact of School Libraries on Student Achievement: A Review of the Research*, [Report for the Australian School Library Association]. Melbourne: Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER).
- MacKenzie, J (2010) Why we still need libraries and librarians. *From Now On The educational Journal* 19 (4) March 2010 [Online] <<http://fno.org/mar2010/still.html>> Accessed 15 April 2010
- Masson,S (2010) Sophie Masson speaks out for school librarians [Online] <<http://savingaussiebooks.wordpress.com/2010/03/30/sophie-masson-speaks-out-for-school-librarians/>> Accessed 13 April 2010
- Siemens, G - Connectivism: Learning Conceptualized through the Lens of Today's World 21stC Learning [Online] <http://21stcenturylearning.typepad.com/blog/2007/02/george_seimens_.html> Accessed 12 April 2010
- School libraries work!* (2004) Scholastic Research & Results Series, No.1. Scholastic Library Publishing, New York. [Online] <http://www.scholastic.com/librarians/printables/slp_rfp_804.pdf>. Accessed 12 April 2010
- The Hub (2010) Campaign for Quality School Libraries in Australia . *Principals* [Online] <http://hubinfo.wordpress.com/principals/> Accessed 16 April 2010

SUMMARY

"Knowledge and learning are forefront in the progress and advancement of humanity. At no other time in history have we stood before as rich a panorama of opportunity as we do today. Our access to information, knowledge, global conversation, research, and the experiences of generations past provide a firm foundation on which to build the society of tomorrow." George Siemens

Teacher Librarians (TLs) encompass the role of supporting students, staff and parents in their quest to educate each child, *"to facilitate the outworking of the inherent potential embodied within every child, such that their uniqueness can change the world for the better via their active involvement in their community and their ability to be lifelong learners that are self assured; balancing confidence with humility and having the capacity to apply their abilities with wisdom."* Treadwell (2007)

Reference point 1: the impact of recent policies and investments on school libraries and their activities

- This may not be considered recent but it is still current policy and certainly has had a huge impact on many school library programs. **In June 1988 the government announced that funds for budgetary priorities would be achieved through three staffing changes, one being that;**

'Teachers will no longer be required to be present with their class on every occasion when the class is being taken for library and/or other activities (e.g. Craft) by another teacher (normally a specialist). The time thus saved (a maximum of one hour) will be used as part of a teacher's face to face release'

- **Decisions on how to spend the TL and PT allocations and the allocation of clerical time to the library are made at the Principal's discretion therefore it is imperative that the Principal has a sound understanding of the needs and the programs running in the School Library. The provision of well trained clerical assistance is also vital to the success of the school library program. It is crucial that the TL and the Principal have a good working relationship to ensure adequate support is provided and the work load is feasible.**
- Many new BER libraries will have no qualified teacher librarian to run the needed programs.
- The Digital Education Revolution (DER) and the implementation of high cost technologies such as Interactive Whiteboards and data-projectors has increased much needed ICLT, but often to the detriment of the remainder of school library resource budgets.

- The impact of National Partnership Agreements on school library staffing (eg NSW devolved staffing trial)
- The provision of school libraries under BER have not provided school communities with buildings designed to meet the educational needs of 21st C school libraries.

Reference point 2: the future potential of school libraries and librarians to contribute to improved educational and community outcomes, especially literacy

"In good school libraries the two most important things are committed senior management and well-qualified and enthusiastic librarians."
— Philip Jarrett

- At present and in the near future Doug Jenkins, believes we will still need a "book oriented" library for developing good reading skills.
- Germein 2010, explains that having the teacher librarian read a story has deep ramifications for students for the future-It's not just story time!
- Australia is a multicultural country with many students arriving at school with little or no English. School libraries and teacher librarians have an important role to play in supporting both ESL staff and students.
- School Libraries help provide equity for families. School and Public Libraries are most important for the students without resources at home.
- A positive learning environment that supports student learning, where students feel comfortable and can pursue their own information, ICT and recreational interests with flexible hours to support equity, is central to students' view of the school library.
- The optimum model is a teacher-librarian with qualifications in both teaching and librarianship. Trained librarians have many skills and knowledge including the following and should be regarded as a highly

professional colleague by staff with the library seen as the heart of the school:

