

SLANZA SUBMISSION ON PAY EQUITY

'Towards Pay Equity'

Ministry of Women's Affairs
PO Box 10 049
WELLINGTON

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Kia ora

Please find enclosed the submission from the Executive Committee of the School Library Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (SLANZA) Te Puna Whare Mātauranga a Kura in response to the discussion document produced by the Ministry of Women's Affairs entitled *Next Steps Towards Pay Equity* (July 2002).

SLANZA is willing to have its submission published in print and on the Internet.

Name of Organisation: School Library Association of New Zealand, (SLANZA) Te Puna Whare Mātauranga a Kura.

Type of Organisation: Professional association for any person interested in school library matters.

Vision: SLANZA will strengthen and promote the role of school libraries to enable all school communities to become information literate.

Purpose of Organisation:

- To provide a national voice for the school library community;
- To advocate the critical role of school libraries in teaching and learning;

- To represent all school library staff: Teacher Librarians, Teachers with Library Responsibility, School Librarians, and support staff;
- To lobby for improved funding to provide better library facilities and services;
- To create opportunities to recognise excellence within the school library field;
- To improve the professional standing, working conditions and qualifications for all staff involved with school libraries;
- To support professional development through conferences, regular newsletters and a website;
- To develop links with associated national and international professional organisations.

Number of Members: c530 personal members

Yours faithfully

Judi Hancock
President
School Library Association of New Zealand Aotearoa, SLANZA
Te Puna Whare Mātauranga a Kura

A submission to the Ministry of Women's Affairs on their '*Next Steps to Pay Equity*' from the School Library Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (SLANZA) Te Puna Whare Mātauranga a Kura

<p>INTRODUCTION</p>	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the issues raised in <i>Next Steps to Pay Equity</i> to help inform Government policy on gender pay discrimination.</p> <p>SLANZA wishes to provide the Ministry of Women's Affairs with information on pay inequities in the library sector of New Zealand primary and secondary schools.</p> <p>SLANZA is the New Zealand professional association for school library staff and represents about 500 personal members.</p> <p>This submission is an overview of SLANZA membership views. It focuses on SLANZA's broad outcomes and strategic directions in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Advocating the critical role of school libraries in teaching and learning; and · Improving the professional standing, working conditions and qualifications for all staff involved with school libraries.
<p>BACKGROUND</p>	<p>School library staff play a pivotal role in the school. By managing the library collection to maximise the provision of resources, they not only support teachers in the delivery of their teaching programmes, but also enhance student learning outcomes.</p>
<p>Role of school librarians</p>	<p>There have been significant changes in education, including ICT developments, and these have impacted on what is required of school library staff if they are to carry out their role effectively. It is now recognised that the library should have a key role to play in supporting the development of literacy, information skills and information literacy (see Ministry of Education and National Library of New Zealand's document released on 19 November 2002, <i>The school library and learning in the information landscape: Guidelines for New Zealand schools</i>).</p>
<p>Key role of libraries in supporting information literacy</p>	<p>These changes should happen right across the curriculum, as well as at all levels of the school system. In addition, there have been significant shifts in learning styles which in turn has meant that all library staff have had to ensure their service remains relevant and supportive in the changing environment.</p>

<p>Need for professional library staff</p>	<p>School libraries need to be staffed by people who are experienced or professionally trained information specialists. If library staff have the qualifications and expertise to work in partnership with teachers, students' learning is substantively improved. Schools need to be moving towards employing professionally trained librarians, and school management should support the professional development of their library staff.</p>
<p>Research shows experienced library staff make a critical difference</p>	<p>The recently released report <i>How School Librarians Help Kids Achieve Standards: the Second Colorado Study</i> (2000) shows how trained library staff can make a difference to students' learning. This study has revealed that student scores on standardised tests are 10% to 18% higher at schools with outstanding library media programmes and staff. Reading scores are higher in schools whose library media programmes are better staffed, better stocked and funded. Scores are also high where library media specialists play a leadership role in their schools, collaborate with classroom teachers in the design and delivery of instruction, and utilise computer networks to extend the reach of the library media centre. Similar studies for Alaska and Pennsylvania also supported these findings (see http://www.lrs.org).</p>
<p>Lack of standards for library staffing provision in New Zealand</p>	<p>As there are no national standards for the staffing of New Zealand school libraries there is widespread diversity in library staff roles and responsibilities (see Appendix 1: Job Definitions). This has not only led to inconsistencies from one school to the next on how their libraries are staffed, but also the number and level of library staff relative to school roll numbers. In view of the Colorado findings, this can only impact adversely on student achievement.</p>
<p>Professional staffing and proper funding of school libraries should be mandatory</p>	<p>School libraries are expensive resources, and many schools do not recognise that unless they have experienced or professionally qualified staff then they will not maximise, or even use effectively, the investment they have made in the library. In New Zealand, many school libraries are currently under-utilised because of the lack of trained library staff. Professional staffing of school libraries should be mandatory, not optional; and funding for this part of the school business should be ring-fenced. At the moment many students and teachers are being short-changed through not having a level of support</p>

