LEADING LEARNING

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TRANSFORMING SCHOOL LIBRARIES TO LEARNING COMMONS

The broad role of education in the JK-12 sector is to build the capacity of learners to make sense of the world around them, to graduate good citizens in a democratic society, and to prepare our youth for successful careers and healthy, satisfying personal lives. Empowering students to learn 'how-to-learn' and to engage them in continuous self-improvement is the challenge for educators.

Our increasingly networked world presents complexities for learning unknown just a few years ago, but at the same time offers fresh opportunities. Learning in ever-changing environments demands new ways of educating – a focus on inquiry, creative and critical thinking, multiple literacies, and working together to meet shared goals and knowledge building. Evolving learning approaches and definitions of learning success are the new realities, with the consequent need for creating innovative learning environments.

Within almost every school in Canada there is a library facility, poised on the cusp of reinventing itself to address these challenges. This document provides standards to guide the transformation of school libraries to create future-oriented hubs of learning, innovation, and knowledge creation.

The *Standards of practice for school library learning commons in Canada* are framed around five core standards of practice that put school libraries at the centre of school improvement. They are intended as a guide for the journey from the more traditional school library program to the whole-school learning commons approach of participatory learning. The deep and enduring value is realized when the whole school moves through the process together – participants supporting each other and building on each other's thoughts and ideas to push further than each team member could individually. Whereas the focus of the library program in the past was on building strong collections of resources and assisting users to find and use them effectively, the goal now is to build learning communities and make connections among learners, thus facilitating knowledge creation in the school community.

The standards were collaboratively developed over a two year period by a concerned and knowledgeable team, representative of almost every part of Canada. This work is a critical investment in Canada's future.

What is the Reality in Canada?

Shifts in education driven by global realities open up opportunities for school libraries to play a significant role in school improvement through the learning commons transformation. This capacity is growing in some schools across Canada and the standards will help all schools advance. The role and potential of the school library learning commons is rarely covered in teacher pre-service programs or principal preparation training. There are few universities in Canada offering education degrees that have school library related research capabilities. This situation has been documented in a research report *The crisis of school libraries in Canada* (Haycock, 2003). Over twenty years of research shows that student achievement and literacy scores advance where professionally staffed and resourced school libraries are thriving. **School libraries make a difference in student achievement** (International Association of School Librarianship, 2008).

Learners have a right to expect good school libraries in every school in Canada. Our school libraries should reflect our common values of equity, diversity, and cultural identity as well as best approaches in the educational and library professions. They should be contextually relevant to student need and success, and built, cared for, measured, renewed and sustained on an ongoing basis by their learning communities. We should position school libraries to lead learning for the future.

The time to reinvest is now

School libraries could support the changes in K-12 schooling that are needed for schools to be centres of 21st century learning. Many provincial curricula espouse this, but few provinces fund school libraries or even mention school libraries as a force for improving teaching and learning or for responding to the demands of a knowledge-based society.

(Oberg, 2014, 5)

What is a Library Learning Commons?

A learning commons is a whole school approach to building a participatory learning community. The library learning commons is the physical and virtual collaborative learning hub of the school. It is designed to engineer and drive future-oriented learning and teaching throughout the entire school. Inquiry, project/problem-based learning experiences are designed as catalysts for intellectual engagement with information, ideas, thinking, and dialogue. Reading thrives, learning literacies and technology competencies evolve, and critical thinking, creativity, innovation and playing to learn are nourished. Everyone is a learner; everyone is a teacher working collaboratively toward excellence.

Some metaphors for the school library learning commons might be: learning laboratory, idea factory, studio or even "great room" in the school and community.

Looking for references or bibliography?

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A Learning Commons is a common or shared space that is both physical and virtual. It is designed to move students beyond mere research, practice and group work to a greater level of engagement through exploration, experimentation, and collaboration. A Learning Commons is more than a room or a website. A Learning Commons allows users to create their own environments to improve learning. A Learning Commons is about changing school culture, and transforming the way teaching and learning occur.

(Loertscher, Koechlin and Rosenfeld, 2012, 1)

Why a Learning Commons Now?

Many school leaders in Canada already recognize the library learning commons as a sustainable investment in learning for the future.

Focus on Learning – "We would like to make the Learning Commons the "Hub" of learning at Keeler School. We would like to examine ways to make sure that if a parent steps into the Learning Commons, they are immediately struck by the learning that takes place at Keeler School as a whole." **UNFURL – Unraveling new frontiers – Utilizing real learning** Derek Rakowski, Principal of Keeler School, Calgary, Alberta (Rakowski, 2013, 1)

Focus on the Learner – "The learning commons philosophy is a means of increasing student engagement and improving student achievement. The learning commons promotes personalization, inquiry, and the integration of technology through the implementation of innovative curricular design and assessment. This space, which is a blend of physical and virtual environments, transforms teaching and learning by allowing both staff and students to co-create knowledge. Within the learning commons, technology supports the construction of new understandings by the learner rather than the learner passively consuming information." **Learning commons implementation guide** Calgary Board of Education, Alberta (Faber, 2013, 4)

Focus on Pathways – "Offering these differentiated, multidisciplinary approaches to learning will provide pathways for all students to explore, grow, and learn and will help develop an understanding and respect for each other's strengths and interests, which will transfer to the world beyond the walls of Edgewood. Being immersed in this environment in elementary school can only allow for broader, and perhaps clearer, choices for high school and postsecondary endeavours for our 21st century learners." **The creation of the Edgewood experiential lab and learning commons for the 21st-century learner** Tamara Mitchell, Principal, and Fran Potvin-Schafer, Teacher-Librarian, Edgewood Public School, Toronto, ON. (Mitchell and Potvin-Schafer, 2012, 21)

Focus on Collaboration – "The Library is being transformed into a Learning Commons. This means basically an open learning area with access to technology and access to wireless internet. It's a learning area for everyone including teachers and students. Our teacher- librarian collaborates with other teachers to plan lessons and helps teachers to develop best practices and strategies. She has an open door policy for all students……… Our learning commons is a happening place." **View from my school** Sheila Morissette, Principal, Fraser Heights S.S., Surrey, BC. (Morissette, 2014, 1).

Focus on Creativity – "Within the interactivity of today's information environment the library learning commons is naturally positioned to provide learning experiences that take critical thinking to the next level through creativity." **By the Brooks** Anita Brooks Kirkland, Consultant for K-12 Libraries, Waterloo Region D.S.B., Ontario. (Brooks Kirkland, 2013, 1)

Focus on Innovation – "The Learning Commons is the starting point – it's the nerve center of a school, the place where learning isn't about collecting dots but rather connecting them through cross-curricular partnerships that boost critical thinking, problem solving, decision making and communicating abilities. It's our experiment lab: a place where kids and adults can take risks and experiment with new ways of doing school. A place where educational research can be played with and developed into programs that not only impact students but also provides "road maps" for teachers: *"this is what innovation looks like to us in the Learning Commons, this is how it engages students and this is how you can implement facets of it in your own classroom."* **Learning the now** Gino Bondi, District Principal of Specialty Programs, Vancouver School Board, BC. (Bondi, 2012, 1)

Focus on Opportunity – When staffed by qualified professionals trained to collaborate with teachers and engage students meaningfully with information that matters in the real world, school libraries become sophisticated 21st century learning environments that offer equal opportunities for achievement to all students, regardless of the socioeconomic or education levels of the community. *School libraries work!* (Scholastic, 2008, 1)

What will this document do to help your school get started?

