

SLAV – National Interactions

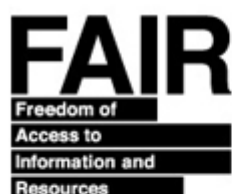
By Di Ruffles

In the last 12 months SLAV has joined with other Australian School State Library Associations to participate in the *Great School Libraries Campaign*.

In previous years, SLAV has worked with its partner associations to support the National Year of Reading initiative and the Parliamentary Enquiry into School Libraries. While we support the spirit of cooperation, it has been necessary to place some limitations on the discussions we have with other parties as SLAV wishes to maintain the current independence of our Association. Nevertheless, SLAV frequently enters into dialogue with our colleagues in other State Associations, in particular, our colleagues in the Queensland School Library Association, School Library Association of New South Wales and Western Australian School Libraries Association. Furthermore, we are currently in discussion regarding the possibility of a MOU for State Associations to explore the sharing of professional development opportunities.

SLAV and the other State Associations have agreed on a shared national goal that – "all students in Australia have equitable access to quality school library services delivered by qualified school library staff". The *Great School Libraries Campaign* has raised awareness about school libraries across all educational sectors and promoted support for all the staff working in school libraries. While the State Associations did not play a direct role in the process of nominating those libraries to be included on the list of Great School Libraries, they did recognise that this campaign helped raise the profile of school libraries and highlighted the essential role they play in student learning.

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Great School Libraries - Have you been inspired?



#GreatSchoolLibraries



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- [Honours List - Australia's Great School Libraries - ACT, NSW, NT, QLD, SA, TAS, VIC, WA](#)
- [New report shows the impact of teacher librarians on student outcomes - Impact Report - Impact PPT](#)
- [Staffing crisis in school libraries](#)
- [Call for government to endorse a teacher librarian for every school](#)
- [Media release](#)
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In the past 12 months SLAV has worked with the other State Associations and ALIA to commission ACER (Australian Council for Educational Research) to provide a breakdown of the SiAS (Staff in Australian Schools) survey to obtain further data on the number of teachers working in Australian school libraries. The SiAS survey was first conducted in 2007, and subsequently in 2010 and 2013, and provides the only national data on the teacher workforce in Australian school libraries. Although the further breakdown of data provided no real surprises to those teaching in school libraries, it does confirm Australia-wide that teacher numbers are declining in primary school libraries and highlights the inequities in the provision of library services to students in low socioeconomic areas. Denying students in disadvantaged sectors adequate library services is a grave concern as there is extensive research on the positive learning outcomes for students who have access to appropriately staffed school libraries.

SLAV has agreed, along with the other State Associations, to support the continuation of the SiAS survey and, in conjunction with ALIA, lobbied the federal Education Minister to request the opportunity to propose further refinements to the school library personnel questions listed in the survey. This data is essential for planning and identifying trends in the teacher workforce in Australian primary and secondary school libraries and for providing a basis for correlation with other research. SLAV's priority remains, as always, to serve our members in our Victorian Primary and Secondary school libraries, but we will continue to be open to dialogue with our colleagues in other states as well as sympathetic strategic partners, to ensure the best possible learning outcomes for all students in Australian schools.

References

McKenzie, Phillip; Weldon, Paul R.; Rowley, Glenn; Murphy, Martin; and McMillan, Julie (2014) *Staff in Australia's Schools 2013: Main Report on the Survey*, ACER Summary, Accessed at: http://research.acer.edu.au/tll_misc/20

Australian Government. Department of Education and Training. *School Teacher Workforce Data Reports - National Reports on School Teacher Workforce Data and Analysis*, Accessed at: <https://www.education.gov.au/school-teacher-workforce-data-reports>

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