Holly Godfree
Students Need School Libraries Campaign Coordinator
2019 Australian Teacher Librarian of the Year
SNSLcampaign@gmail.com
@HollysLibrary
(Favelle, 2009)
How does the Students Need School Libraries campaign apply to your context?
Overview

1. Bit of History
2. Data
3. The Campaign
4. What You Can Do
5. Workshop Prep
A Brief, Non-Academic(!) History of Australian School Libraries

From ‘Life After Fenwick’ by Valerie Johnson (2007)
“It is ironic that at the start of the 20th century children did not have access to libraries because they could not afford to pay for the service.

Now at the start of the 21st century, they are faced with constraints on library services because no one can afford, or is willing, to pay for them.”

(Johnson, 2007, p.134)
First Libraries = Ad Hoc: Individual Citizens, Churches and School Teachers

1890s: First recorded children’s library (in SA)

1944: Education Dept first provides funds for purchasing books (VIC)

Mid-1950s: School Libraries begin to feature in education

1955: First Teacher Librarian Course (VIC)

1960s - 70s: Heyday for Public and School Libraries

1990s: ‘Compulsory Competitive Tendering’ (VIC), ‘School Autonomy’ (ACT), ‘Independent Public Schools’ (WA) - Roots of current situation

(Johnson, 2007)
“A great obstacle to the progress of school library development is the lack of well-trained personnel in each individual school library.”

(Fenwick, 1966, p.20)
DATA

(Maguire, 2016)
Data: ‘Staff in Australia’s Schools’ Survey

Australian Primary School Teachers in Libraries

Chart 2: Change in distribution of primary teachers in library by SESs of school 2010-2013

(Weldon, 2016, p.11)
Data: Staff in Australia’s Schools’ Survey

Australian Secondary School Teachers in Libraries

Chart 3 Change in distribution of secondary teachers in library by SES 2010-2013

(Weldon, 2016, p.11)
Data: ACT Primary School Library Staffing

Table 4: Staffing levels of teacher librarians and all library staff in 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Percentage of schools with a TL</th>
<th>Highest staffing level of TLs</th>
<th>Lowest staffing level of TLs</th>
<th>Highest staffing level of all library staff*</th>
<th>Lowest staffing level of all library staff*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*‘All library staff’ refers to any paid staff regularly working in the library (including TLs).
2017 Softlink Data combined with Learning for the Future’s Recommended Staffing Levels.
Thoughts
Feelings
Reflections

What surprised you? What did not surprise you?
Hope
School Library Coalition (2015)

- Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA)
- Australian School Library Association (ASLA)
- School Library Association of New South Wales (SLANSW)
- School Library Association of South Australia (SLASA)
- School Library Association of Victoria (SLAV)
- Queensland School Library Association (QSLA)
- Western Australian School Library Association (WASLA)
16 October 2018: Launch of Campaign
- Numerous public endorsements by authors and illustrators.
- Speeches at ASLA Conference, NES Brisbane, NSW TL conference and SA Public Libraries conference.
- Articles in The Big Issue, FYI, Access, Incite, ACT Educator, and more.
MISSION
To ensure student access to high quality school library services.

VISION
Every student has access to a dynamic, well-resourced school library led by a qualified teacher librarian alongside qualified library staff.
Campaign Tactics

Previous Tactics

○ Target Principals + Politicians Directly
○ Action from: Official “Leaders” + scattered individuals
○ Preaching to the converted, amongst ourselves

New Tactics

○ Target Parents + General Public
○ Distributed Leadership + Action
○ Support the public to take message to principals + pollies

(Book of Wander, 2011)
Strategic Vision

Phase 1: Educate and Celebrate

a. What are school libraries actually all about? FILMS!
   i. Research - Digital Literacy: website evaluation, positive digital footprint, using technology well
   ii. Resources - Helping Teachers: improving lessons, reducing workload
   iii. Relationships - Wellbeing: safe, supportive environment; compassion and empathy
   iv. Reading - Literacy: reading literature and non-fiction, test scores
Phase 2: Add Alarm

a. Alert them to the problem
b. Provoke their alarm and interest
c. Direct them to our website

Ongoing: Practical Support for Action

a. Practical tools and suggestions on website
Thoughts
Feelings
Reflections

And...How does this connect to your situation?

(Couse-Baker, 2017)
What can YOU do?
Connect: Mindset of Audience

School libraries are:
- Only about reading books
- Pleasant, quiet places for study

School Librarians:
- Scan books for loan
- Are intimidating / helpful / mean / inspirational

(hjl, 2013)
Connect: Parents’ Top Concerns

1. Digital Skills
   * Fake News
   * Choosing Trustworthy Info
   * Critical Thinking

2. Frustration and Poor Choices with Research at Home
   * Helping Teachers - Resources, Planning, Team Teaching
Why are we campaigning?

Practical contribution to address many ‘Wicked’ Problems

- Improved opportunities - individuals and a generation
- Supporting a healthy democracy
- Creating a better world
What are school libraries about?

- The staff
- Research, Resources, Relationships, Reading
- Personalisation - to school community, to individuals

(Skley, 2014)
Why is school library staffing in decline?

- **Internet**
  - Serious misunderstanding about it and students’ capabilities

- **Invisibility**
  - School library services often ‘behind the scenes’

- **Money**
  - School-based Management

(Skley, 2014)
How Do we Improve Struggling School Libraries?

Essential Components for Effective School Library Policy

1. The ‘Right’ Person
2. Qualifications
3. Team
4. Time
Achilles’ Heels

(FRE Lens, 2011)
...Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking...

We are all meant to shine, as children do.

... as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give others permission to do the same.

Marianne Williamson

(Amy the Nurse, 2015)
To Do: Put the Monkey on Your Back

- Connect with Campaign
  - FB, Twitter, Insta, Newsletter
  - Friends, Colleagues, Author Ambassadors
- Be present in the Opinion pages
  - Responsive, Reactive, Proactive
- Presentation - Do one or Invite one
  - Approach struggling schools’ P+C and Boards
More you can do:

- Actively help us create this thing
- Share Flyers
- Thought-provoking email signature
- Work with your Union and Associations
  - “We are the Weather Makers”
- Do your job well and share it
Extended Family
Children’s School
Your Partner
Neighbours
Local Biz
Clubs
Kid/Adult Sports
Unions
Social Media
Faith Orgs

(McAveey, 2018)
What makes you excited?
What will you be BOLD about?
Textual References