Purpose

This document has been developed to provide vision and practical strategies for those responsible for and committed to viable and successful school libraries in Canada. The framework of standards comes to life in growth continuums to support transformations from library facilities to vibrant library learning commons. The standards represent guideposts along the journey, and schools will find themselves at different points with each standard and theme within the growth continuums. Suggestions for getting started are found in the section **Moving Forward**, with implementation strategies as well as background resources that provide further direction and support for schools and districts.

Rationale

- School library programs should be a force for change at the centre of teaching and learning with a focus on enabling student achievement and growth as productive citizens in Canada.

- A myriad of new technologies, the explosion of digital information, and the potential of collaborative working spaces and networks are driving pedagogical changes to school curricula.

- Without an excellent school library functioning as a learning commons, students are severely disadvantaged. Students need to be working with the best technologies and resource collections available. They require expert instruction and guidance to become sophisticated users of information and ideas in our complex world. To meet their learning potential and participate fully as successful learners and contributors our students need learning opportunities and new environments deliberately designed to engage and inspire.

- All schools in Canada need to be able to develop and support excellent school libraries responsive to the diverse needs of learners today and into the future. This means that all schools large and small, urban and rural, public and private, brick and mortar or virtual, need to provide access to teaching expertise in the library as well as best resources, technologies and physical and virtual learning spaces to support learner needs as they evolve. The transitioning of the school library to school library learning commons establishes the vision and structure to address these evolving needs and encourages continuous growth.

The hallmark of a school library in the 21st century is not its collections, its systems, its technology, its staffing, its buildings, but its actions and evidence that show that it makes a real difference to student learning, that it contributes in tangible and significant ways to the development of meaning making and constructing knowledge. **Transitions for preferred futures for school libraries** (Todd, 2001, 4)

| Facilitating collaborative engagement to cultivate and empower a community of learners | Advancing the learning community to achieve school goals | Cultivating effective instructional design to co-plan, teach and assess learning | Fostering literacies to empower life-long learners | Designing learning environments to support participatory learning |
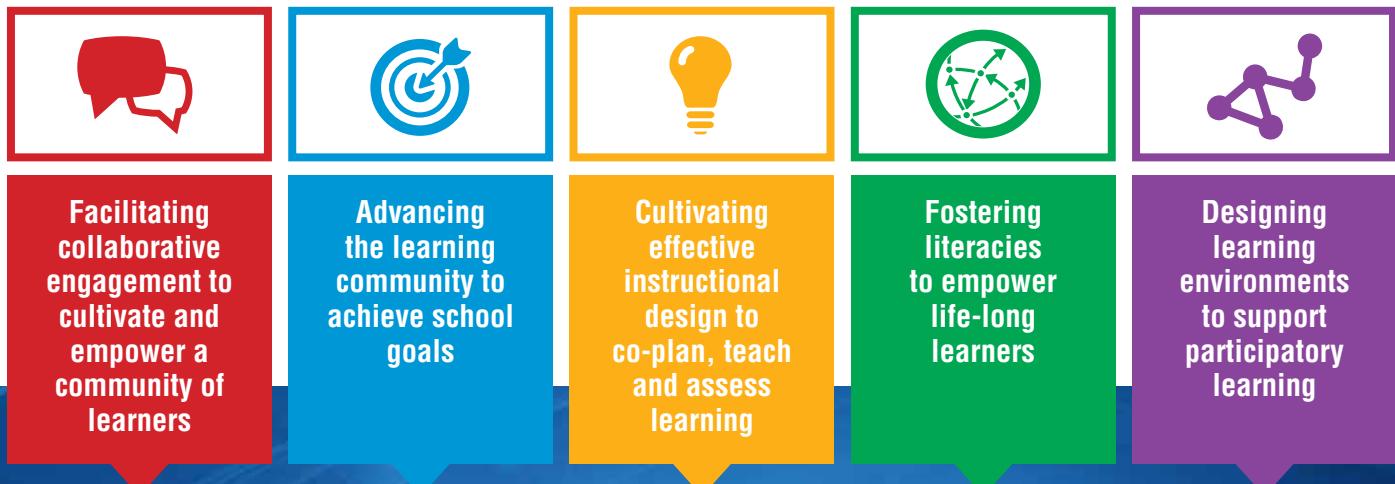
Standards of Practice for School Library Learning Commons in Canada

The work of an effective school library learning commons is framed by five core standards of practice that weave together to generate dynamic learning. Each standard is supported by a growth continuum of indicators of success and authentic examples happening in libraries today. (See **Growth Indicator Charts**)

Standards of Practice for Effective School Library Learning Commons

Facilitating Collaborative Engagement to Cultivate and Empower a Community of Learners

Advancing the Learning Community to Achieve School Goals

Cultivating Effective Instructional Design to Co-plan, Teach and Assess Learning

Fostering Literacies to Empower Life-Long Learners

Designing Learning Environments to Support Participatory Learning

The standards focus on key concepts to be implemented to drive best teaching and learning through the Library Learning Commons. The growth indicators provide a snapshot for the implementation of each standard. The work of quantifying and designating best resources and staffing to support implementation of the standards must be managed at the district and school site level.

The charts accompanying each standard provide a continuum of indicators that have been developed to measure beginning steps or guideposts for each standard and progressive stages of implementation and growth. Each stage builds on the accomplishments of the previous stage thus the indicator language is not repeated in most cases but takes on another layer or another aspect of implementation growth. The goal is to get all schools on the path to providing the very best learning environments and library programs possible to support students academically and personally in learning to learn. Every school will find itself somewhere at a different place on the continuum for each indicator. The continuum will assist decision makers to determine what results have been achieved and also to provide future goals.

In keeping with the responsive nature of the Library Learning Commons (LLC), there is no end to the continuum as it evolves to keep pace with information and technology changes and school needs of the future.

EXPLORING EMERGING EVOLVING ESTABLISHED LEADING INTO THE FUTURE

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

EXPLORING

The school community is utilizing the *Standards of practice for school library learning commons in Canada* to begin the review of its school library and to assist in developing goals and action plans for moving forward. The growth continuum charts begin with schools already in the first phase of learning commons transitions but will also assist those schools in the exploring phase to establish points of entry.

EMERGING

The school community has embraced the Library Learning Commons concepts and it has established a Learning Commons Leadership Team to begin the work of preparing the library facility, collections, technologies and teaching and support staff for renewed focus on learning in changing environments.

EVOLVING

The Library Learning Commons Leadership Team is building a collaborative school culture with teachers and students with a focus on inquiry learning that utilizes the teaching expertise, resources, technologies and spaces of the Library Learning Commons.

ESTABLISHED

The school Library Learning Commons is dedicated to building teaching partnerships to design and guide engaging and effective collaborative learning and participatory knowledge building experiences.

LEADING

The school Library Learning Commons is central to leadership and empowerment of all learners, students and teachers, who actively participate in, and contribute to, their learning communities.

