



Nova Scotia Association of Library Technicians
June 7, 2012

NSALT's Message:

We are asking the Department of Education to create provincial standards for school libraries.

- ✓ Hours – ensure that all students in Nova Scotia can regularly access their school library. Students should be able to go to their school library every day and use the resources and expertise of library staff.
- ✓ Staffing – ensure that there is adequate staffing for school libraries. No doors should be closed.
- ✓ Staffing qualifications – ensure that there is a standard minimum of qualifications. Each library staff person should have formal library education – library technician diploma minimum, MLIS maximum. Volunteers are not equipped to run a school library.
- ✓ Budget – ensure that school libraries are returned to restricted funding. Mandate that school boards spend the library funding allocation on library services.

The Department of Education allocates monies for libraries in the funding allocation. Boards are not required to spend the entire amount on library services. (See Chignecto Report)

Library staff performs such an important role in our schools. They are not just the people who sign out books to our children. No other staff members in our schools have the time or specific skills to perform the job of library staff. Our library staff is responsible for:

1. Selecting materials for the library which includes choosing titles, finding reviews, previewing the materials and finding the best price.
2. Inventory – Ensure all materials are in the library and other parts of the school
3. Circulation – Ensure books are properly signed out, returned and shelved.
4. Manage the information technology in a school. Ensure the equipment is in good working order, arrange for any repairs and advise the administration on the technology needs of the school.
5. Participate in extra-curricular activities within the school which include coaching and leading clubs.
6. Program for students in the form of author visits, games, guest speakers and other activities. Provide regular access to the library outside of instructional time.
7. Cataloguing – Ensure titles are properly entered into the database, ensure duplicates are not purchased and process all new books.
8. Interlibrary loans – Following the proper etiquette of borrowing books from external sources, establish a process with other schools.
9. Digital and copyright licensing. Provide information on copyright access; negotiate prices for digital, movie and music licenses and purchase licenses and equipment.

Multiple studies have affirmed there is a clear link between school library programs that are staffed by qualified information professionals and student academic achievement. Research has shown that students in schools with good school libraries learn more, achieve better grades, and score higher on standardized test scores than their peers

in schools without libraries. Students benefit from the guidance of school library staff, which encourage them to read more and to love reading.

The sum of a person's education in Nova Scotia cannot be the classroom. Libraries provide a rich component to a student's education.

What happens to the abandoned library? The problems are many, lack of respect for books, technology, reading and libraries; missing books; missing e-readers; and damaged computers. Most of all, you take away a safe place for students to become effective users and producers of information and ideas.

"When I read about the way in which library funds are being cut and cut, I can only think that American society has found one more way to destroy itself"

-Isaac Asimov