

SLYSIG REPORT TO REPCO

PERIOD February-July 2015

Problem Statement

School Library is a unique sector among all the sectors within LIS that needs unique approach. Einstein once said; you cannot resolve your current problem using the same measure that you used to create that it. You need a paradigm shift.

Background

The current sentiments within LIS sector are highlighting a serious challenge of lack understanding of School Library & Information Services (SLIS). We are going to use the anecdotal facts based on our experience in sector. If we may liken LIASA to a federation of Unions in South Africa, LIASA should consider SLIS as vulnerable sector like domestic and farm workers. The later workers may purportedly enjoy constitutional rights and even right to fair labour practice but we know the opposite is true. They work in an environment that has unclearly determined rules. The rules are dependent on the employers' discretion. **Why comparing SLIS to domestic and farm workers?** The teachers are hired to provide primary service which is teaching and learning. The library comes in as add on in a form of Co-curriculum or Extra-Curriculum. The concepts Co-curriculum or Extra-Curriculum have their connotation within the education fraternity and there is no clear consensus on them. Co-curriculum or Extra-Curriculum has bearing when the teacher librarians are evaluated in a system through Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) and Professional Management and Development system (PMDS). In some instances the IQMS co-ordinators refuse to record activities of Teacher librarians as part of Co-curriculum or Extra-Curriculum demanded by the instrument they use.

You cannot organise them into an association because management in most cases would not see their role as providing professional service to the learners/school. Most schools relegate all the known people with poor work ethics into library committees.

When the education system underwent restructuring many full time Teacher Library were declared in excess and they had to be transferred to other schools and libraries were closed. Many teacher librarians opted for full time teaching of examinable subjects so that they cannot be right-sized.

The Teacher Librarians by virtue of being Teachers they have to acquire a licence to practice provided by South African Council for Educators (SACE). On the other hand by virtue of '*librarians*', are they also have to

Teaching is a profession and librarianship is a profession. Which profession will take a centre spot of a Teacher Librarian? In line with challenge of IQMS/PMDS coordinators, who will

ensure that designations conferred by LIASA are recognised? How will they synchronise the issues of CPTD versus CPD?

Some of districts in this country do not have SLIS coordinators/advisors/Implementers. How will the schools get support to render this service?

Some of the provinces do not SLIS personnel to look after the interest of the sector. Who will ensure that the districts are doing the right job in SLIS.

At National office, the DBE has no SLIS person to plan sectors' affairs. We have a multi-billion project under implementation through an AD-HOC structure. We have a National Guidelines for School Library and Information Services which states the following; *The National Education School Library and Information Services is responsible for providing leadership by;...*(NGSLIS.2012:4). These guidelines are a product of fifteen years draft- after draft of SLIS Policy and in the final year what happened

RECOMMENDATIONS

LIASA in general should consider SLYSIG as vulnerable sector is in ICU needing operation.

LIASA should action the issue of forming partnership with Department of Basic Education.

LIASA should commission a study that will focus School Library Services

LIASA must be vocal in addressing the deafening silence around the provision Library and Information Services at Technical & Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

SLYSIG Coming events

Biennial conference

The previous SLYSIG chairperson presented a plea to EXCO/President to allow us to host sector conference in 2014. The SLYSIG conference presented wonderful lessons and as result in 2016 we will be hosting the second biennial conference. The conference will be hosted at Free State University on June. We will like to be advised on the following:

- We are approaching possible sponsors (i.e. non listed as LIASA funders) who are showing interest in working with us. The challenge is that we need to present our business plan or proposal to them so that it can undergo their internal approval processes. We would like to submit the proposal to LIASA EXCO so that it can present it on our behalf in line with the operations of the Association.
- Request the President to grace the event by hosing the Guest Speaker on our behalf.

From the presentation by the Department of Basic Education at SLYSIG EXCO meeting in Mbombela the following information came to light:

GETTING THE NATION TO READ

- National Reading Promotion Plan- is on development of nationally acceptable reading and writing norms.
- One Book Flood per province.
- Reading revolution-20 July-08 September 2015.
- Mobilising 1000 schools.
- Organising placement of Library Assistants to these 1000 schools through learnership-
- 1000 trolley libraries for multigrade schools with resources.
- MoU between DBE and DAC revitalised.
- DBE is looking for partners to develop libraries and provide resources.
- Mandela day
- Filing of vacant LIS posts.