LEARNING FOR THE FUTURE

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LEADING LEARNING FRAMEWORK
Standards, Themes and Growth Indicators for School Library Learning Commons

Themes by Standard:

Facilitating collaborative engagement to cultivate and empower a community of learners	Advancing the learning community to achieve school goals	Cultivating effective instructional design to co-plan, teach and assess learning	Fostering literacies to empower life-long learners	Designing learning environments to support participatory learning
Vision for Learning	Planning for School Improvement	Instructional Leadership	Literacy Leadership	Designing for a Collaborative Physical LLC
Design for Collaboration	Principal Collaborative Role	Instructional Partnerships	Engaging Readers	Designing for a Collaborative Virtual LLC
Partners in Collaborative Learning	Teacher-Librarian Collaborative Role	Engaging with Inquiry Approaches	Information Literacy	Designing for Accessibility in the LLC
Student and Community Partnerships	Teacher Collaborative Role	Differentiated Learning	Critical Literacy	Designing for Responsive Print and Digital Collections
School Administration Partnerships	Support Staff Collaborative Role	Technology for Learning	Digital Literacy and Citizenship	Designing for Creativity and Innovation
District Administration and Consultant Partnerships	District Administration and Consultant Collaborative Role	Assessment for, of and as Learning	Cultural Literacy	Designing for Participatory School Culture
		Evidence-Based Practice	Literacy Partners	

Facilitating Collaborative Engagement to Cultivate and Empower a Community of Learners

The library learning commons plays a key role in cultivating and facilitating collaboration to provide rich experiential learning opportunities. It provides not only a physical space to develop skills and engage learners, but is also a portal to virtual connections, both local and global. It is important to acknowledge the diverse needs and contributions of all players within the school learning commons community, both in terms of resource formats and access to information and collaboration opportunities. Local, regional and global connections and collaborations are a vital part of progressive, future-oriented learning environments.

EXPLORING	EMERGING	EVOLVING	ESTABLISHED	LEADING INTO THE FUTURE
Themes	**Growth Indicators**			
Vision for Learning	Library Learning Commons (LLC) is explored by the school to address shifts in learning needs and environments. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	LLC is evolving as a whole school approach to collaborative learning. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	LLC drives school wide collaborative teaching and learning. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	LLC builds learning communities and is responsive to evolving school, district and global changes. **SEE IT IN ACTION**
Design for Collaboration	LLC is a welcoming inclusive space redesigned to support flexible collaborative learning. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	LLC is a gateway of information, literature and communication supported by a technology infrastructure that advances collaboration. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	LLC is a learning hub providing programs that infuse collaborative technology tools and virtual spaces into learning experiences. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	LLC is an active participatory learning centre modelling and celebrating collaborative knowledge building, play, innovation and creativity. **SEE IT IN ACTION**
Partners in Collaborative Learning	Library Learning Commons (LLC) leadership team and teacher-librarian/LLC teacher work with teachers to design learning experiences to teach interdependence. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	LLC leadership team and teacher-librarian/LLC teacher work with teachers to design learning experiences to teach collaboration techniques and strategies. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	LLC leadership team and teacher-librarian work with teachers to build habits of mind and skills for working in a collaborative world. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	LLC leadership team and teacher-librarian work with teachers to design challenges to empower student-led collaborative learning. Students learn how to build personal learning networks. **SEE IT IN ACTION**

EXPLORING	EMERGING	EVOLVING	ESTABLISHED	LEADING INTO THE FUTURE
Themes	**Growth Indicators**			
Student and Community Partnerships	Students and community are welcome contributors to LLC operations. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Students and community contribute talents to building school culture. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Students and community expertise are utilized to help others learn. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Students and community lead special projects and initiatives in the LLC. **SEE IT IN ACTION**
School Administration Partnerships	School administration works collaboratively with LLC leadership team to support learning in the LLC. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	School administration works collaboratively with LLC leadership team to develop and implement LLC vision and goals. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	School administration works collaboratively with LLC leadership team to engage the school community in participatory learning in the LLC. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	School administration works collaboratively with LLC leadership team to lead school improvement through the LLC. **SEE IT IN ACTION**
District Administration and Consultant Partnerships	District administration and library consultants work collaboratively with schools to review and renew library spaces and programs. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	District administration and library consultants work collaboratively with teacher-librarians/ LLC teachers to transform library spaces and programs to support learning shifts. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	District administration and library consultants work collaboratively with teacher-librarians to develop and promote LLC as a catalyst for 21st century learning approaches. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	District administration and library consultants work collaboratively with teacher-librarians to empower teacher research and experimentation with new technologies and learning strategies in the LLC. **SEE IT IN ACTION**

Advancing the Learning Community to achieve school goals

The ultimate goal of the library learning commons is improved student achievement through the refining of instruction for essential literacy, research and inquiry and communication skills. As such, it is also a key to building opportunities for student learning and innovation to be demonstrated, shared and showcased. Forming a team to lead the learning commons is an effective way to intentionally plan for and assess the success of the goals of this learning space. Strong leadership for the learning commons is vital to ensure sustainability and attainment of school, district and provincial/territorial student learning goals and outcomes.

EXPLORING	EMERGING	EVOLVING	ESTABLISHED	LEADING INTO THE FUTURE
Themes	**Growth Indicators**			
Planning for School Improvement	Library Learning Commons (LLC) leadership team ensures that collections, facilities and programs are guided by school, district and provincial/territorial policies.	LLC leadership team designs programs to support school improvement plans.	LLC leadership team develops clear goals to align programs with school goals and share and showcase teaching and learning achievement.	LLC leadership team develops and implements school improvement initiatives that are a model for future-oriented learning.
	SEE IT IN ACTION	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**
Principal Collaborative Role	Principals support or initiate LLC development to build a collaborative learning community.	Principals ensure that all teachers have opportunity to work collaboratively.	Principals encourage all teachers to work collaboratively with LLC staff to utilize programs, spaces, resources and technologies for learning.	Principals are advocates and ambassadors for advancing the LLC.
	SEE IT IN ACTION	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**

EXPLORING	EMERGING	EVOLVING	ESTABLISHED	LEADING INTO THE FUTURE
Themes	**Growth Indicators**			
Teacher-Librarian Collaborative Role	Teacher-librarian/LLC teacher works with LC leadership team to assess usage of LLC and alignment with school improvement goals. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Teacher-librarian/ LLC teacher develops short and long range plans for facilities and program growth with the LLC leadership team to facilitate school improvement goals. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Teacher-librarian prepares and digitally shares reports/ action research to document progress and aid in budget and staffing allocation and succession planning. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Teacher-librarian leads collaborative site based research on the impact of the LLC. **SEE IT IN ACTION**
Teacher collaborative role	Teachers advocate for the LLC to meet the literacy and information needs of all learners. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Teachers co-plan learning experiences with teacher-librarian using LLC print and digital resources, spaces, technologies and teaching expertise to address differentiated learning. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Teachers co-plan, teach and assess learning experiences with teacher-librarian using LLC learning environment to focus on learning to learn skills and strategies. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Teachers co-plan with teacher-librarian for school-wide learner led approaches to inquiry. **SEE IT IN ACTION**
Support Staff Collaborative Role	Support staff in school or working centrally at the district level, help LLC leadership team develop and manage collections and facilities in the LLC. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Support staff in school or working centrally at the district level, work with LLC leadership team to manage online databases and subscription resources in the LLC. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Support staff in school or working centrally at the district level work with teacher-librarians to implement collection development policies and procedures in the LLC. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Support staff in school or working centrally at the district level work with teacher-librarians to create and analyze circulation and usage reports from the LLC. **SEE IT IN ACTION**
District Administration and Consultant Collaborative Role	District administration and library consultants collaborate to develop best learning environments in LLC to support curriculum. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	District administration and library consultants collaborate to develop supports to enable LLC transformations for learning success. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	District administration and library consultants collaborate with other specialist consultants to ensure that all disciplines utilize the LLC. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	District administration and library consultants collaborate with other district, provincial, and national education leaders to build LLC capacity. **SEE IT IN ACTION**

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Cultivating Effective Instructional Design to Co-plan, Teach and Assess Learning

Knowledge-building, creativity and innovation, and honing of information management and literacy skills are key goals of the learning commons. The intentional teaching of these skills, as well as opportunities to utilize a variety of resources, technologies and spaces to support learning require collaboration and planning and thoughtful instructional design, as does the effective assessment of learning. Learners also need to 'learn how to learn' through deliberate design of opportunities to build metacognition of learning skills, process and content. It is essential to support both student and teacher growth and success in these areas.

