

## PRESIDENTS REPORT 2021

It has been a huge privilege being President of SLANZA for the past two years. It has been a journey that I will always treasure and one that has taught me so much. I am so inspired by the mahi done in school libraries in Aotearoa, and it confirms my knowing that – School Libraries Transform.

I have been honored to meet so many of you and listen to you as you share your work, you are a passionate dedicated group of librarians who care for our tamariki of Aotearoa.

Sadly, I have also heard many of your stories of difficulty as you have faced library budget cuts, room reallocations and precious hours taken from your workloads.

They have been hard stories to listen to and we honor you all for your determination to keep going when you are facing these cuts of time and money. Thank you for not giving up on our children, on literacy, on reading, on haurora / wellbeing and the power of a school library to transform the lives in our school communities.

SLANZA in 2021 has had a sterling year in terms of securing funding for our school library sector through the New Zealand partnership Program (NZLPP). Four projects were confirmed for this funding.

1. A Bit SUS- working with Tohatoha to invest in 15 schools to run a program about misinformation and fake news. This program will work with students, staff, and the community to inform and educate them on the impact social and news media has on our youth and help give them the skills and knowledge needed to test and approve the information they receive can be trusted.
2. Any Questions, Many Answers- we are working to set up two pilot programs in Northland and Hawkes Bay/East Coast that work in schools to collect local story and korero that can then be shared to support the new curriculum on New Zealand Histories. The power of this partnership is that it will be classroom based and allow our students to gather and use the information from their whenua to inform them of their local story.
3. Kahui Ako- Community of Learning Pilot Program. Two pilots have been set up in Waimea in Nelson and Te Oko Horoi in the Waikato. These pilots will create a lead school librarian to set up a Professional Learning Group of local school librarians with the aim of supporting each other, collaborating library programs within the Kahui Ako, and sharing resources and local history story and artifacts. This pilot will also set up a kete of resources from the local area with online knowledge and information to support the school's delivery of the new History Curriculum. They will work with all schools, the museums and public library to create this kete as a one stop resource repository.
4. LIANZA/ SLANZA Partnership for qualification uplift across the library sector. This project is the flagship for the NZLPP and it is so exciting for us all. It will enable many of us all to access funding to complete tertiary education in librarianship. It will remove the barrier of finances for successful applicants to achieve the possibility of gaining a library qualification. A lot of work is being done to scaffold this project and we hope applications will be called for and study underway by mid-2022.

SLANZA is so thankful for these opportunities to be involved in the NZLPP funding allocations and we are excited about how it will uplift the mana of school libraries and the work of SLANZA as an organization.

SLANZA is now also on the Sector Reference Group which is a collaboration of organizations involved in all forms of libraries in Aotearoa. This gives us representation with a national voice at the highest level to ensure School Libraries are heard and listened to and that the grassroots issues of school library spaces are known by our wider sector.

We also worked with the Ministry of Education to research best practice in School Libraries. 12 School Libraries were selected to be interviewed, this included the Librarian, the Principal, the students, and some staff. The reason for this project was to enable us to work with the MoE to highlight the impact a successful library can have on a school and how they are resourced to do this. The aim is to use these schools to showcase to other Board of Trustees and Principals what can be done in the current funding model and what they miss out on if they do not fund the school libraries adequately. We hope this report will be very useful in informing school leaders and decision makers the powerful impact a school library has on learning, school culture, literacy, and support for the teaching staff in the delivery of the curriculum. We also hope this report will therefore by implication inform those decision makers the huge negative impact the loss of a library space and staff will have on their school.

The School Library Transforms campaign took a back seat because the launch of the campaign gave us multiple avenues of media coverage that we think enabled us to be included in the NZLPP funding rounds and complete the study with the MoE. These two projects have taken vast amounts of our volunteer time, and that time has been diverted from the grassroots promotion of the campaign. It is our hope that 2022 can see more direct connection to the campaign across Aotearoa. In my view the campaign worked hard and fast for us in ways we could never imagine, but it also cost us in terms of connecting the core message to our individual schools and communities.

The most disappointing thing we have faced together is two conferences disrupted by covid and the eventual decision to fully cancel our triannual gathering. It was not an easy decision to make as we value so much being together and sharing our stories and journeys as school librarians as we learn from each other. We all miss the speakers, workshops, business stall holders and their goodies, dinners, banter and hanging in the foyer. It was a sad day for us all. We hope that we can meet in Christchurch in 2023/4 for our next full conference with maybe a cheeky top of the South Island regional one before that!

I am so thankful for the SLANZA National Executive team I have worked with over the last two years. I have learned so much from them and they are truly dedicated and very hardworking.

Elizabeth Atkinson resigned this year as our Auckland NE Representative, I appreciated her wise counsel, her quiet guidance, and her common sense that mingled delightfully with a subtle and delightful sense of humor. Maree Silver also resigned as our Aoraki rep, she has a new job at Hillmorton High School. We are thankful for her knowledge and help in all things finance as NE Treasurer and this was especially helpful as we relocated to XERO. Her expertise in this area was really helpful and we appreciated her voice as a primary school librarian on National Exec.

We also have just farewelled Keri Cochrane from Southland, who is leaving to spend more time with her whanau including caring for her grandchildren. She gave us a real down to earth voice on the Exec and we appreciated her practicality and reason as we discussed our work. She took the lead role in organizing our Awards and we are thankful for her work for us in this area.

We welcomed Sally Blake from Aoraki region and Claudine Crabtree from Auckland and Kirsty Adam from Southland onto the National Executive. We are excited about the experience and passion they bring into the Exec as we move forward.

I would also like to thank Anita Lamont our Admin Officer- she is the super glue that holds us together, her expertise, knowledge, incredible work ethic and determination for SLANZA to succeed has made our work this year possible. I have thoroughly enjoyed every moment working with her. Thank you, Anita!

Clare Forrest and Julia Smith are our stalwarts and NE is very blessed to have them continue to serve with us as they hold so much institutional knowledge and a deep passion for all things school library. Loyalty is a hard commodity to find and these two have it in bucketsful! I am so thankful for them both.

It is my honor to hand over leading our team to Sasha Eastwood-Bennit, she is a huge advocate for school libraries, she is far more organized than I will ever be. She will bring so much knowledge and passion to this role and I am genuinely excited to see how she will continue to grow and nurture our SLANZA National Executive as we continue together to serve you all.

To you all our members- thanks so much for your work for our children, for your fight to protect school libraries and for your energies to grow them. Never forget- School Libraries Transform and you are vital in ensuring that happens.

Ngā mihi mahana - Warm regards

Glenys Bichan