- In 2002 the Australian School Library Association and the Australian Library and Information Association commissioned the Australian Council for Educational Research to review all research into the impact of school libraries on student achievement. The report, released in March 2003, demonstrates that there is a positive relationship between school libraries and student achievement in the following ways:
- The provision of a safe harbour, a haven, a sanctuary for students from troubles is another very important role of the school library. The pastoral setting of the library addresses social, emotional and work-related needs.
- School Libraries and teacher librarians are a great resource for the enrichment of children and their parents.
- School Libraries and teacher librarians develop leadership skills in students who, in turn, support the success of the library.
- Tls improve communication with the school community by the good use of VLEs (Virtual Learning Environments). Many Tls have created School Library websites, blogs and wikis to enhance learning. Teacher librarians are the lead professionals in their schools on the use of the VLE (Virtual Learning Environment), Web2.0 and information literacy. They are often charged with being the school photographer and the schools promotion officer.
- School Libraries help to create Learning Communities. They offer parents resources to support their role. Special resources are often placed in a dedicated Parent section. Parent borrowers are most welcome as are their young pre-schoolers. Some libraries have been able to offer Pre-school sessions in preparation for "big school".

Reference point 4: the role of different levels of government and local communities and other institutions in partnering with and supporting school librarians

DET leaves it up to "discretion of School Principal

Improving student achievement is a vital principal interest, but many principals overlook libraries and librarians as potentially powerful instruments in that work because they have not been educated to the library's value and library media research rarely appears in administrator publications Wilson & Blake (1993)

Consequently, principals often leave library potential untapped despite fifty years of research evidence that effective library media programs-when led by active, involved librarians-can have a discernible positive impact on student achievement regardless of student, school and community demographics Hartzell Gary (2010)

Reference point 5: the impact and potential of digital technologies to enhance and support the roles of school libraries and librarians

- *"Dynamic information needs to be searched differently to static information." Information Generation 3 is here!!*
- **The types of information, resource and communication tools which a school encourages learners to use is bound up in the attitudes and values of the community which that school services. This suggests that both the role and the significance of libraries and librarians will increase accordingly.**
- **Teacher Librarians in collaboration with other staff will need to develop strategies and activities that explore the range of literacies which are required in order to develop transliterate lifelong learners.**
"Transliteracy is The ability to read, write and interact across a range of platforms, tools and media from signing and orality through handwriting, print, TV, radio and film, to digital social networks."
"A transliterate person is one who is literate across multiple media." Wikipedia (2010)
- **Our school community members all need to become transliterate. To expand this totally, skills will need to be taught explicitly, explored and applied within the various curriculums in the school context. A whole school approach needs to be led by the Teacher Librarian after in-depth Professional Development and planned for the school then adopted - Planning for schools.**
" Main PD need is the time to network." Kent (2009)
- **School libraries as a "place" will continue to be important, but teacher librarians need to expand programs beyond the library walls and create**

virtual libraries capable of reaching and serving students wherever they are, both at and away from school. (Virtual Learning Environments-VLE)

Recommendations

- There needs to be the instigation of a Principal Training Program at Federal level, funded by Federal Government, in conjunction with the arrival of the National Curriculum, to enlighten Principals about the ways which School Librarians and Teacher Librarians can enhance student outcomes across curriculum areas.
- Common policies for school libraries and metaliteracies including information literacy are needed across all states.
- Professional Development must be provided equitably for all TLs and Principals to understand how to diagnose learning dilemmas at their school community level.
- Principals and their executive must be directed to develop working teams with their Teacher Librarians. These teams should include the computer coordinator and invitations could be extended to other executive or other interested teachers. *"Teacher Librarians are a wonderful resource .. specialists in our schools..need valuing and inclusion in planning."* Pryor (2010)
- Ensure all Teachers know what TL's role is- what we can do for them and their students. Teachers need to value and utilise the special skills of the teacher librarians.

- Professional Learning that has a focus on understanding and developing critical thinking skills, successful wide reading programs, visual literacy, critical literacy, running literature-focused events and using ICLT in promoting literature must be widely promoted and plenty of sessions need to be advertised and provided in a wide range of centres to ensure equity for all TLs.
- After suitable professional learning has been implemented the Principal, the Teacher Librarian and the computer coordinator must collaboratively plan to engage the whole school community in conversation about how to support a blended learning environment, how to meet the demands of an increasingly tech intensive role and the need to “try” to keep up with newly emerging technologies.
- Ensure all schools have a well trained library technician or clerk to support the school library for the hours that the library offers its services because without their assistance to competently manage circulation, shelving and collection management duties the professional role of the teacher librarian is wasted undertaking the necessary clerical duties.
- Update OASIS Library – Library standards