EXPLORING	EMERGING	EVOLVING	ESTABLISHED	LEADING INTO THE FUTURE
Themes	**Growth Indicators**			
Instructional Leadership	Library Learning Commons (LLC) leadership team applies information literacy instruction to the design of resource based learning experiences.	LLC leadership team works with teachers to apply information literacy instruction to the design of inquiry learning experiences.	LLC leadership team works with teachers to understand and implement inquiry models to the design of excellent learning experiences.	LLC leadership team empowers personalized professional learning of inquiry approaches.
	SEE IT IN ACTION	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**
Instructional Partnerships	Teacher-librarian/ LLC teacher and classroom teacher cooperatively plan instruction that enables learners to work effectively with information and ideas.	Teacher-librarian / LLC teacher and classroom teacher cooperatively develop units of instruction that engage learners in inquiry learning.	Teacher-librarians are active participants with all faculties in the design of guided inquiry to plan, teach, assess and reflect on effective learning experiences.	Teacher-librarians foster student and teacher technological capacities and digital literacies.
	SEE IT IN ACTION	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**
Engaging with Inquiry Approaches	Learning experiences are designed to give students research experience.	Learning experiences are designed to have real world context and relevancy for students.	Learning experiences are designed to engage students in choice of topics they care about.	Learning experiences are co-designed and planned with students to empower real-world and relevant learning experiences.
	SEE IT IN ACTION	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**

EXPLORING	EMERGING	EVOLVING	ESTABLISHED	LEADING INTO THE FUTURE
Themes	**Growth Indicators**			
Differentiated Learning	Learning experiences accommodate multiple learning styles and abilities. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Learning experiences are supported by differentiated content. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Learning experiences support differentiated learning approaches and processes. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Learning experiences support the personalization of learning for all learners. **SEE IT IN ACTION**
Technology for Learning	Evolving technologies and infrastructure to support teaching and learning needs are introduced. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Evolving technologies and robust infrastructure facilitate collaborative learning. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Evolving technologies and robust infrastructure engage participatory teaching and learning. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Evolving technologies and robust infrastructure empower networking and participatory learning opportunities within and beyond the school. **SEE IT IN ACTION**
Assessment for, of and as Learning	Students are guided through the learning experience and given feedback by instructors at critical stages in the inquiry/project process. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Students self and peer assess throughout the inquiry/project process and set goals for improvement. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Students engage in reflective strategies to ensure metacognition of content and process learning. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Students understand inquiry learning and can articulate how the experience helps them grow as learners. **SEE IT IN ACTION**
Evidence-Based Practice	Teacher-librarians/LLC teachers work with the LLC leadership team to review the LLC learning experiences and set goals for improvement. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Teacher-librarians and teachers build and share their professional knowledge of approaches and environments to support inquiry learning and assess its effectiveness. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Teacher-librarians initiate collaborative action research with teachers to build best practice strategies and approaches to learning in the LLC and assess its effectiveness. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Teacher-librarians contribute their knowledge of best practice results in their LLC to the broader education community. **SEE IT IN ACTION**

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Fostering Literacies to Empower Life-Long Learners

New technologies and evolving methods of communication and sharing drive expanding understandings of literacy. This reality has made the refinement and demonstration of strong literacy skills ever more important for learners. Exploring and connecting various ways of knowing and learning is part of the process of personalizing learning and involves embracing new literacies and skills. The school Library Learning Commons has a leading role in assisting learners to hone and apply an expanded notion of literacy as well as fostering an active reading culture.

	EXPLORING	EMERGING	EVOLVING	ESTABLISHED	LEADING INTO THE FUTURE
Themes	**Growth Indicators**				
Literacy Leadership	Library Learning Commons (LLC) leadership team supports traditional literacy (reading, writing, listening, speaking).	LLC leadership team fosters multiple literacies (information, media, digital).	LLC leadership team designs and applies learning experiences to nurture all literacies.	LLC leadership team leads the school community in designing learning for transliteracy.
	SEE IT IN ACTION	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**
Engaging Readers	Students self-select reading texts from the collection and report that they enjoy reading for pleasure.	Students participate in organized reading programs.	Students engage in face-to-face and virtual book clubs based on their interests.	Students help build a community of readers.
	SEE IT IN ACTION	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**
Information Literacy	Teacher-librarian/ LLC teacher instructs students in information skills to prepare them for research and inquiry projects.	Teacher-librarian/ LLC teacher provides information literacy instruction in units and lessons to build student skills.	Teacher-librarian collaborates with teachers to infuse information literacy instruction in learning experiences to ensure deep understanding of content.	Teacher-librarian leads the school community in the design of information literacy learning strategies and processes in order to empower independent learners.
	SEE IT IN ACTION	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**

EXPLORING	EMERGING	EVOLVING	ESTABLISHED	LEADING INTO THE FUTURE
Themes	**Growth Indicators**			
Critical Literacy	Students bring personal experiences and understanding to information and media by making text to text, text to self, and world connections.	Students are critical consumers of information and media by developing questions before, during and after reading and viewing.	Students use a variety of strategies to analyze, critique and synthesize information and media.	Students construct and share new personal meaning using knowledge building technology tools.
	SEE IT IN ACTION	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**
Digital Literacy and Citizenship	Teacher-librarian/ LLC teacher teaches students how to be safe online.	Teacher-librarian / LLC teacher teaches students to use information ethically and responsibly.	Teacher-librarian teaches students digital rights and responsibilities to build their digital skills.	Teacher-librarian empowers students to take ownership of their digital responsibilities.
	SEE IT IN ACTION	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**
Cultural Literacy	LLC collection reflects cultural diversity, points of view and equity.	LLC collection builds connections to Canadian identity.	LLC program infuses cultural literacy.	LLC program contributes to the co-creation of cultural literacy.
	SEE IT IN ACTION	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**
Literacy Partners	LLC supports literacy in the home.	LLC leadership team works with all teachers on programs to engage readers and build lifelong learning dispositions.	LLC leadership team fosters partnerships with the local public library and librarians.	LLC leadership team works with the community to develop and promote literacy for all.
	SEE IT IN ACTION	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**	**SEE IT IN ACTION**

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Designing Learning Environments to Support Participatory Learning

Active and knowledgeable involvement in participatory learning is a necessary competence for today's learners. Learning commons spaces, collections and tools are changing in response to this paradigm shift. Working together in groups, both virtually and in person is the new norm. Inherent in these activities is the importance of security, privacy and good digital citizenship practices as well as effective collaboration skills and ensuring accessibility for all. A learning commons can provide both the physical and virtual learning environments as well as provide the supports necessary for the student to be an active participatory learner. The Learning Commons Leadership Team reviews and revises LLC learning environments to meet these evolving needs.

