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Western Australian School Library Association

Dear Parents

I am writing to you on behalf of the Western Australian School Library Association (WASLA) to express our grave concern about the intended cuts to public schooling in WA. While this Government is insisting that there will be no loss of teachers and facilities in Government schools will not be affected, feedback from Principals and other Associations indicate that this is definitely not the case.

A major result of these cuts that affects all schools, is the withdrawal of the School Library Support Service through Central Office. This means that there will be no support for library personnel in WA schools. Most Government schools in WA are staffed by Library Officers (Level 1 / 2 clerical positions) who rely on the Library Service for information about resource selection to support curriculum and literacy programs in your school and cataloguing information so the library service is available to all students and teachers. Since WA will no longer be providing records for the schools national database (School Catalogue Information Service), WA Government schools will incur new licensing costs.

WASLA would ask all P&Cs to ask their Principal what the proposed funding cuts will mean for their school. Some facts:

* The Liberal Government in WA has not signed up for extra funding from the Federal Government for Government schools.
* Government schools in WA have not had their funding indexed to the CPI for the last 3 years so in real terms they have been suffering funding cuts for the last 3 years.
* All private schools in WA have signed up for Federal funding (Gonski) and are due to receive extra funding from the WA State Government as outlined in the last budget.
* Government schools in WA will suffer major funding cuts in 2014 (last budget) which will affect staffing, the employment of Educational Assistants, VET programs, ESL assistance, Gifted and Talented programs and special programs for children at risk. Any extra-curricular programs are also likely to be withdrawn as Principals try to accommodate lost staff. These cuts may also lead to larger class sizes and even fewer facilities for students.
* Schools will lose staff and access to centralized services such as the School Library Service.

WASLA urges parents to ask for some hard facts about what is happening to their school and why this Government seems intent on withdrawing funding from the public school system in WA.

Yours sincerely

Signed on behalf of

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Secretary, Literacy and Reading Section, International Federation of School Libraries (IFLA)