

Extending The Classroom:

The Library Learning Commons

A Curriculum Support Document – 2018



Education and Early Childhood Development

***Department of Education and Early
Childhood Development***

Mission Statement

*The Department of Education and Early Childhood
Development will improve provincial early childhood learning
and the K-12 education system to further opportunities for
the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.*

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Acknowledgements

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for Newfoundland and Labrador gratefully acknowledges the contribution of the following committee members in the completion of *Extending the Classroom: The Library Learning Commons*:

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Section 1: The Library Learning Commons

Introduction

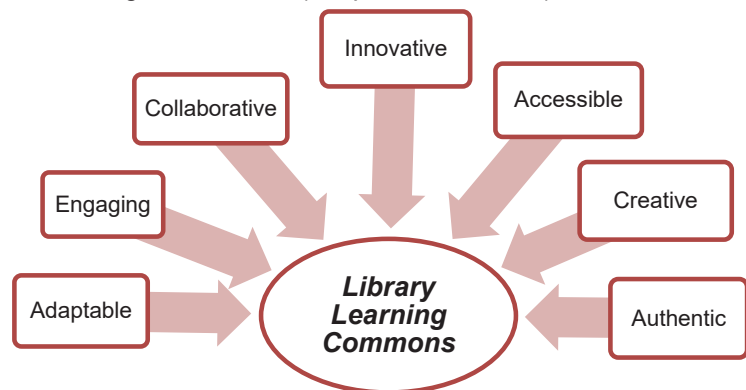
The Library Learning Commons

The title, Library Learning Commons (LLC), is interchangeable throughout this document. It may also be referred to as LLC, Library, Learning Commons, and/or Commons.

A school library learning commons (LLC) involves a *whole school* approach, presenting exciting opportunities for collaboration among all curriculum areas and within the school community. Within a library learning commons, new relationships are formed among learners, new technologies are realized and utilized, and both students and educators grasp new ways to learn. A library learning commons provides opportunities for participatory learning in an authentic environment. It is a physical and virtual environment within the school which becomes a flexible, active hub for both collaborative and independent learning.

The school library plays an essential role in the implementation of this innovative vision for education. Each member of the school community plays an important role in creating a space that inspires students to actively engage in their learning.

A library learning commons approach is based upon a cross-curricular perspective that recognizes literacy, numeracy, knowledge, thinking, communication, and application as foundations for learning how to learn (adapted from OSLA).



"A Learning Commons is about common physical and virtual places to experiment, practice, celebrate, learn, work and play...it is more than a room...it is about changing school culture and about transforming the way learning and teaching occurs."

(Koechlin, Rosenfeld, and Loertscher, 2010, 9)

The library learning commons

- adapts to the needs and configuration of students and the school;
- encourages collaboration among students and teachers;
- focuses on the 4Cs (collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creative thinking);
- helps develop technological, teamwork, and leadership skills;
- maximizes use of an accessible library space;
- promotes engagement of all learners;
- provides opportunities for students to adapt and to learn how to learn in authentic environments;
- provides physical and virtual spaces where learners make meaningful connections through investigation, experimentation, research, and reading; and
- supports a shift from content to process focused education.

Purpose and Rationale

"We have gone from being a warehouse of books to a busy, vibrant place for students and faculty to gather and learn in a connected and collaborative environment."

(Cicchetti, 2010, 52)

As society continues to experience a pedagogical shift in learning, students are provided with more opportunities to make connections, collaborate, communicate, think critically, and be creative. Their learning is purposeful, authentic, active, and student centered. The school library is a vital part of any school community. It is because of changing pedagogy that many schools are using the school library and other spaces as a starting point to reinventing themselves to better serve all stakeholders. *Extending the Classroom: The Library Learning Commons* offers guidance for schools who wish to learn more about the LLC approach. Focus is on student learning competencies and teacher practice and pedagogy, as well as professional learning resources for teachers.

The LLC approach compliments the Newfoundland and Labrador curriculum which is organized by outcomes and is based on *The Atlantic Canada Framework for Essential Graduation Learning in Schools* (1997). Essential Graduation Learnings (EGLS) offer clear goals for education by describing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes expected of all students who graduate from high school. The LLC approach helps students make connections and develop abilities that will empower them to learn how to learn as they meet the shifting and ongoing demands of life, work, and study.

Standards of Practice

The Canadian Library Association (CLA) promotes five core standards of practice for school library learning commons in Canada. These standards may be used to "guide the transformation of school libraries to create future-oriented hubs of learning, innovation, and knowledge creation" (Leading Learning, 2014, 4). They include

- advancing the learning community to achieve school goals;
- cultivating effective instructional design to co-plan, teach, and assess learning;
- designing learning environments to support participatory learning;
- facilitating collaborative engagement to cultivate and empower a community of learners; and
- fostering literacies to empower life-long learners.

(Leading Learning, 2014, 8)



These standards focus on key concepts that drive teaching and learning practices within a library learning commons. The CLA provides transitional growth stages for the development of an LLC. The following chart outlines these stages.

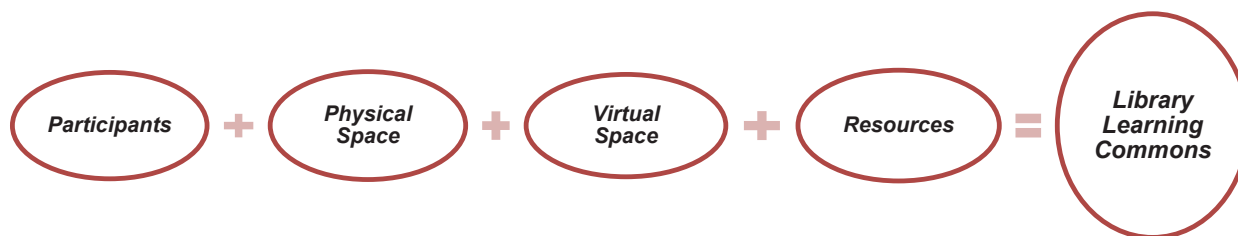
These terms indicate the transitional growth stages of a Library Learning Commons:



From: Leading Learning, Standards of Practice for School Library Learning Commons in Canada, Canadian Library Association, (2014).

What it Looks Like in Our Schools

Several key components must be in place in order to design and implement a successful library program. These include:



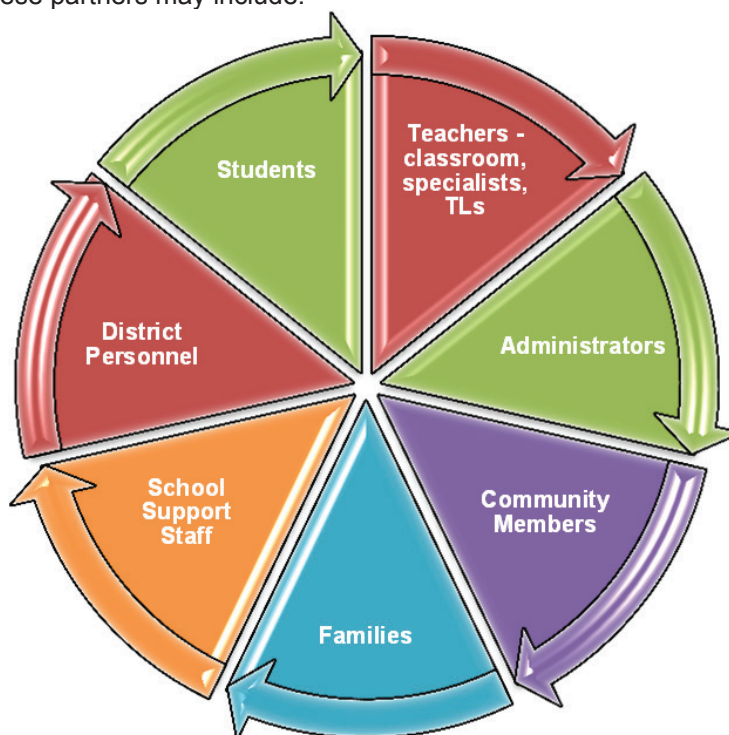
Appendix A: LLC
Planning Template

Participants

The library learning commons is designed to include all members of the school community as partners in learning. All partners build on their personal and school strengths collectively. The teacher librarian (TL) is an active teacher, one who offers expertise to help facilitate change and oversee the daily functioning of the space. The TL collaborates with classroom teachers to plan and facilitate cross-curricular learning experiences.

Many schools have teacher librarians who are also classroom teachers. They are not always physically available to the many students who make use of the LLC; therefore, schools may develop a team approach to facilitate the development of their space. It is important to encourage shared responsibility for both the creation and the operation of the learning environment. In some instances, it may be advantageous for a committee to oversee the planning and general operation while other partners assist with development ideas and daily running.

These partners may include:



"We wanted to make the space a 'third space', different from home and different from a classroom, all the while ensuring that we were supporting and extending what was happening in the classroom."

(Mueller, 2015, 14)

Physical Space



Physical space is designed to be welcoming and flexible. The school library is an ideal location for a flexible learning commons; however, such a space is not always available. Another area of the school or a combination of several areas within the school may provide students with spaces to work both independently and collaboratively. Physical space is designed to accommodate diverse learners and a variety of group configurations. To ensure students see themselves in the space, they must have opportunities to provide input into how it is designed. Visual clutter can lead to distraction and disruption, especially for those who are susceptible to sensory overload; therefore, it is important to consider all components of the space. Colours, materials, and layout impact how students behave and interact with their environment. Consideration should be given to

- creating attractive and functional storage areas;
- finding ways to avoid clutter;
- using natural objects and materials as well as invitations and provocations to enhance learning;
- adding soft, neutral colours; and
- displaying student created visuals (consider how walls can be used effectively as part of an educational environment).

Physically setting up a safe, inclusive, accessible space may be accomplished by moving any available excess furniture to a common area(s). Consider features associated with room layout:

- accessible bookshelves
- accessible technology
- collaborative teacher space
- comfortable seating
- independent/collaborative student spaces
- listening equipment
- makerspace
- movable tables
- reading spaces
- recording equipment
- tutoring table/booth



Within the physical space, support for projects involving computers and other digital devices can be accomplished by

- ensuring accessibility for all students;
- including appropriate software to meet the needs of all students;
- including computers for individual and collaborative use;
- including an interactive white board;
- providing access to a printer, charging stations, and Wi-Fi;
- providing dedicated computer stations for specialized projects (e.g., video editing, robotics); and
- setting up a digital production center (cameras and computer equipment for editing and video creation).

"The Learning Commons creates virtual spaces that are flexible and inviting. It helps students view learning as a life pursuit."

(Ontario School Library Association, 2010, 8)

Virtual Space

A virtual learning commons (VLC) is a digital learning community. Both students and teachers "collaborate to establish the VLC as a place where individuals and groups are actively learning, communicating, and building together in real time. This participatory community of learners is powered by software which allows many contributors, and it is as public or private as the school wishes it to be" (Loertscher, Koechlin, and Rosenfeld, 2012, 2). Students and teachers have limitless access to an online presence for learning. This may include

- access to databases and NL Public Library collections (a NL Public Library card will provide access to a digital library and numerous other resources);
- access to and support for educational uses of social media (e.g., Tumblr®, Twitter®, Instagram®, Pinterest®);
- access to teacher sites that include tutorials, assignments, and resources;
- a focus on online resources and databases (e.g., magazine databases, encyclopedias, approved links); and/or
- virtual communication (e.g., Google Drive®, email, Skype®, flipped classrooms).

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) will provide a range of recommendations for making online content more accessible.

Library Collection: Development and Maintenance

The library collection includes print materials and a variety of other resources that are necessary to make the environment engaging and useful. They may include

- a wide selection of reading material (e.g., fiction, nonfiction, magazines, posters, digital texts, and virtual library);
- alternate format materials;
- e-readers and tablets;
- exemplars made available at the writing station;
- professional learning (PL) for teachers;
- supply station (e.g., markers, paper, artistic tools); and/or
- visual representations of advertisements, art, etc.

Collection maintenance is important for any library space. Books and other resources must be maintained and updated on a regular basis. Ensuring that students have access to current, engaging reading materials can be accomplished by

- canvassing student preferences,
- keeping magazine renewals (for student interest and for teacher PL) up to date,
- organizing promotions such as book fairs,
- providing easy access for requests (for students and teachers), and/or
- setting up a 'teaser' shelf or table at the entrance to the LLC.



Differences at a Glance

Differences between a more traditional learning resource centre (LRC) and a library learning commons (LLC) may include those outlined below.

| Traditional Learning Resource Centre | Library Learning Commons |
|--|--|
| Fixed shelves and furniture, populated by print materials | Movable furniture, low shelves (unless on perimeter), multiple spaces, diverse collection of texts (print, digital, and multimedia) |
| Generic wall displays | Wall displays showcasing student strengths and successes |
| Computers housed in a separate room | Computers and mobile devices available to individuals and groups |
| One class at a time uses the space | More than one class at a time, students from two or three classes, or a couple of students from several different classes moving in and out, working collaboratively |
| Space is open during scheduled class time only | Access at recess, lunch, and after school, as well as student access to virtual learning commons (during and after school hours) |
| Consists primarily of print resources | A balance of digital and print resources that are engaging and current |
| Teachers plan for their own classes when accessing the library | Teachers collaborate with other teachers or with other partners to plan subject based and cross-curricular activities |
| All students work on the same task | A variety of tasks are underway using a range of resources |
| Main activity is book borrowing | Space is utilized by a variety of groups (e.g., teacher PL, community visitors, guest speakers), and for a variety of activities (e.g., grade level assemblies) |
| In school access to library collection only | Web based access to library collection, databases, book recommendations, etc. |

Adapted from: Together for Learning: School Libraries and the Emergence of the Learning Commons, (OSLA), (2010)

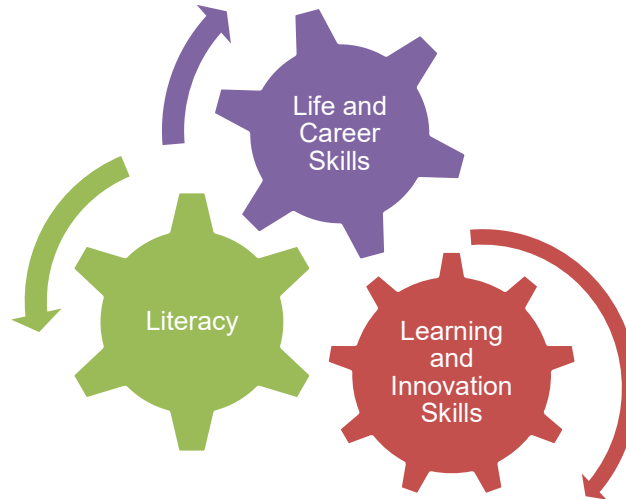
Section 2: Student Learning Competencies

Learning Skills

A library learning commons provides opportunities for growth and skill development. Students will draw upon previous knowledge attained as they continue to develop learning competencies.