EXPLORING	EMERGING	EVOLVING	ESTABLISHED	LEADING INTO THE FUTURE
Themes	**Growth Indicators**			
Designing for a Collaborative Physical LLC	Physical Library Learning Commons (LLC) spaces are reviewed and redesigned to support individual, small group and whole class work. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Physical LLC spaces are flexible to facilitate spontaneous groupings. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Physical LLC spaces are designed to engage learners in participatory learning. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Physical LLC spaces invite networking and participatory learning opportunities within and beyond the school. **SEE IT IN ACTION**
Designing for a Collaborative Virtual LLC	Virtual LLC supports the information needs of students and teachers. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Virtual LLC supports individual and group participation. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Virtual LLC is designed to engage learners in participatory learning. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Virtual LLC empowers learners to co-create and share ideas and knowledge with a broader learning community. **SEE IT IN ACTION**
Designing for Accessibility in the LLC	LLC physical and virtual spaces are designed to address accessibility in accordance with district and regional policies. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	LLC physical and virtual spaces and technologies support multiple abilities, with particular benefit for special needs learners. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	LLC physical and virtual spaces encourage participation of special needs students in working with information and enjoying reading activities. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	LLC physical and virtual learning spaces assist and accommodations are experimented with to discover best approaches to making learning accessible to all. **SEE IT IN ACTION**

EXPLORING	EMERGING	EVOLVING	ESTABLISHED	LEADING INTO THE FUTURE
Themes	**Growth Indicators**			
Designing for Responsive Print and Digital Collections	Print and digital collections are inclusive and support Canadian identity as well as the information needs of all learners in the school community. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Print and digital collections are built by teacher-librarians in consultation with teachers to facilitate curriculum content and independent reading. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Print and digital collections are built by teacher-librarians in consultation with teachers and students to ignite knowledge building and a love of reading. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Print and digital collections are augmented by collaborative consultation with the school community to empower personalized learning. **SEE IT IN ACTION**
Designing for Creativity and Innovation	Learning experiences are explored and developed for hands-on learning. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Learning experiences are developed to facilitate presentation productivity. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Learning experiences are developed to engage learners in creative expression and communication. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	Learning experiences are developed to invite creativity and innovation. **SEE IT IN ACTION**
Designing for a Participatory School Culture	LLC celebrates learning accomplishments. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	LLC facilitates participatory school organizations and clubs. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	LLC engages learners to participate in events to build school culture. **SEE IT IN ACTION**	LLC invites the school community to participate in building school culture. **SEE IT IN ACTION**

MOVING FORWARD

Principal

School Community

The Teacher-Librarian & Learning Commons Leadership Team

*The library-as-learning commons functions as the hub of the school, where teachers and students collaborate, inquiry-based learning is promoted, and teacher-librarians provide instructional support to every teacher in the school while fostering a thriving reading culture. **Library to learning commons: A recipe for success*** (Hayes, 2014, 1)

Key Leaders: Working Together Leading Learning for the Future

School principals as curriculum leaders and site managers of their schools will provide the leadership, budgets and support for moving forward with library learning commons transitions and implementation of national and regional standards.

*At the school level, the principal is key in establishing and encouraging working partnerships among staff and students. The principal must provide the climate for co-operation, experimentation and growth. The Learning Commons has great potential, but only when everyone participates. **Together for learning*** (Ontario School Library Association, 2010, 40)

Teacher-librarians have the specialized skills, knowledge and training to implement needed change. Volumes of research point to the positive

influence excellent teacher-librarians have on teaching and learning. Each school and district should work creatively to ensure that all students have the benefit of teacher-librarian expertise in information literacy and technology in learning as well as in supporting independent reading and evolving literacies. Dr. Ken Haycock writes:

The role and impact of the teacher-librarian can be synthesized quite simply: teacher-librarians impact student learning and achievement by forming strong and positive relationships with members of the school community, especially the school principal; by collaborating with classroom colleagues to plan, develop and assess independent learning abilities in students; by fostering a recreational reading culture in the building; and by providing informal staff development opportunities. K. Haycock (personal communication, December 8, 2013)

The Library Learning Commons Leadership Team represents the learning needs of the entire school community. Working together with classroom teachers, students and community, the vision and action plan for developing and sustaining each school Library Learning Commons will evolve.

Leadership in the Learning Commons is team-based rather than centralized in a single individual. Each school begins with the functions desirable in the Learning Commons and then organizes various leadership teams to carry out those program elements.

The new learning commons: Where learners win (Koechlin, Loertscher, and Zwaan, 2011, 147)

The School Community, as individuals and as a collective body, has a role to play in shaping the Library Learning Commons and utilizing its potential for school improvement.

The Learning Commons must be fluid; it must grow and evolve with school needs, emerging technologies and global realities. It requires leadership to succeed, and that leadership can only come through the willing co-operation and collaboration of everyone participating in the school learning process. Together for learning (Ontario School Library Association, 2010, 40)

Learning Commons Support Staff are critical to managing and maintaining best resource collections, facilities and technologies for modern learning. These important players support the entire learning commons community and may be on site at the school, travelling between multiple schools or working centrally to keep information systems running.

Key Steps for Implementation: Essential Process and Conditions for Success

Establish a Learning Commons Leadership team representative of the school community.
▼

Create a vision for library learning commons.
▼

Integrate the school library learning commons standards of practice into the overall school development plan.
▼

Review the existing resources and learning programs you already have in your school to build on.
▼

Develop an action plan with the help of the Learning Commons Leadership team.
▼

Implement teaching and learning aligned with *Standards of practice for school library learning commons in Canada*.
▼

Celebrate successes but keep on getting better.

As schools immerse themselves in the journey of adopting the learning commons perspective key steps and helpful tools to support the process follow. It is to be emphasized that the transformation from school library to the learning commons perspective is a "whole school" transformation. Thus this 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.

Establish a Library Learning Commons Leadership team representative of the school community. The principal and teacher-librarian or learning commons teacher invite participation from

other administrators, teaching specialists or lead teachers, learning commons support staff (technicians, clerks, classroom teacher(s), student(s), parent(s) and/or caregivers and local public library or other community representation. The team, along with the entire staff and students, should work through the steps pertinent to the school to adopt a school library learning commons perspective that facilitates sustainable growth through the indicators of the five national standards.

Create a vision for library learning commons.
Study the professional research, evidence and literature on this approach to school wide learning. Examine current pedagogical studies and weave key ideas into the elements of a learning commons to deepen understanding. Engage the entire school: teachers, students and other members of the community in study and renewal. (See **Recommended Resources, Appendix 8**, and **National Project** (Voices for School Libraries Network, 2014) site for resource suggestions).