<p>Key factors impacting on school librarianship</p>	<p>which provides effective access to the materials held in their libraries, or guidance on how to use them. Students will not achieve the level of competence of which they are capable if they are not given the opportunity to develop information skills through the active collaboration of library and teaching staff in providing this.</p> <p>Contributory factors for the lack of consistency in attracting and/or retaining trained library staff include the following:</p> <p>Library staff in New Zealand schools are almost exclusively women. Although a few are recognised and paid as professional staff (see Appendix 1: Job Definitions), historically most library staff have been treated, administratively, as school support staff (see Appendix 2: NZEI Support Staff in Schools Rates). School support staff remuneration is drawn from the school's Operations Grant which inherently has many and varied demands on it. As each Board of Trustees can determine the type and number of library staff and hours worked based on the identified needs of the school, this can lead to the reduction in either pay or hours for library staff when schools choose to prioritise limited funds in other ways.</p>
<p>'Women's work'</p>	<p>Although this is not a universal 'given', many women become library staff because school hours suit family commitments. Once in libraries, most see the value of their work, and recognise the need for professional commitment. They look to upskill with library qualifications, despite the fact that this is infrequently rewarded financially in schools. When their family commitments decrease, they eventually move on to more realistically paid work, depriving the school of their expertise and experience, and the students of their knowledge of the library collection and how to best help them use it.</p> <p>Other women, who may have acquired previous qualifications in either teaching or librarianship, are also attracted to school library hours while their families are young. In this case the school benefits hugely from their previous experience, while still paying them marginal rates of pay. Once in these positions, it is often difficult for these women to raise their financial or hierarchical status – why should the school pay more for their labour when they have already had the benefit of their expertise for less?</p>

<p>Upskilling for no reward</p>	<p>Again, the school is eventually deprived of quality staff and concomitant improved student achievement as these women also look elsewhere for better pay and conditions.</p> <p>Many schools genuinely want to recognise the quality of their library staff by remuneration appropriate to their skills, but are unable to balance the books with a 'limited pot' Operations Grant. Staff are told that despite the evident value of their work in contributing to student achievement, there is "no more money". Less sympathetically, women are sometimes told that their jobs are "not that complicated" despite job descriptions which require skills not too dissimilar to better-rewarded male colleagues: ICT expertise being a case in point. These situations are totally inequitable, not only woefully under-rewarding these women's skills, but also using their labour to subsidise normal school operations.</p>
<p>Lack of recognition for qualified staff</p>	<p>The following issues need to be considered in trying to address the equity concerns of library staff:</p>
<p>Limited Operations grant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · gender - the undervaluing of women's skills as school library staff, even compared to other librarian jobs in the public and private sectors; · job status - lack of security for hours worked; 'term-time only' conditions; · wage rates - low starting rates; inability to change grading as qualifications or expertise increase;
<p>Equity issues to be addressed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · conditions - family friendly school hours/reduced pay may not suit as library staff lessen family obligations/improve qualifications; · promotional opportunities - it benefits school management to offer professional development opportunities, but not necessarily to reward the qualifications which result; · workload - particularly relevant as secondary schools have recently introduced new assessment standards (NCEA) which have increased the need for well-resourced libraries with library staff conversant with facilitating student and teacher access (see Appendix 3: NZEI ROUROU article on NCEA);

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· ICT – workload has increased as has the need for training· job description - task descriptions not necessarily in sync with what is expected; extra hours sometimes required to fulfil actual mechanics of library function, with no financial recompense. Some staff doing one-and-a-half jobs so as not to let students down;· Operations Grant - the downside of self-managing schools is that there is no consistency for library staffing standards nationally, leading to inequity of support/results for student achievement;· bargaining arrangements/union activity - NZEI has made some gains on behalf of library staff, though this has mostly been opposed by STA, who have vested interests in protecting further dilution of their operations grants through staff salary increases.
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