"To become independent learners, students must gain not only the skills, but also the disposition to use these skills, along with an understanding of their own responsibilities and self-assessment strategies. Combined, these four elements build a learner who can thrive in a complex information environment."

(Standards for the 21st century Learner, AASL, 2)



Student learning competencies encompass three broad areas which are then further subdivided:

- **Learning and Innovation Skills** – Learning and innovation skills enhance a person's ability to learn, create new ideas, problem solve, and collaborate. These skills will help foster lifelong learning:
 - Collaboration
 - Communication
 - Creative Thinking
 - Critical Thinking
- **Literacy** – Literacy is a process of receiving information and making meaning from it as well as having the ability to identify, understand, interpret, communicate, compute, and create texts, images, and sounds. This includes three components:
 - Information and Communication Technology Literacy
 - Numeracy
 - Reading and Writing
- **Life and Career Skills** – Life and career skills are skills that address leadership, the interpersonal, and the affective. These skills are crucial in today's emerging world:
 - Flexibility and Adaptability
 - Initiative and Self-Direction
 - Leadership and Responsibility
 - Productivity and Accountability
 - Social and Cross-Cultural Skills



Inquiry

The essence of inquiry ...

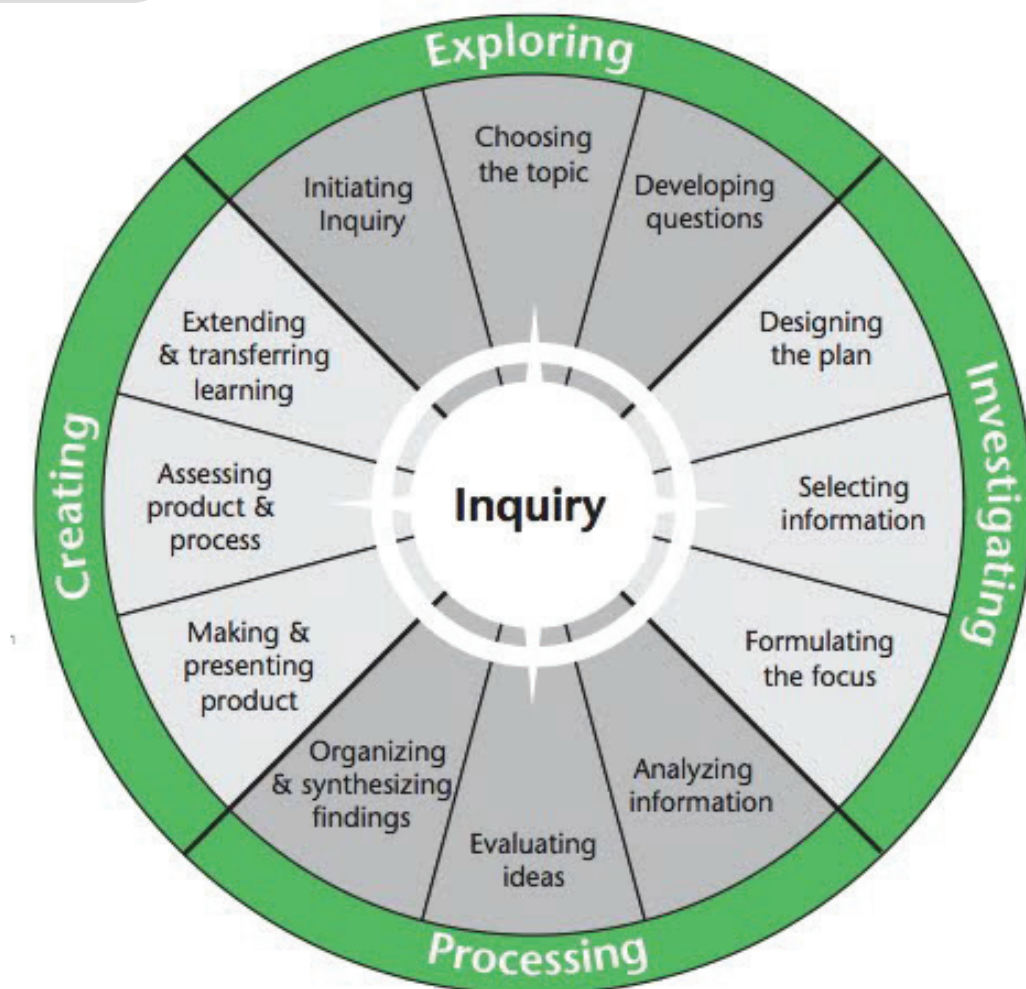
"Inquiry ... requires more than simply answering questions or getting a right answer. It espouses investigation, exploration, search, quest, research, pursuit, and study. It is enhanced by involvement with a community of learners, each learning from the other in social interaction."

(Kuklthau, Maniotes & Caspari, 2007, p. 2)

The library learning commons is a vibrant and energetic environment where inquiry is fundamental to the development of all other skills. Inquiry focuses on learning new information that is useful and applicable; it involves posing questions and developing explanations for phenomena. Students become risk takers, yet know when to seek guidance. Teachers should guide students to use inquiry in all aspects of their learning as they explore, investigate, process, and create.

Teacher librarians and classroom teachers collaborate to facilitate student inquiry that is rich in experience and reward. Classroom teachers contribute important knowledge of subject content and student needs while teacher librarians contribute knowledge of available resources and strategies to help students build inquiry skills.

The graphic below outlines a model for inquiry that can be adapted for use with students.



A Model for Inquiry : Ontario School Library Association

Section 3: Teaching Practice and Pedagogy

Developing and Maintaining a Library Learning Commons

The Emerging Commons

Planning and developing a library learning commons is a school community initiative and should be part of the school development plan. All stakeholders should agree that it is a priority even though all may not immediately act as leaders or even participants.

Each school must have a culture which supports both independent and collaborative learning. Members of the school community will collaboratively plan how to use the learning commons to facilitate that learning while addressing curriculum outcomes. Design and use of the LLC will be unique to each school. This will be based on factors such as student needs and interests, availability of teacher librarians, teacher and administrative support, community partnerships, school configuration, location, and student population.

A successful LLC includes inquiry-based learning, is project based, and involves embedded learning experiences throughout the school.

Three key elements are necessary in order to program for success:



Initial Support includes

- a dedicated implementation team,
- careful direction and monitoring, and
- stakeholder support.

Program Expectations includes

- realistic goals,
- time considerations, and
- meeting of curriculum outcomes.

Resource Availability includes

- involvement of the community,
- movement of resources to a central location, and
- identification of school assets and challenges.

Initial Support



Implementation Team

This is not a solo process. The whole school community may be part of the planning process. It is important to work with the larger school community to gather support in the beginning stages. In schools where teacher librarians are also classroom or specialist teachers, it is important to promote, during all stages, a shared responsibility for the LLC.

