



LAI SLG

School Libraries Group of the
Library Association of Ireland

The School Library Group of the Library Association of Ireland notes with disappointment that the March 9th announcement by the Minister for Education on the expansion of DEIS supports to further schools has once again failed to deliver on the 2005 DEIS Action Plan commitment to expand the JCSP Demonstration Library Project.

The 2005 Plan stated that

'provision for school library and librarian support (will be extended to the 50 SSP schools with the highest concentrations of disadvantage over five years - extension to further SSP schools will be considered subsequently)'.

It is unconscionable that, seventeen years later, this commitment has still not been met, with just 30 JCSP libraries having been established.

The School Library Group of the Library Association of Ireland calls on the Government to immediately rectify this omission by putting in place the structures and funding needed for JCSP Demonstration Library Project expansion – as committed to in 2005.

All educators, particularly those working in DEIS schools, are concerned that the educational attainment gap will have widened considerably over the recent periods of school closure due to COVID-19. Disadvantaged students who may already have been dealing with major challenges are at particular risk of falling behind even further.

The extra supports that school libraries and school librarians can offer to students in DEIS schools are now more important than ever. While the Government stalls on the promised expansion of the JCSP Demonstration Library Project, most fee-paying secondary schools have libraries that are staffed with fully qualified librarians. Not acting on the promised roll-out of libraries for more DEIS schools widens the educational advantage gap even further.

LAI School Library Group Committee

16th March 2022

<https://www.libraryassociation.ie/school-libraries-group/>

For more information see the JCSP Demonstration Library Project Charter [here](#)