This report is organised under the following terms of reference:

- the impact of recent policies and investments on school libraries and their activities;
- the future potential of school libraries and librarians to contribute to improved educational and community outcomes, especially literacy;
- the factors influencing recruitment and development of school librarians;
- the role of different levels of government and local communities and other institutions in partnering with and supporting school librarians; and
- The impact and potential of digital technologies to enhance and support the roles of school libraries and librarians.

The impact of recent policies and investments on school libraries and their activities.

The Federal Government has recently invested massive amounts of money into building or renovating school libraries. Whilst this is greatly appreciated by staff and students the lack of funding to for staff and resources to ensure these use of these buildings are maximised is a concern. The new buildings will not translate into improved learning outcomes unless there is adequate resourcing, staffing, programming, management and administrative support. Teacher librarians are informed, trained specialists in information literacy and literature and able to use their skills and knowledge across curricula and throughout the school. This means that the teacher librarian is in a position to assist all students in becoming information literate lifelong learners. Research shows that libraries boost student achievement and learning http:// The Queensland State Government's A Flying Start campaign has created a focus on early learning but has overlooked the role school libraries and teacher librarians can play in this. Resourcing libraries with 21st century technology is necessary but the role of books and development of reading and multi literacies cannot be overlooked. The new library being constructed on this site has given the school flexible and inviting learning spaces, but the need for staffing and further resources is evident. Additional funding to school libraries for resources would be a natural progression to ensure the learning spaces are maximised.

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

Research shows that well utilised and well staffed libraries increase learning and student achievement. http//www.asla.org.au/research/, http//eprints.qut.edu.au/20410, http://www.slav.schools.net.au/synergy/vol3num2/hay.pdf. School libraries develop information and literacy skills through cross curricula programs. Teacher librarians create key partnerships with teachers through cooperatively planned and implemented learning experiences for students. However over the past few years the staffing and resourcing of libraries has fallen short. Some state governments and private employers have failed to recognise the value of a well staffed and resourced library and have allowed principals to

decide how to staff libraries. This decision has often been based on a monetary value rather than a learning outcome for students.

The challenges created by the constant development of new technologies can be managed through the library program. Teacher librarians are able to assist students to deal with changes in media and develop the skills necessary to use a wide range of and variety of online reading and viewing which will connect with writing, creating and innovation through multi literacies including screen literacy and trans-literacy.

Libraries can provide the specialist support required to ensure our students are information and ICT literate as well as literate in the traditional sense.

Factors influencing recruitment and development of school librarians

There has been much discussion relating to staffing of school libraries. Whilst much of the clerical and administrative work can be performed by technicians and assistants the teaching/facilitating/instructing role must be conducted by a qualified teacher librarian if students are to gain the most benefits. Teacher librarians are able to assist students in book selection, improve research skills and develop information literacy skills. The need for teacher librarians, who have both teaching and library knowledge and skills to improve learning outcomes, is imperative. In many locations teacher librarians are being called on to take classes whilst teachers take their non-instructional time. This takes the teacher librarian away from their main focus in the library and the library program and devalues the skills they have in library learning. The age of teacher librarians is also a concern as the median age is much higher than other teaching roles. This suggest a lack of new trainees in this area. This is an area that needs promotion, exposing pre-service teachers to the value and opportunities that a teacher librarian position can offer. Pre-service teachers would benefit from spending some off their practice in a school library. This would allow them to experience the wide variety of curriculum and year level teaching that is involved. It would also inform them of the teacher librarian's role and assist in educating them as to the role a teacher librarian can play in cooperative planning and teaching in their future.

It is also necessary to entice experienced teacher into the role. A teacher with a good knowledge and understanding of information literacy and literature promotion may be looking to gain qualifications to become a teacher librarian. At present the only way to achieve this is through the costly Masters degree. Perhaps universities need to offer more flexibility regarding bridging courses that take into account prior learning and experience. There also needs to be a similar course that allows librarians to become teacher librarians.

The importance of the teacher librarian role must be recognised by employers. Time must be allowed for administration as well as teaching. When teacher librarians take leave they are rarely replaced with supply teacher librarians. This gives a message of undervaluing their role if there is no necessity, to have another person take on their role when they are absent.

I would recommend that funding is given to train and retrain teacher librarians for the future.

The role of different levels of government and local communities and other institutions in partnering with and supporting school librarians

The lack of clarity of the role of the teacher librarian and the changes in technology and ICT has created problems for the profession. Principals are able to take advantage of this lack of clarity and timetable teacher librarians as they choose. There needs to be a clear understanding of what teacher librarians do and then an assurance that this is followed in

schools. The lack of support for the role and reduced funding and valuing of the role must surely be discouraging staff from pursuing a career as a teacher librarian.

The teacher librarian role must be a respected and valued position not one of escape for those not wishing to classroom teach any longer. The leadership role of the teacher librarian in curriculum development and planning, cooperative teaching and planning and working with all year levels cross curricula should not be undervalued. No other staff member meets all these demands.

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

With increasing rates of change in ICT teacher librarians are in a position to develop student understanding and competencies with Web2.0 technologies. It is our role to develop student understanding and mastery of available technologies and to be aware of new technologies as they appear on the market. To ensure schools are able to offer this service funding at all levels of education must be made available to meet equity issues. Hardware is not the only requirement, assistance in purchasing subscriptions and licensing for databases and e-learning must be consistent across all schools. The DER grant system must include access to information as well as computers.

These technologies must also be available to remote and indigenous communities.

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