Direction and Monitoring

During development, all participants need to be aware of the purpose of the changes as well as the goals that have been set. The school development process can assist with setting direction and evaluating each step along the way.

Stakeholder Support

The school community should be aware of what is happening and more importantly, why it is happening. Regular school community updates regarding any changes within the culture of the school will continue to build interest in and support for new initiatives.

Program Expectations

Realistic Goals

It must be understood that this process is a larger cultural change within a school. It is unique to each school and may be a multi-year process. Attainable and measurable goals should be set. Realistically, a school may set and attain one goal at a time rather than attempting multiple goals at once. Timing is dependent on availability of and access to personnel and physical resources. Strengths and challenges should be evaluated to ensure that choices are being made with the culture and needs of the school community in mind.

Time Considerations

Planning time, teacher schedules, and teacher allocation must be considered. Each school will have different staff numbers and different teacher librarian allocations. A teacher librarian may lead a team towards a LLC transition but all team members will need to consider time for collaboration and planning.

Curriculum Outcomes

In all stages of planning, curriculum outcomes and course goals must be at the forefront. Implementation team members should consult with all applicable staff members and pertinent district personnel to ensure that curriculum outcomes are addressed.

Appendices

- B: Collaborative Planning Guide
- C: Cross-Curricular Planning Template
- D: Sample Curriculum Support Plan

Resource Availability

"Participatory learning includes the many ways that learners (of any age) use new technologies to participate in virtual communities where they share ideas, comment on one another's projects, and plan, design, implement, advance, or simply discuss their practices, goals, and ideas together."

(Davidson and Theo, 2010, 12)

Community Involvement

The use of student and community volunteers will provide valuable support to the development and operation of the LLC. Direct recruitment of volunteers has proven successful in daily operations and will help to promote the program. In addition, partnerships formed within the community can be very helpful.

Physical Resources

An initial goal of the planning committee will be to determine a space within the school that can be used for the LLC. This space should be one that is accessible to all students, can be utilized by larger groups, can easily house technological requirements and physical resources, and can be transformed to meet many needs. In many schools, the library is uniquely equipped to serve this purpose. In schools where such a space is not available, consideration should be given to using smaller, multiple spaces. This may be sections of classrooms or the end of a hallway. Once a space is identified, some useful resources should also be chosen for that site. Resources may continue to be housed in other locations throughout the school as well in order for all students to have continued access.

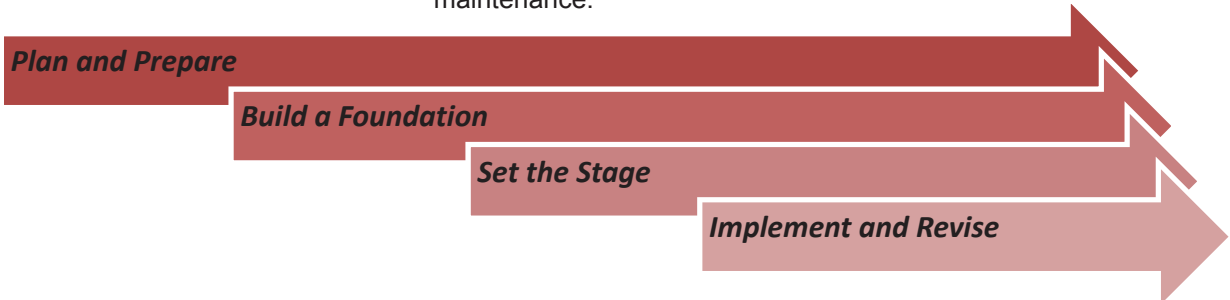
Assets and Challenges

Every school is unique, with a variety of both assets and challenges. The implementation team must determine the best use of assets as well as the focus of their collection, development, and maintenance.



Developing and Maintaining

A library learning commons is not a product that has a beginning and an end. It is an interactive, supportive, adaptable space that continues to change and develop as each school evolves. Four general phases are considered necessary for its development and maintenance.



Appendix E:

- Start-up and Year-end Checklist

Phase 1: Plan and Prepare

- Change the physical space; when it looks different, everyone knows that something different is happening. Ask: What is possible? What do you have? What would you like to have?
- Determine how staff members are currently using the library space and ask how they would like to see it being used; determine whether additional spaces are available for use in case groups or individuals need either a space that is quiet or one that offers more opportunity for louder interactions.
- Develop an action plan; include short and long term goals that are based on the school development plan.
- Ensure that the space is accessible to all students.
- Establish a library learning commons leadership team that represents the school community (staff, students, community).
- In K-6 schools, consult with local early learning services to determine how their spaces enhance creativity and learning.
- Study professional literature to determine how this approach is used in different contexts.



Phase 2: Build a Foundation

- Arrange collaborative planning and teaching times based on schedules.
- Contact other schools to learn how they use their learning commons.
- Expand the library learning commons community to inform and include more families.
- Explore creative solutions to ensure that the learning commons is available to students and staff for the entire school day.
- Form partnerships with groups who may be able to offer support (e.g., NL Public Libraries, NLTA Teacher Librarians Special Interest Council, The Literacy Foundation, service groups).
- Participate in professional learning communities (e.g., EECD Professional Learning Site, Teacher Librarian Google Group, teacher led professional development).
- Provide professional learning for staff and invite staff members to act as team leaders.

"It is to be emphasized that the transformation from school library to the learning commons perspective is a 'whole school' transformation. Thus the integral work around learning and teaching should not be viewed as 'extra work' or needing 'extra time' but inherent and vital to the support and growth of the whole school development plan."

(Leading Learning, CLA, 2014, 22)

Phase 3: Set the Stage

- Arrange furniture so the space is open, modern, accessible, and welcoming. Students should feel an immediate connection and a sense of belonging over time.
- Consider buying new print resources.
- Encourage students to create wall murals and posters and to offer suggestions for the space.
- Ensure that a plan is in place to catalogue and circulate library materials.
- Make connections with other teachers to collaboratively meet curriculum outcomes; consider cross-curricular approaches.
- Promote use of the space (e.g., fact-sheet, web page).
- Revive and update existing library collection; keep relevant books (involve students, staff, and families in decisions regarding resources to keep and those that are needed).

Phase 4: Implement and Revise

- Be prepared that unanticipated changes may need to occur as the learning commons evolves; embrace change as a part of necessary growth rather than as weakness or failure.
- Conduct regular learner surveys to determine changes that are working and those that are not.
- Develop a checklist that informs how well learner needs are being met.



