

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

March 8, 1929

Miss Grace E. Barneberg
550 Dana Street
San Luis Obispo, Calif.

Dear Miss Barneberg:

Your idea with reference to the establishment of a central library to answer the great need of reading and such in the different state institutions is indeed a very splendid and commendable one. The proper selection and the careful study of books carried on in a central place and availing the inmates of the various institutions the great opportunity of reading suitable books would mean a step in advance.

With the deaf child, however, where the most difficult problem is the acquisition and comprehension of language, the use of library books, reading material, and the habits of beneficial reading are of greatest importance. The work with the deaf is special and requires intimate understanding to appreciate some of the difficulties common only to the education of the deaf.

Our Library is carefully selected and the books are arranged according to the reading ability of deaf children, who as a rule are three to five years behind the normal hearing child in language comprehension. This can be readily appreciated when one considers what a great handicap the loss of hearing is. Hearing is the normal avenue for instruction and without this means the individual has almost insurmountable obstacles to overcome in the way of acquiring language, which is so essential to one's growth and development.

From this you can understand how difficult it would be to arrange for suitable reading for a school such as ours. It cannot be done from the outside. The selection and the use of suitable books for the different groups of our children make up one

of our most serious problems. We as a profession are still struggling to better our selection and to improve the deaf child's comprehension of language.

Your thought and consideration of us in this respect are much appreciated nevertheless. We sincerely hope you are successful in your project. We are sorry that we cannot join your efforts.

Thanking you again for your interest and wishing you success in your worthwhile endeavor, I am

Sincerely,

Elwood A. Stevenson
Principal

EAS:VE
ENC.

1. Have those under your care a library? *Yes*
2. How many books? *9,000*
3. How supplied? *By donation and purchase*
4. In charge of a trained librarian? *Yes*
5. If no library, what reading is supplied and from what source?

X

6. What is the character of the books:

Haphazard?

Well selected with a view to the needs of the users? *Yes*

Done with great pains

7. Would you favor a branch library of the State Library cared for by a trained librarian who could properly guide the readers?

Should be a splendid idea, but as I have already explained would not be workable in a school such as School for the Deaf.

8. Remarks:

Letter accompanying explains very carefully our situation

Edward A. Stetson
Principal

School for the Deaf -
Berkeley, Cal

8/9/29