

FACIMILE TRANSMISSION

ATTENTION:	Ms Trish Kelly, General Manager, Human Resources, NSW DET Fax: (02) 9561 8955
COPY TO:	The Hon. John Della Bosca MLC Minister for Training and Education Fax: (02) 9228 4392
FROM:	Amanda Credaro PRIVATE ADDRESS SUPPLIED Email: acredaro@optusnet.com.au
SUBJECT:	Inequity of Opportunities for 760,000 Students in Public Education
Your Refs:	RML07/4435, A56864 PER07/4901 RML07/4665, A57668 RML07/4028, A56178 RML07/4160 RML07/2994, A53910 RML07/3881, A55153 RML07/3627, A55376

Dear Ms Kelly,

Many thanks for your letter of 9th November 2007 (copy attached) informing me yet again that copies of my correspondence have been forwarded to the Industrial Relations Directorate to “inform future discussions with the NSW Teachers Federation on a range of matters relating to the role of teacher-librarians”.

As I stated in my fax of 23rd September to the Minister, and copied to you, the issues raised are not industrial, but professional.

The Minister himself would appear to be the only individual within state parliament with the authority to address the inequities of opportunities for the 760.000 students enrolled in public education in NSW.

What role does the NSW Teachers Federation play in ensuring that the DET fulfils its obligations under not only legislation, but also its own State Plan? The Federation has in the past made excellent ‘suggestions’ on policy – which of course have no ‘force’ in within the Department.

Indeed, the principals of NSW Public Schools appear to be becoming increasingly united in their refusal of the guidance offered by Federation. And yet the DET itself is not prepared to provide any such guidance.

Ms Kelly, may I ask why the Department will not restore tied funding for libraries? If the amount is subtracted from the global budget for schools, and dedicated for library use, there would be no additional cost to the Department. A number of other tied funds are in existence; professional learning (which is becoming more frequently withheld from Teacher Librarians), technology, etc.

Ms Kelly, may I ask why the Department will not issue guidelines for principals in the deployment of clerical officers? Historical precedence is of little relevance in times of changing resource use and the ever increasing realization of the importance of

Information Literacy – and yet the DET is ‘happy’ to allow Teacher Librarians to undertake clerical work such as shelving and covering books rather than working with the students and staff, but only in some schools. How common is this? Unfortunately, the Department appears to be unwilling to conduct the suggested survey to quantify the degree of inequity. How can the Department fulfill its mandate unless it has hard data to analyse.

Similarly, with the allocation of the “20%” administration time – reduced from the previous “30% minimum”. The work of Teacher Librarians is becoming more complex, and the international research has more than demonstrated the increase in student achievement that results from maintaining standards and following Best Practice ... rather than running “The Liberry” in the fashion that principals experienced as students themselves in the 60s and 70s.

Ms Kelly, I have revisited all the correspondence received by me on these issues, and those from the Minister received through Mr Paul Gibson etc.

I am unable to locate any cogent rationale for the apparent decision. In my communication of 23rd September 2007, I expressly asked why the Department was relegating these issues to the status of “industrial issues”. Despite risking further ire, I am impelled to ask the same question, yet again.

Why is the Department adamant that these issues – resource provision, staffing, administration, effective procedures - which relate to the Department’s legislated obligations and its own policies, being referred to as “industrial matters”?

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Amanda Credaro
18th November 2007