Planning and Leading Transitions

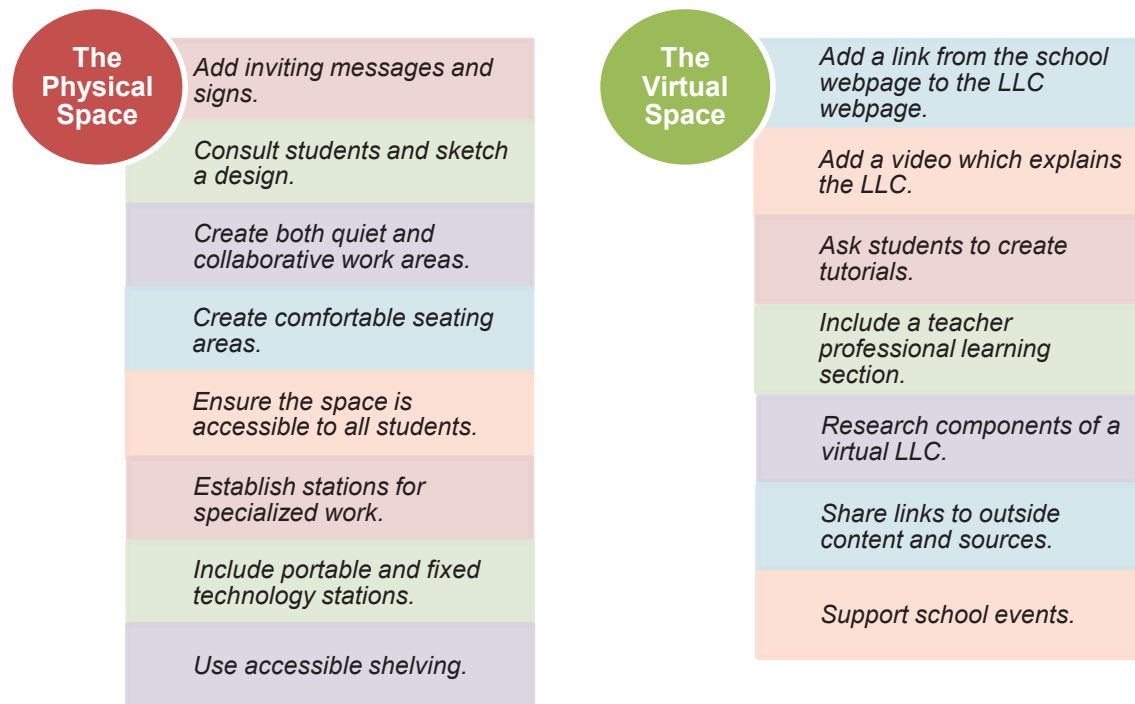
During the initial stages of development, realistic expectations must be considered. In many cases, individual schools will already embrace and use some or all of the strategies needed to carry out an effective transition. For example, many schools will need minimal physical changes, some will have current reading materials, others will have classes who work well across curriculum areas, and yet others will have peer tutoring available at lunch time and after school. The key is to bring these and other good practices together into a space (or spaces) that can be used and supported by all. Organization may take several forms. A three-year plan is a realistic way of developing a learning commons. In this case, it may be beneficial to use a planning template such as the one below.

| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 |
|---|--------|--------|--------|
| Transitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical changes • schedule changes | | | |
| Timelines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monthly • yearly | | | |
| Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • action items | | | |
| Responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student • staff • community • outside partners | | | |
| Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • budget • time • people | | | |
| Indicators of Success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • surveys • interviews • assessments | | | |

Adapted from: Koechlin, C., Loertscher, D., and Rosenfeld, E. (2010). *Building a Learning Commons: A Guide for School Administrators and Learning Leadership Teams*. Salt Lake City, UT: Hi Willow research and Publishing

Achieving Change

Achieving lasting change must consist of small steps and will take time. Each school must plan changes based on available resources. The actual space will be comprised of physical and virtual areas. The physical area will provide a welcoming atmosphere while the virtual area will provide live and digital interactions between students within and outside the school building. Tips for achieving change are outlined in the chart below.



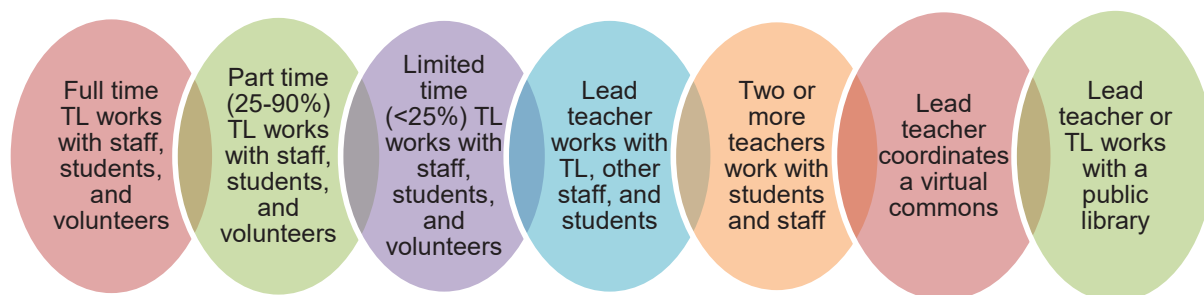
Adapted from: Leading Learning, Standards of Practice for School Library Learning Commons in Canada, Canadian Library Association (2014).



Maximizing Potential

While a virtual LLC can be accessed by students from their classroom, from a mobile device, or from home, it is challenging for a physical LLC to be open and available for the whole day. Each school is unique based on its student needs and interests, grade configuration, geographical location, scheduling demands, and available resources.

In many schools, the teacher librarian will lead the transition; however, support is needed from all stakeholders. Having a strong community volunteer base will build capacity and help form new partnerships. In many cases, students within the school community will act as leaders and will offer their time to help organize and run the physical space, add content to the virtual commons, and tutor outside of class time. In other schools, one or more teachers may take on the role of lead teacher(s) and support one or more specific components (e.g., create a virtual commons, coordinate scheduling and collaborative opportunities). In all schools, strong administrative support for the initiative is essential. One of the following scenarios may apply to each school:



Behind the Scenes

As part of a school team, the teacher librarian plays an integral role in laying the groundwork for a successful learning environment. Day-to-day operations are common to most.

Collaborative Planning

- May include team/co-teaching or resource development

Resource Based Unit Development

- May include researching, writing, scheduling, teaching

Scheduling

- May include developing creative scheduling practices to ensure maximum use and efficiency; TLs and teachers may collaborate to schedule (an accessible calendar will allow for efficient organization of time)

Volunteer Recruitment

- May include circulation, shelving, cataloguing, displays, book fairs, book repairs

Collection Development

- May include selection of print and non-print resources, ordering, discarding/weeding, making hardware and software accessible, organizing library materials

Circulation Database Maintenance

- May include cataloguing materials, generating overdue notices, collecting overdue books

Appendices

- *F: Team Teaching Models*
- *G: Scheduling*
- *H: Weeding the Collection*
- *I: Partner Flyer*
- *J: Sample Volunteer Letter*

Teaching Practices, Strategies, and Activities

Cross-Curricular Approaches: What is Happening?

When planning, teachers often collaborate with other teachers from the same or from a different curriculum area. The LLC offers a space and therefore an opportunity for students to work alongside peers who are working on a different topic or within a different curriculum area.