Integrate the school Library Learning Commons Standards of Practice into the overall school development plan. It is not an "added" plan but a whole school learning and teaching philosophy supported by **extensive research** (International Association of School Librarianship, 2008) for student success. Review the five standards and indicators of success for *Leading learning: Standards of practice for school library learning commons in Canada*. Align indicators with school and district goals and initiatives asking questions such as, how could the LLC help to address school goals? (See Appendices **1** & **2**)

Review the existing resources and learning programs already in place in your school and build on that success. Chart where you are on the growth continuums for each standard and begin or continue your journey to impact and enhance student learning success. Prepare a needs assessment to review where your school is with regard to various key components of a LLC and then chart where you want to go. For example: staffing, budget, library physical and virtual spaces, computer labs, culture of collaboration, inquiry learning, wireless infrastructure, mobile technologies, and central support.

Develop an action plan with the help of the Learning Commons Leadership team.
Collaboratively develop a learning commons plan for moving forward based on your vision for the library learning commons, school goals and needs, strategies and actions, responsibilities, time, budget and your own indicators of success. Where are you now, what do you want to achieve, what actions do you need to take, what will it cost, how long will it take, who is responsible, who can help? (See Appendices **3** & **4**)

Implement teaching and learning aligned with Standards of practice for school library learning commons in Canada. Foster a collaborative school culture of inquiry and participatory learning in both physical and virtual environments. Establish excellent instructional designs that engage learners in developing 21st century skills and literacies and knowledge building through utilization of exemplary technologies and resources. Build learning environments that support and nurture inquiry, experimentation, innovation, creativity and playing to learn. (See Appendices **5** & **6**)

Celebrate successes but keep on getting better.
Construct venues for collaborative sharing and continued knowledge building. Assess results and set goals for improvement. Support experimentation with new strategies and technologies and infuse collaborative teacher research in school improvement and future directions for the library learning commons.

The 'work' of the learning commons is to facilitate and lead a new culture of learning that truly addresses the needs of 21st century learners and teachers. It is about everyone working together to get better and better at thinking, questioning, analyzing, creating and generally improving as learners. Learning to learn and knowledge-building form the program focus in the learning commons. Fostering 'habits of mind' and 'learning dispositions' are conducive to success. See (**Koechlin, 2009**)

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Suggestions for Professional Growth Reflection and Renewal

- Encourage the transparency of teaching and learning in the Library Learning Commons. Capitalize on collaborative technologies to achieve best practice. Build a Virtual Learning Commons. (See **Appendix 6**)

- Use strategies such as a collective "time log" to document library usage. Analyze the log to see what library activities could be discontinued, what activities could be combined, or what different activities the staff may want to try to develop the school library learning commons transformational way of teaching and learning. Gather evidence of progress. **Think you can't? yes you can!: Teacher librarian's toolkit for student success** (Ontario School Library Association, 2003)

- Brainstorm with the Library Learning Commons leadership team and the staff about unique ways to engage in professional growth through the experiential aspect of a learning commons. e.g. video conferencing, student technology coaches. **Evolution of the learning commons: webinar** (Kitchener, 2012)

- Engage students in discussion and planning: what do they need, what are their ideas for transforming the school library? **Grade 5 – Library transformation** (Calgary Board of Education, 2013)

- Consult Staff: **Bowness learning commons-3** (Calgary Board of Education, 2013) What elements do teachers and support staff believe are essential to transformation to a learning commons? Bring the results back to the Library Learning Commons leadership team to create a shared vision for your school library learning commons. Key questions: What are the desired elements of a learning commons? What needs to change? How will we know we are making progress – short range, long range? How will we know we have been successful? (See Appendices **3** and **4**)

- Encourage your school library team to meet with other similar teams to share timely topics, new professional resources and ideas as well as to attend conferences or other professional growth activities. At the same time, share your questions/concerns/successes with other principals nearby and in your district for support/ideas. *At heart I'm still a teacher* (Miller, 2013)

- Support teacher-librarians and teachers in **action research** (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2000) as they implement the *Standards of practice for school library learning commons in Canada*. Encourage sharing of their findings at professional conferences and symposiums. **TMC Canada** (Treasure Mountain Canada, 2014)

- Annual reflection – take time at the beginning and end of each school term to engage in staff reflection about learning commons vision, growth and transformation – by discussion, e.g. repeating the standards "check-off" activity.

Key Recommendations to Support Continued Growth

At the Provincial or Territorial Level:

- Create a **provincial/territorial review committee** (Alberta Education, 2014) to examine school library learning commons exploration and development in the province or territory in relation to the *Standards of practice for school library learning commons in Canada*.

- Create research grants in collaboration with local teacher associations or the national symposium **TMC** (Treasure Mountain Canada, 2014) to foster the implementation and development of the standards. **ASLC research bursaries** (Alberta School Library Association, 2014)

- Encourage schools to invest staffing and resources for Library Learning Commons through curriculum policy, action plans and projects. **Action plan on reading in schools** (Quebec Ministry of Education, Recreation and Sports, 2013)

- Ensure university education courses prepare teachers of all subject disciplines and levels as well as school administrators for their roles in learning commons practice as per *Standards of practice for school library learning commons in Canada*.

- Ensure teacher-librarian training prepares teacher leaders in learning commons practice as per *Standards of practice for school library learning commons in Canada*. **University of Alberta teacher-librarianship** (University of Alberta, 2014)

- Ensure library technician training colleges prepare library technicians choosing the school career path for learning commons practice as per *Standards of practice for school library learning commons in Canada*.

At the Local Level:

- Combine community, school and government efforts to promote and implement *Standards of practice for school library learning commons in Canada* outlining the critical benefits for students.

- Strive to meet *Standards of practice for school library learning commons in Canada* in every school site by ensuring the placement of professional teaching staff (teacher-librarian, teacher-technologist, learning commons teacher) to lead the program. (See **Appendix 7** for varied staffing models).

- Consider the technical library support needs of teacher-librarians and learning commons teachers by providing both professional and paraprofessional staff whether on-site, shared among sites or centrally allocated.

- Explore creative solutions to ensure that the physical Library Learning Commons is accessible to all students and staff during the entire school day regardless of school size. (See **Appendix 7** for varied staffing models)

- Support the building of a Virtual Library Learning Commons for every school to ensure that members of the school community have access at any time. (See **Appendix 6**)

- Consider the continued growth of teacher-librarians and learning commons teachers by providing district library consults and professional learning and networking opportunities.

- Provide **policies** (Edmonton Public Schools, 2011) and budgets that support continual learning opportunities for schools in implementing the national standards.

- Look for opportunities to form partnerships with other groups that are also working toward improving learning now and for the future, e.g. **Parent engagement story** (Ontario School Library Association, 2014) **National reading campaign** (National Reading Campaign, 2013) *MediaSmarts* (Media Smarts, 2014)

GLOSSARY

Collaborative Knowledge Building: A constructivist activity, where learners work together to construct understanding to build a body of knowledge. In the school Library Learning Commons, understanding is advanced with planned teacher interventions such as question prompts, graphic organizers and conferencing. (Koechlin, Loertscher, and Zwaan, 2011, 1)

Collaborative Learning: Groups of students/teachers actively participate in working together towards a common goal. The result is unique to the group dynamics and can be conducted in person, virtual or in blended learning environments.

Collaborative Teaching: One or more classroom teachers and/or one or more learning specialists (e.g., teacher-librarian, learning commons teacher) plan, teach, coach and assess a learning event together. Library technicians and/or assistants or support staff work with teachers to support a learning event as directed by the teachers.

Flexible Space: The design and furnishings of the physical learning commons allow for spontaneous re-arrangement of furniture and even shelving to accommodate a variety of teaching and learning needs.

