

# TIME FOR A CHANGE

**O**n Saturday 21 March 2015, ALIA Schools in conjunction with the Victorian Teacher Librarian Network (VCTL) launched their new collaborative document titled 'School library resource centre guidelines for self reflection and evaluation'. The launch took place at the ALIA Schools half-day seminar called 'Be the change: promoting cultural change in your library'. ANNE GIROLAMI, the ALIA Schools Convenor, tells us about this self-reflection and evaluation tool for school libraries.

A well-managed school library provides a foundation for innovative programs that improve student learning outcomes. It is also a valuable asset both educationally and financially. Therefore it is essential that the school library is included in its school's ongoing cycle of improvement.

Previously, a reflection tool was first developed by this partnership for the School Improvement Framework [SIF]. The SIF is an evidence-based inquiry approach to planning within the school. It requires schools to incorporate ongoing

monitoring and evaluation of student outcomes to ensure continuous school improvement. Every Catholic primary and secondary school in Victoria undertakes a four-year cycle of review.

Once that document was completed it became apparent that there was a need to develop a similar document for all school libraries. Using the basis of the first document, the working party revisited, reworked and amended that document. The result was a new document, generic in nature, to assist any school library in its review process. It comprised four sections:

- What do we aim to achieve?
- What have we achieved?
- Physical environment/Learning environment
- Future directions.

Many hours were spent writing, editing, discussing, debating and formatting. Consistency was important, and clear, concise yet relevant information was required.

An unexpected element of the process was the opportunity made by the ALIA House team under the initiative of ALIA's CEO, Sue McKerracher, to put the document through the design process. We were especially grateful to Heather Wellard and her team, Meagan Spedding and Lauren O'Hara, for adding a most professional look.

It was an exciting celebration to formally acknowledge the completion of this joint venture. The collaborative nature and the spirit of cooperation in which the work was performed enabled this document to not only be completed in a three-month time period, but also to be made available to all school library resource centres in Australia at no cost.

The working party comprised Eileen Cooney of Mount Lilydale Mercy College; Denise Sleeth of Holy Spirit Primary School, Thornbury; Fay Pattison of Sacred Heart College, Oakleigh from the VCTL; as well as Anne Chowne of St Francis of Assisi Primary School, Mill Park; Susanne Graetsch of Lalor Secondary College, Lalor; and Anne Girolami (Chair) of Mercy College, Coburg, representing ALIA Schools.


This dedicated group gave their own personal time and worked enthusiastically on this project. Each of these women currently serves in their respective associations as well as work in school libraries either in the primary or secondary school setting. They were commended and sincerely thanked for their time, support and vision in always looking at ways to advocate for and promote the role of school library resource centres.


Gratitude was also extended to the principal of Mercy College, Coburg, Dr Michelle Cotter, for her generosity in the provision of her school as a meeting place, as well as the provision of relevant resources that assisted in the completion of this project. Thanks was also extended to the organising committee of the ALIA Schools seminar for incorporating the launch into the program. It was a very opportune time and place.

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