Use formal and informal assessments to measure success of tasks completed. This may range from longer surveys to quick exit card activities.

| Cross-Curricular Approaches: What is happening? <i>Any combination of activities may occur</i> | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| Activity | What Students are Doing | What Teachers are Doing | What Teacher Librarians are Doing | Student Result |
| Reading and Viewing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> choosing fiction and nonfiction texts for different purposes choosing texts based on a topic or genre choosing texts based on interests sharing information sitting comfortably (individually or in groups) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> listening to and discussing students' reading modelling reading/viewing guiding reading | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> supporting reading instruction canvassing students for purchasing suggestions showing how to use the library | Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a love for reading/viewing experience incidental learning read about topics they like at their own pace without further expectations |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> co-teaching guiding students as they choose reading/viewing material sharing book talks facilitating the use of alternate format materials | | |
| Listening | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> listening to a presenter listening to audio books or podcasts listening to peers share a project, book, or experience using websites to learn French, Spanish, etc., pronunciation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> supporting students in audio choices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> facilitating presentations signing out audio books and equipment | Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> become active listeners make critical decisions based on what they have heard |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> participating in discussion (may be student or teacher led) | | |
| Collaborating | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> working on a task with classmates working on different topics/tasks with groups of students from different classes in the same space working with other students virtually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> co-teaching collaborating with other teachers conferencing with students working with volunteers (e.g., as they facilitate presentations, read to/with students, or help in some other way) | | Students will develop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> collaboration skills leadership skills team building skills |

| Activity | What Students are Doing | What Teachers are Doing | What Teacher Librarians are Doing | Student Result |
|-----------------------|---|---|--|---|
| Working Independently | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> building skills associated with independent work developing personal interests working on personal writing/research | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> conferencing with students monitoring student writing, research, etc. supporting students as they learn independent work skills | | Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop independence and confidence |
| Inquiring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> investigating topics both informally (e.g., personal interest) and formally using various devices, books, magazines, people, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> guiding and conferencing with students helping students find resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> helping students and teachers find resources teaching research skills teaching information literacy skills | Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop critical thinking skills |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> modelling research and inquiry processes helping students effectively use resources | | |
| Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> writing for a specific purpose writing for pleasure writing independently or collaboratively writing through different mediums | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> conferencing with students co-teaching collaborating with other teachers helping students select and use technology modelling writing working with small and larger groups of students | | Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> strengthen writing skills develop writing enjoyment match writing style with purpose |
| Tutoring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> listening to/viewing online tutorials peer tutoring during lunch or after school (e.g., an assignment) tutoring or being tutored (either planned or unplanned/informal) using prepared tutorials via a handout | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adding curriculum related videos to the virtual learning commons monitoring peer conferencing and peer tutoring suggesting or providing resources (e.g., links, paper copies, resource people) | | Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop leadership skills welcome help from others |
| Sharing/ Presenting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> formal sharing in small or large groups using part or all of the commons informal sharing through discussions, small groups, visual displays, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> providing opportunities for self-reflection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> presenting a variety of ways to "show what you know" | Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> become better presenters develop metacognitive skills |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> facilitating and participating | | |

Section 4: FAQs and Resources

Frequently asked Questions (FAQs)

"What we want is to see the child in pursuit of knowledge, and not knowledge in pursuit of the child."

George Bernard Shaw



What research supports the library learning commons approach?

In 2014 The Canadian Library Association published 'Leading Learning: Standards of Practice of School Library Learning Commons in Canada'. This document, and others are listed on the References page.

Who should lead the transformation from traditional library to library learning commons?

Leadership will depend on the school. In larger schools, this may be the teacher librarian, while in smaller schools, one or more classroom teachers or classroom teachers and the teacher librarian may work together.

Why is support of the school administrator necessary?

A library learning commons can transform the learning culture of a school. Administrator support is necessary in order for the pedagogy and school's cultural changes to be viable.

What do I do if there is little support for the development of a library learning commons?

Determine what aspects of a library learning commons will fit into what you are currently doing and that you can viably do in your day to day job. Incorporate what you can to enhance the learning of your students. Small steps are important.

How can students play a role in development and maintenance?

Students can be an ally in evaluating and selecting resources to purchase. They can offer ideas that help develop the library learning commons into a place that is safe and welcoming for all.

FAQs Continued

What kind of professional learning is available to assist schools?

There are online communities that support schools when creating a library learning commons. Connecting with peers who are also moving in the same direction will be beneficial for both.

How is a library learning commons different from many current learning resource centres?

A library learning commons is often more interactive than a traditional learning resource centre. The school has made a commitment to provide a space that is student centered. Staff members focus on cross-curricular and collaborative activities and a variety of tasks are being completed using a range of resources.

How is the library learning commons connected to current skill development?

A library learning commons provides opportunities for students to develop learning competencies in the areas of literacy, learning and innovation skills, and life and career skills, all of which are essential learning skills.

How do we measure success of the library learning commons?

Ask the students as well as teaching partners. If students can articulate what they are doing in the library learning commons, collaboration they have experienced, technologies they have used, learning that has taken place, etc., then it is a success. Feedback from teachers will help to determine future plans and goals.

How can the library learning commons strengthen student achievement?

A library learning commons helps promote active participant learning. By changing the way that teachers and students interact, students are building a new understanding of their curriculum. They can then apply their understanding to all facets of their learning.

Resource Links

Resource links to websites and videos related to developing and maintaining a library learning commons can be found on the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's professional learning website. This site can be accessed at <https://www.k12pl.nl.ca/>.

Appendices

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Appendix A: Library Learning Commons Planning Template

The template below may be helpful to teacher librarians and teachers when making broad, long-term plans for the current year and beyond.

| | What I am currently doing | What I want to do | Goals for this year | Goals for next year and beyond |
|--|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Physical & Virtual Space | | | | |
| Facilitating Students | | | | |
| Collaborative Planning: Teachers | | | | |
| Collaborative Planning: Community | | | | |
| Library Collection: Development | | | | |
| Library Collection: Maintenance | | | | |
| Digital Devices | | | | |

Appendix B: Collaborative Planning Guide

The template below may be helpful to teacher librarians and teachers when planning for a specific student learning experience.

| Collaborative Planning Guide | |
|---|---|
| Teacher _____ Date _____ Meeting time(s) _____ | Unit of Study _____ Number of students _____ Projected Unit Timeline _____ |
| Outcomes | Student grouping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Large groups • Pairs • Small groups |
| Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher • Teacher Librarian • Peer • Self | Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anecdotal • Checklist • Formative • Grade • Rubric • Self-evaluation • Summative • Other |
| Culminating Task | |
| Anticipated Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiction • Internet • Nonfiction • Online databases • Reference • Tablets/computers • Videos • Other | Sample Lessons and Supports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APA /MLA Style Guide • Book talks • Brochure and newsletter design • Debate preparations • Informational writing outlines • Note-taking • Online database searches • Presentation tips • Website evaluation • Other |
| Notes | |

Appendix C: Cross-Curricular Planning Template

The template below may be helpful when independently or collaboratively planning cross-curricular student learning experiences.