Habits of Mind: A disposition toward behaving intelligently when confronted with problems, the answers to which are not immediately known: dichotomies, dilemmas, enigmas and uncertainties. (**Costa, 2014, 1**)

Information Literacy: The ability to access, evaluate, use and share information effectively and ethically for a range of educational, career and personal purposes. (Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2008, 47). *Achieving Information Literacy* (Asselin, Branch, and Oberg, eds., 2003, 5) defines an information-literate citizen as someone who:

- works independently and collaboratively to solve problems
- analyses information critically in all its formats and in all media contexts
- applies information strategically to solve personal and social problems

- makes decisions based on accurate and current information
- uses information and communication technologies
- respects information sources and diverse perspectives
- honours intellectual property and privacy rights
- appreciates the aesthetic qualities of various creative and scientific expressions
- communicates effectively and expressively, using a variety of information and media formats.

Inquiry: An approach to learning whereby students find and use a variety of sources of information and ideas to increase their understanding of a problem, topic, or issue. It requires more of them than simply answering questions or getting a right answer. It espouses investigation, exploration, search, quest, research, pursuit, and study. Inquiry does not stand alone; it engages interests, and challenges students to connect to their world with the curriculum. Although it is often thought of as an individual pursuit, it is enhanced by involvement with a community of learners, each learning from the other in social interaction. (**Kuhlthau, Maniotes and Caspari, 2007, 2**)

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Intellectual Freedom: "All persons in Canada have the fundamental right, as embodied in the nation's Bill of Rights and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity, and to express their thoughts publicly. (**Canadian Library Association, 2011b, 1**)

Knowledge Building: The creation and improvement of knowledge of value to one's community. (**Scardamalia and Bereiter, 2010, 12**)

Learning Commons Leadership Team: A committee to lead a whole school approach to learning for the future, responsive to the needs of learners, via the LLC teaching expertise, resources, technologies and physical and virtual spaces. The team is inclusive to the school community (e.g. administration, teacher-librarian, lead and/or specialist teachers, library support staff, classroom teachers, students, parents or other interested school community members).

Learning Commons Professionals:

District Library Consultant: A specialist teacher/teacher-librarian whose duties involve school library learning commons development and support for schools from the district level.

Teacher-Librarian: A teacher who leads the LLC program and has education in school librarianship (eg. specialist, diploma, Master of Education, Master of Library and Information Science).

Teacher-Technologist: A co-teacher in the LLC who models effective and transformative uses of technology and has education in technology.

Learning Commons Teacher: A teacher who has responsibilities for management and program in the LLC when there is no teacher-librarian on site.

Librarian: The school library staff member who assists the Learning Commons Leadership Team with management of the LLC and has qualifications (e.g., MLIS) in library science and/or information science.

Library Technician: The school library staff member who assists the Learning Commons Leadership Team with management of the LLC and has a diploma in Library and Information Technology.

Learning Commons Support Staff: The school and district staff who have special responsibilities assigned to support the LLC such as library clerks, library technicians, librarians, IT technicians. They may work on site or from a central site.

Learning Commons Plan: The plan of action for the LLC that is developed and continually reviewed to address the context of the particular school community, demographics, specialized programs or mandates, including the student learning outcomes, collection plan and budget.

Learning Environment: The physical or virtual space deliberately designed to provide optimum conditions for learning. In the LLC, rich learning environments support all learners with best resources, technologies, flexible spaces and professional instruction.

Library Learning Commons (LLC): The physical and virtual collaborative learning hub of the school community, designed to engineer and lead learning for the future, a transformational shift from traditional library to a whole school learning culture where everyone is working together to enhance learning, and to continually improve thinking, questioning, analyzing and creating.

Transitional growth of a Library Learning Commons:

Exploring – The school community is using the *Leading learning: Standards of practice for school library learning commons in Canada* (Canadian Library Association, 2014) to begin the review of its school library and to assist in developing goals and action plans for moving forward. The growth continuum charts begin with schools already in the first phase of learning commons transitions, and will also assist in establishing points of entry.

Emerging – The school community has embraced the Library Learning Commons concepts and has established a Learning Commons Leadership Team to begin the work of preparing the library facility, collections, technologies and teaching and support staff for renewed focus on learning in changing environments.

Evolving – The Learning Commons Leadership Team is building a collaborative school culture with teachers and students to have a focus on inquiry learning that utilizes the teaching expertise, resources, technologies and spaces of the school Library Learning Commons.

Established – The school Library Learning Commons is dedicated to building teaching partnerships to design and guide engaging and effective collaborative learning and participatory knowledge building experiences.

Leading – The school Library Learning Commons is central to leadership and empowerment of all learners (students and teachers) who actively participate in, and contribute to, their learning communities.

Metacognition: The action of consciously thinking about one's own thinking; in the LLC this is the process of learning how to learn by examining both knowledge gained and the strategies one uses to learn, and making plans for improvement.

Online databases and subscription resources: A searchable aggregated collection of thousands of predominantly full-text information records (free of advertising) from a wide range of media sources; e.g., newspapers, magazines, journals, lists, specialized reference texts, encyclopaedias, atlases, image banks, e-books, and video/audio clips purchased from a publisher via specific license agreements. A designated login process ensures that only authorized users have access to licensed resources. Users can access online reference resources from a central login point, thereby eliminating geographic and time constraints.

Participatory Learning: Learners work collaboratively to develop their own learning paths, build collective knowledge, and co-create the sharing of their new understandings. In the LLC, learners work in both physical and virtual participatory learning environments. (**Koechlin, Loertscher, and Rosenfeld, 2010, 11**)

Personal Learning Network (PLN): A set of connections to people and resources both offline and online that enrich our learning – at a moment's notice. (**Richardson, 2011, 2**)

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School Community: "When used by educators, the term school community typically refers to the various individuals, groups, businesses, and institutions that are invested in the welfare and vitality of a public school and its community i.e., the neighborhoods and municipalities served by the school. In many contexts, the term encompasses the school administrators, teachers, and staff members who work in a school; the students who attend the school and their parents and families; and local residents and organizations that have a stake in the school's success, such as school-board members, city officials, and elected representatives; businesses, organizations, and cultural institutions; and related organizations and groups such as parent-teacher associations, "booster clubs," charitable foundations, and volunteer school-improvement committees (to name just a few)." (**Great Schools Partnership**, 2013)

Student Learning Outcomes: The outcomes of the provincial programs of study. The student learning outcome framework in CLA's *Achieving information literacy: Standards for school libraries in Canada* (Asselin, Branch, and Oberg, Eds., 2003, 9-17) are drawn from multiple subject areas and information literacy documents.

Transliteracy: The ability to read, write and interact across a range of platforms, tools and media from signing and orality through handwriting, print, TV, radio and film, to digital social networks. (Thomas, Joseph, Laccetti, Mason, Mills, Perril, and Pullinger, 2007,1)

Virtual Learning Commons (VLC): The online force of the Learning Commons, a digital learning community in which the whole school participates. It is not a library website which only provides a one-way stream of useful information. Instead, both the instructors and the students of the school 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)

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Standards Discussion Starters for Learning Leadership Teams

Facilitating Collaborative Engagement to Cultivate and Empower a Community of Learners

- How do we cultivate a collaborative learning community in a school? Who is involved? Why is it important?

