



:. ontario library association

March 9, 2015

Toronto Catholic District School Board
80 Sheppard Avenue East,
North York, Ontario M2N 6E8

Dear Trustees of the Toronto Catholic District School Board,

The Ontario Library Association includes more than 5,000 members from the public, school, and academic library sectors. Our purpose is to ensure children and adults have the best possible access to library services so that they can learn and succeed in life.

We are writing to provide information about the value and impact of Elementary Teacher Librarians on student achievement in response to the proposed budget cuts. We understand the challenging financial situation that the Toronto Catholic District School Board is facing and the need to make some reductions. One of the proposed cuts is to eliminate 45 elementary Teacher Librarians and replace them with Library Technician positions.

While both positions are integral to the success of the school library program, the Teacher Librarian has the following impacts on student success:

- Schools with professionally-trained school library staff have reading achievement scores that are approximately 5.5 percentile points higher than average in Grade 6 EQAO results.
- Schools without trained library staff tend to have lower achievement on grade 3 and 6 EQAO reading tests, both in terms of average achievement and attaining level 3 or higher.⁽¹⁾
- The Elementary Teacher Librarian provides the fundamental information and digital literacy skills to bridge student learning in high school.

Teacher Librarians:

- Support implementation of new curriculum and teaching strategies.
- Are a central and collaborative resource for the school. They co-plan, co-teach, and co-assess with teaching partners.
- Are the literacy partner and technology leader in the school.
- Have the expertise to evaluate and select resources that engage students as readers and helps students develop a love of reading.
- Are the technology mentor and coach for staff and students.
- Provide equitable access to technology.
- Provide equitable access to authoritative digital and print resources to support inquiry-based learning.

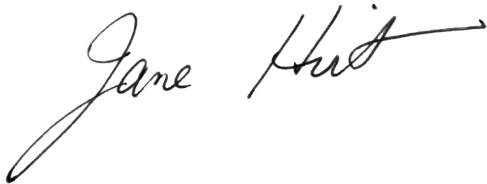
A further significant concern is that the percentage of Ontario students in grade 3 who report 'they like to read' dropped from 76% in 1999 to 50% in 2011⁽²⁾. Research indicates that there is a correlation between students reporting they like to read and the schools with

Teacher Librarians. We know that that the elimination of these positions will have a severe negative impact on reading engagement and subsequently on success in other subject areas.

For these reasons, elementary students in schools that do not have Teacher Librarians, are not receiving the same education as students who are in schools that do have Teacher Librarians.

We urge you to keep the elementary Teacher Librarian positions for the Toronto Catholic District School Board – these positions have a direct positive impact on student achievement. We would welcome a meeting to discuss further.

Best regards,



Jane Hilton,
President, Ontario Library Association



Jeanne Conte,
President, Ontario School Library Association

CC;

The Hon. Kathleen Wynne, Premier of the Province of Ontario

The Hon. Liz Sandals, Education Minister, Province of Ontario

Cindy Van Wonderen, Chair, The Association of Library Consultants and Coordinators of Ontario (TALCO)

References:

1. School Libraries and Student Achievement in Ontario, A Study by Queen's University and People for Education, 2006:

<https://www.accessola.org/web/Documents/OLA/Divisions/OSLA/SchoolLibrariesStudentAchievementOntario.pdf>

2. Reading for Joy, People for Education, 2011:

<https://www.accessola.org/web/Documents/OLA/issues/Reading-for-Joy.pdf>

ontario library association
2 Toronto Street, 3rd Floor
toronto, ontario, canada
m5c 2b6

a member of ^{the} PARTNERSHIP

phone: 416.363.3388
: toll-free: 1.866.873.9867
fax: 416.941.9581
: toll-free: 1.800.387.1181
email: info@accessola.com
web: www.accessola.com