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| Unit/Lesson Title | | Grade Level | |
| Subject(s) | | Time-frame | |

Big Ideas

| Goals and Curriculum Expectations (outcomes, essential questions, related content, and culminating task) | |
|---|---|
| | |
| Knowledge/Concepts (that students will acquire) | Skills/Competencies (that students will acquire) |
| | |
| Resources, Materials, and Space (needed for tasks) | Responsibilities (teacher, TL, etc.) |
| | |

Appendix C: Cross-Curricular Planning Template (continued)

| Making Connections | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|
| What activation activities will best determine prior knowledge? What instruction will take place? How can students help plan learning and assessment? What questions will students need to answer? How can instruction be differentiated? | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Learning Checkpoints (scaffolded strategies and activities to support student learning) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Checkpoint 1 | Checkpoint 2 | Checkpoint 3 | Checkpoint 4 | Checkpoint 5 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Student Assessment and Reflection</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Self-Assessment and Reflection</th> <th>Peer and Teacher Assessment</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="height: 150px;"></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | | | | Student Assessment and Reflection | | Self-Assessment and Reflection | Peer and Teacher Assessment | | |
| Student Assessment and Reflection | | | | | | | | | | |
| Self-Assessment and Reflection | Peer and Teacher Assessment | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Unit Evaluation | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |

Appendix D: Sample Curriculum Support Plan

A curriculum support plan is an important component that can guide the work of teacher librarians. This plan can help a TL organize a cycle, a month, or several months. It is important that TLs not feel overwhelmed with numerous responsibilities and tasks.

| | | | |
|---------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| Subject | | Grade Level | |
| Developed By | | | |

| | September | October | November | December → |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|
| Grade | | | | |
| Grade 1 | Big Ideas/Topics | Big Ideas/Topics | Big Ideas/Topics | Big Ideas/Topics |
| | Lessons/ Collaborative Units | Lessons/ Collaborative Units | Lessons/ Collaborative Units | Lessons/ Collaborative Units |
| | Resources | Resources | Resources | Resources |

Appendix E: Start-up and Year-end Checklist

The table below includes a sample checklist of library learning commons tasks to be completed at the beginning and end of the school year.

| | Start-up Checklist |
|-----------------------|--|
| LLC Admin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask classes to create posters for the LLC • Contact families regarding volunteering • Coordinate a student tech team • Create labels for classroom circulation bins • Delete from cataloguing program, students who have moved to another school • Email staff conference regarding availability of resources, schedules, etc. • Enter names of new students into cataloguing program • Finalize LLC schedule – set up reading clubs, set peer reading time, etc. • Meet with teachers to share library offerings, flexible schedules, calendars, etc. • Process and catalogue any new items • Set up book and magazine displays • Shelve or bin books as necessary • Update alternate format materials • Update class and staff lists • Update LLC wall schedule and post wall calendar • Update online subscriptions • Visit classes to share library offerings and book scheduled class times |
| Tablets and Computers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add electronic schedules • Charge carts • Check apps and update per grade level request • Check interactive whiteboard function • Check printer • Check workstations • Ensure charge stations are connected and employed • Post cycle schedule for cart • Post two-cycle fixed and flex schedule |
| Volunteers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edit, print, and distribute volunteer recruitment letter • Email last year's volunteers, update mail list and call replies • Set volunteer orientation date(s) am, pm |
| Other | |

Appendix E: Start-up and Year-end Checklist (continued)

| | Year-end Checklist |
|-----------|--|
| LLC Admin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean/tidy tables, counter, chairs, etc. • Collect classroom circulation bins • Make announcements re: books to be returned • Print and distribute overdue notices • Remove wall displays, etc. • Sort basket books • Wash and store stuffed animals • Weed and store magazines |
| ICT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect and check all tablets and laptops • Make announcements re: leave PCs and peripherals plugged in • Make announcements re: tablets and laptops to be returned with cords and charge blocks • Run tablet updates, etc. • Shut down tablets for summer storage |
| Lab | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask tech team reps to delete grade level drive folders, etc. • Clean lab • Shut down lab PCs • Clean carts and keyboards, etc. |
| Other | |

Appendix F: Team Teaching Models

Teacher librarians and teachers may work together using the six models of co-teaching as outlined in Friend and Cook's *Co-Teaching: Principles, Practices, and Pragmatics* as presented at the New Mexico Public Education Department Quarterly Special Education Meeting, Albuquerque, NM, April 29, 2004.

One Teach, One Observe

One person observes while the other teaches. Teachers decide in advance what types of information are to be gathered during the observation and agree on a system for gathering the data. Afterwards, the teachers jointly analyze the information. That is, observation should be a deliberate part of the lesson, not just incidental checks of student activity.

One Teach, One Drift

One person instructs while the other circulates throughout the room providing assistance to students as needed. If both are familiar with the curriculum content, either teacher may lead instruction.

Parallel Teaching

The class is divided into two groups of approximately the same size. Both teachers plan the lesson(s) jointly and teach the same topic simultaneously. This approach gives each teacher an active – but separate – instructional role in the classroom. Students can be strategically placed in the two groups.

Station Teaching (Centres)

Teachers divide students and content. Each teacher then teaches the content to one group and subsequently repeats the instruction for the other group. A third station may be set up for independent work. Rotation through stations can occur during one or several class periods.

Alternative Teaching

One teacher works with the larger group while the other works with a smaller group of students. The larger group completes the lesson while the smaller group either completes an alternative lesson or the same lesson at a different level. This arrangement might take an entire class period or it might be used for just a few minutes at the beginning or end of a lesson. For this approach to be successful, the purpose for the small group and its membership should vary. If both are knowledgeable of the curriculum content, either teacher may lead either group.

Team Teaching

Both teachers are delivering the same instruction at the same time. This is often called “tag team” teaching. This implies that each speaks freely during large-group instruction and moves among all the students in the class. Instruction becomes a conversation, not turn-taking. This co-teaching approach is affected more than any other by individuals’ teaching styles. This is the most interpersonally complex co-teaching approach. When a wide range of abilities exists within a class, this model may be less effective than others.

Appendix G: Scheduling

A flexible LLC schedule is preferable and will allow classroom teachers and teacher librarians time to co-teach. Scheduling of common preparation periods may be helpful for co-planning purposes. The schedule is open so that classroom teachers and TLs can book the LLC depending on time, space, and resources needed for a learning activity. Shaded blocks indicate times the TL is available for co-teaching. More than one class may use the LLC at a time. Small groups, individual students, or classes exchanging books may use the LLC at the same time as another class. The unshaded times may be booked; however the TL is teaching in another class and is not available to co-teach in the LLC at that time.

Sample Flex Schedule.

| Period | Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 | Day 5 | Day 6 | Day 7 |
|-------------|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 8:30-9:00 | | | | | | | |
| 9:00-9:30 | | | | | | | |
| 9:30-10:00 | | | | | | | |
| Recess | LLC open for book exchange | | | | | | |
| 10:15-10:45 | | | | | | | |
| 10:45-11:15 | | | | | | | |
| 11:15-11:45 | | | | | | | |
| Lunch | LLC open; classes will be posted at the beginning of each week | | | | | | |
| 12:30-1:00 | | | | | | | |
| 1:00-1:30 | | | | | | | |
| 1:30-2:00 | | | | | | | |
| 2:00-2:30 | | | | | | | |

Alternatively, a fixed-flex combination schedule may be used. This includes using a fixed schedule during one cycle and a flex schedule during the next. A fixed schedule offers a set time in the LLC for the duration of the school year (i.e., every second cycle). This schedule also provides opportunities for additional groups of students to use the LLC as needed. The shaded blocks indicate the classes that are scheduled with the TL present. During this time, the TL may co-teach full or mini-lessons, and/or work with the classroom teacher to support reading, guide research, assist with book selection, or facilitate other activities that support the curriculum. The unshaded times may be booked as well; however, the TL is teaching in another class and is not available in the LLC at that time.

