



:: ontario school library association

OLA and OSLA respond to the Toronto District School Board's decision to repurpose all Elementary teacher-librarians

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The Ontario Library Association (OLA) and the Ontario School Libraries Association (OSLA) are deeply concerned with the Toronto District School Board's decision to repurpose all Elementary teacher-librarians.

TDSB's decision to eliminate Elementary school teacher-librarians board-wide will have dramatic impacts on student learning and success. While we understand that access to virtual library resources may still be available, without the support of teacher-librarians, it will be extremely difficult for teachers and students to navigate and use these resources effectively.

It is important to emphasize that access to library space and book circulation is only one element of the school library experience. School libraries are critical to successful online learning, ensuring that students achieve curriculum objectives, and curating the digital and print resources they need to succeed. School libraries, especially at the Elementary level, foster students' love of reading, which research has shown has a positive impact on success in science and math, literacy scores, and students' social and civic engagement.

Teacher librarians are literacy leaders and technology partners in each school. During the early months of the pandemic, teacher-librarians assumed a critical role and provided strong leadership in helping students, teachers and parents adapt to a distance learning approach.

We cannot afford to sacrifice the long-term learning success of our children by eliminating the school library program. This is more essential than ever and must be maintained in our schools. Other school boards in the Greater Toronto Area are implementing plans that successfully strike a balance between smaller cohort sizes and maintaining the critical functions of the school libraries.

We strongly urge TDSB to immediately revise its Elementary school year plan to keep its teacher-librarians and ensure that students and teachers will continue to have access to these vital resources and supports.

For more information about the importance of school libraries, please visit:

http://www.accessola.org/web/OLA/ADVOCACY/Ongoing_Library_Issues/School_Library_Issues/OLA/Issues_Advocacy/School_Library_Issues



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ⁱ People for Education, Reading for Joy, 2011. Toronto: People for Education, 2011.