Teacher Librarians:

We need them now more than ever!

Questions to ask at your child's school

- Who are the library staff and what qualifications do they have?
- Recommended staffing levels are 1 full time Teacher Librarian (TL) for 300 students (see ASLA & ALIA 2001).
- If the staffing levels are lower than this, ask: How has the staffing mix changed over the past few years? Did the school ever have a TL? Considering the substantial evidence connecting library staffing with improved student learning outcomes, what justification can the school give for not having this staffing level?
- If the library staff are not full time, what are the reasons for this?
- If the library staff are not qualified, are they currently studying? Is the school encouraging them to apply for the Education and Training Directorate's targeted scholarship program given that Teacher Librarianship is a priority area?
- How are information literacy skills* taught?
- How old is the library collection?
- What level of funding is allocated to the library?
- What online subscriptions does the library hold?
- Who creates online pathfinders or subject gateways of mediated online resources for use by staff and students?

* Information literacy skills - how to pose and analyse a question; locate and evaluate print and online sources; and use and present information effectively within a legal copyright framework and using a range of media.

Questions to ask your child

- How do you locate a Fiction book if you know the author's name?
- How are Non-Fiction books organised on the shelves?
- What do you know about ways to stay safe online?
- Can you name several search engines?
- How do you use Advanced Search or Boolean search strategies to find information online?
- How can you find an image online that is licensed for reuse?
- What should you look for on a web page to know that the information is trustworthy?
- What are some useful note-taking strategies?
- What do you know about using and acknowledging other people's work?

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