Sample Fixed Schedule.

| Period | Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 | Day 5 | Day 6 | Day 7 |
|-------------|--|-------|------------|------------|------------|-------|------------|
| 8:30-9:00 | | | | | | | |
| 9:00-9:30 | | | | | | | |
| 9:30-10:00 | | | | | | | |
| Recess | LLC open for book exchange | | | | | | |
| 10:15-10:45 | K-Brown | | 3-Doyle | 2-Williams | 4-Campbell | | |
| 10:45-11:15 | K-Davis | | 3-Power | 2-Jones | 4-Walsh | | |
| 11:15-11:45 | K-Pike | | 3-Saunders | 2-Peddle | 4-Hopkins | | |
| Lunch | LLC open; classes will be posted at the beginning of each week | | | | | | |
| 12:30-1:00 | 1-Snow | | | 5-Baikie | | | Book Clubs |
| 1:00-1:30 | 1-Smith | | | 5-Young | 6-Parker | | Book Clubs |
| 1:30-2:00 | 1-White | | | 5-Reid | 6-Wells | | Book Clubs |
| 2:00-2:30 | | | | | 6-Miller | | Book Clubs |

Appendix H: Weeding the Collection

Weeding

Weeding is the removal of materials (books, periodicals, magazines, videos, etc.) from a library collection in a planned and systematic way. Weeding is an important, ongoing component of collection development that is necessary in order to keep the library learning commons current, engaging, and aesthetically pleasing. Weeding also ensures that the library collection is continuously evaluated for equity issues and stereotyping, it offers quicker access to relevant resources, and offers guidance regarding resources that could or should be added.

Weeding may be informal or ongoing throughout the year; materials are removed from the collection based on their condition upon being returned to the library. Weeding may also be formal; on a regular basis, different sections of the library are targeted.

Procedure

Teacher librarians must develop a weeding procedure that works best for their school and library learning commons; however, some general guidelines are listed below:

- Develop a timeline with a definite goal for evaluating the entire collection
- Inform staff and administration of your plan and the criteria used
- Have carts, recycling bins, boxes, dusters, hand wipes and post-it notes available
- Each book should be evaluated individually
- Delete barcodes from the system

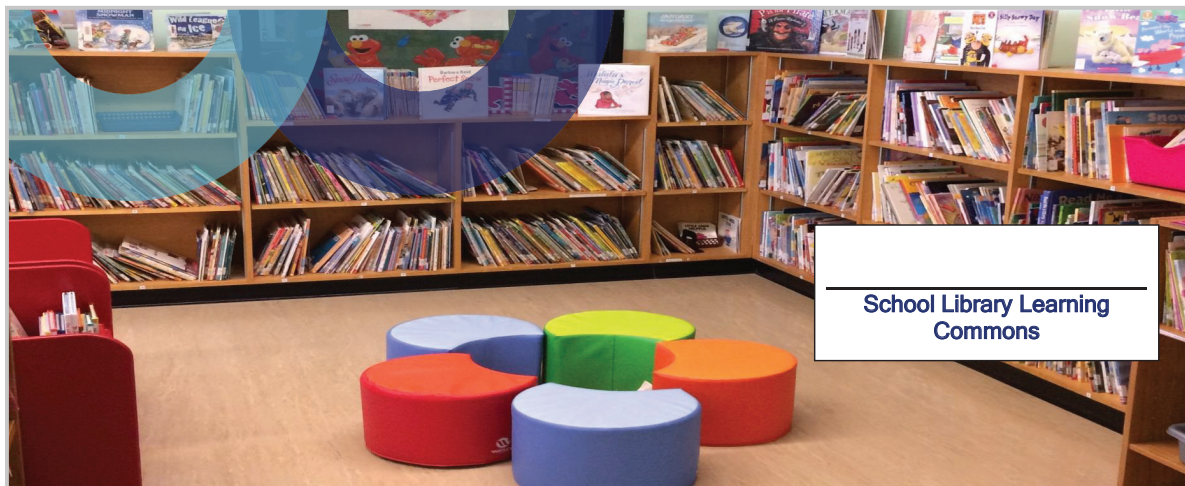
Criteria

Teacher librarians should consider the following criteria when weeding:

- Copyright: Older books and other texts require closer examination for content (including obsolete information and content that includes racial, cultural, or sexual stereotyping)
- Content: Should be relevant to the school needs and provincial curriculum and include accurate information at reading levels appropriate for students in the school
- Physical Condition: Is it worth repairing (e.g., torn, worn, mouldy)? Is it able to be repaired?
- Circulation: How long since it was last signed out?
- Current: Is newer material or information available? Are there duplicate copies?
- Consider keeping valuables such as award winners and classics, student authored texts, local histories, school yearbooks and publications, titles found in curriculum guides, out of print titles that are still useful and relevant.

Appendix I: Partner Flyer

Teachers may consider creating a brochure to distribute to all school staff. This may be a simple letter sized page with information on how a teacher librarian can work with other instructional staff.



**School Library Learning
Commons**

What your School Library Learning Commons can do for you!

Help is available every day in your school library learning commons (LLC). Your teacher librarian is part of the instructional team at _____ and is ready, willing, and trained to help.

A teacher librarian can

- ✓ Adapt materials for students
- ✓ Help produce instructional materials
- ✓ Help teach students to locate, utilize, analyze, and produce information
- ✓ Inform you of new materials and trends
- ✓ Locate materials in a variety of formats
- ✓ Locate resources to support your professional learning goals
- ✓ Plan and teach units and lessons with you
- ✓ Promote a love of reading
- ✓ Provide opportunities for exhibits and displays
- ✓ Suggest instructional materials
- ✓ Support reading instruction
- ✓ Work with small groups of students

You can

- ✓ Ask for materials you can't find
- ✓ Assist students in selecting appropriate reading material and when borrowing books
- ✓ Share topics so the TL can plan complementary read-alouds and activities
- ✓ Inform the TL about units that will require or benefit from use of the LLC
- ✓ Invite the TL to your grade level meetings
- ✓ Make requests in advance when possible
- ✓ Model and promote use of the LLC
- ✓ Monitor student behaviour
- ✓ Participate in the selection of new materials
- ✓ Schedule the use of the LLC by whole classes or small groups

Teacher Librarian:

E-mail:

Appendix J: Sample Volunteer Letter

MEMO TO: School Community Volunteers

FROM: _____, Teacher Librarian

RE: Volunteers for the School Library Learning Commons

DATE: _____

Hello family and community members:

Welcome to another exciting school year at _____.

I would like to share some information about our Library Learning Commons (LLC). Our LLC includes approximately a thousand books, an audio book listening centre, local newspapers, comfortable and flexible seating areas, a selection of magazines, an interactive whiteboard, tablets, and desktop computers. Valuable assistance from volunteers provide our students with an efficient and effective library program. I am looking forward to continuing our success with the help of our volunteers.

Volunteers

- help with book circulation, cataloguing, and weeding
- give presentations in areas related to their expertise
- help run school book fairs
- work with students and teachers from all grade levels while they collaborate in the LLC
- help display student work

As a volunteer in our LLC, you can contribute by participating in any or all of the activities listed above. Your suggestions for improving and enriching the program are encouraged and welcome.

If you have time to donate to the _____ Library Learning Commons and our students, please email me at _____ or fill in the form below. Detach the form and return it to the school.

Thank-you,

School Library Learning Commons Volunteers ~ Please return to _____

Name: _____ Phone Number(s): _____

Time(s) Available: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Comments: _____

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September 2018
ISBN: 978-1-55146-665-1