- What are the specific needs of the stakeholders within the school community – students, parents, staff?

- How can these needs become opportunities for advancing a collaborative learning community e.g. 24/7 access to a variety of excellent resources as well as learning opportunities? How can technology help?

- Local, regional and global connections are part of the 21st century learning environment. How best can these relationships be facilitated to provide rich experiential learning experiences (and responsible global citizens)?

- How can an understanding and respect for the diversity of Canadian culture and Aboriginal peoples' heritage be reflected to build a positive climate for the school Library Learning Commons community and encourage contributions from all?

Advancing the Learning Community to achieve school goals

- How will plans for the school Library Learning Commons align with school, district, provincial/territorial goals and plans?

- How will collaborative leadership for the school Library Learning Commons team be framed and articulated? How will the role of the principal (administration), the teacher-librarian, the library learning commons support staff (in school and central), teachers (Classroom and specialists, IT specialists, students, parents, volunteers, the wider community etc., be considered and articulated?

- How will the success of the school Library Learning Commons be assessed? What indicators of success are important/significant?

- How do we ensure sustainability of the school Library Learning Commons as members arrive and depart to and from school or district sites?

- How will the school Library Learning Commons be a model for and leader of innovation and creativity?

- How will student learning and knowledge creation be showcased?

Cultivating Effective Instructional Design to Co-plan, Teach and Assess Learning

- What does effective instructional design look like in the school Library Learning Commons?

- What are the elements of effective instructional design?

- How does the school Library Learning Commons design for knowledge building, creativity and innovation?

- How can we make the best use of technologies, resources and spaces to support excellence in co-planning, teaching and assessing learning?

- How do we support both student and teacher growth and success?

Fostering Literacy to Empower Life-Long Learners

- How do you define literacy? How do you define literacy for 21st century learning and literacy for global learners?

- What knowledge and skills do students need to be able to demonstrate in order to be "literate" for life, bearing in mind that literacy has multiple forms?

- How does literacy connect to different ways of knowing and learning? How do the school library staff engage/differentiate to connect with all learners for life?

- Life-long learners demonstrate a capacity to embrace new ideas, skills and ways of knowing. In what ways can the school Library Learning Commons encourage and facilitate this engagement?

- What role does technology play in fostering literacy(ies) in the school Library Learning Commons?

- How does the school Library Learning Commons empower individuals to engage in personalized learning?

Designing Learning Environments to Support Participatory Learning

- What does participatory learning look like? What kinds of physical and virtual features enable participatory learning?

- How do you assess the space and collection to know what is working, what is not and what could be tried to better support learning?

- What does a 21st century collection encompass? How do you provide/activate access to the collection?

- How do you strategically organize the collection in order to support participatory learning?

Action Planning:

Teacher Librarians Leading Transitions in the Learning Commons to Boost Student Achievement

School Improvement Goal	Learning Commons Strategies and Actions	Needed Budget/ Resources	Success Indicators

Who can help?	Physical spaces	Virtual Spaces	Questions & Notes

Appendix 3

Action Planning: Using Standards Growth Indicators

Standard	Where are you now?	Where do you want to go?	How will you get there?
Facilitating Collaborative Engagement to Cultivate/Empower a Community of Learners			
Advancing the Learning Community to Achieve School Goals			
Cultivating Effective Instructional Design to Co-plan, Teach and Assess Learning			
Fostering Literacy to Empower Life-Long Learners			
Designing Learning Environments to Support Participatory Learning			

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Appendix 4
Action Planning:
Planning and Leading Transitions to a School Library Learning Commons

CONSULT	PLAN	IMPLEMENT	MONITOR	EVALUATE	SUSTAINABLE CHANGE

Transitions What changes do we want to make?	Timelines What are the expected start and finish times?	Strategies and Actions How will we achieve transitions?	Roles Who is responsible for what?	Resources What budget, time and people are needed?	Indicators of Success How will we know the transition is complete? How will we know it is working?

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.

Appendix 5

Tips for Achieving Needed Physical Changes

Once a learning commons program is envisioned and underway schools will want to consider ways to transform the existing library and computer lab facilities into a collaborative learning environment. This need not be expensive.

- First free up space by reviewing what is not being used and remove from the facility.

- Make a sketch of the facility and experiment with redesign to meet learning and teaching objectives. If you need a major makeover consult with experts such as district architects.

- **Utilize walls for shelving** (MacKenzie, 2014) when possible and try to have the rest of low shelving on casters to create flexible spaces.

- Get creative when planning comfortable areas for reading, working and playing to learn.

- Consult students and discover their desires for a learning commons. Hook student interest with an **authentic problem solving project** (MacKenzie, 2012) about the learning commons.

- Visit a learning commons or **explore virtually**. (Ontario School Library Association, 2014)

- **Write grants** (Domeier de Suarez, 2012) for funding for special purchases. **Innovative learning designs** (T.E. Scott Learning Commons, 2013)

- Invest in robust wireless to support e-readers, tablets and other mobile devices.

- Clean out underused seminar rooms and establish stations for specialized work e.g. video production, drama, makerspaces.

- Consider educational design theory e.g. **The third teacher**. (OWP/P Architects, VS Furniture and Bruce Mau Design, 2010)

- Provide for quiet study as well as collaborative work.

- Consider a moveable wall to define a specific work area.

- Ensure that teaching areas are well equipped with portable technologies.

- Remove signage that is not user friendly and replace with invitation messages.

- Investigate accessibility standards and policy to ensure compliance.

- Invite participation!

Appendix 6

Tips for Building a Virtual Learning Commons

The Virtual Learning Commons needs the same attention as the physical environment. It is an organized but collaborative space for learning. It is not a replacement for the physical LLC but an extension of it to make the LLC available to students and learners 24/7.

- You may already have a library webpage that points students and teachers to available resources. Redesign your existing webpage just the same as you redesign the physical space to facilitate participatory learning.

- If you do not have a webpage to build on consider using this **free VLC template**. (Koechlin and Loertscher, 2013)

- Study the VLC environments built by others. There are many examples linked to the growth continuum charts.

- Explore possibilities for building a **vibrant virtual learning space**. (Ontario Library Association, 2014a)

- Read some **professional literature**. (Brooks Kirkland, 2009)

- Consider your **opening page** (Crosland, 2014) and plan to invite students into the VLC with an interesting item such as a video, challenge, or questions to engage interest.

- Invite students and teachers to help you build resource pathfinders and other content.

- Invite students to help build tutorials for using digital learning tools.

- Link the library social networking sites to the front page.

- Design spaces to foster independent reading. Build a reading community.

- Organize links to useful technology tools.

- Develop a space to plan and curate inquiry learning experiences such as **virtual knowledge building centers**. (Koechlin and Loertscher, 2014)

- Create spaces for play and experimentation.

- Support **school cultural events** (Bowness virtual learning commons, 2013). Your VLC can be a virtual school yearbook.

- Develop a section of the VLC for teacher professional learning.

- Invite participation!

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.

Appendix 7

Creative Learning Commons Scenarios

To ensure that the physical library learning commons is maximized to its potential it needs to be open and ready for learning at all times. Students and teachers need to know that real time support, expertise, resources and technologies are always available and that the LLC is a stable extension of every classroom. The virtual learning commons provides a 24/7 environment for teachers and students to work, create and share any-time. Together the two learning environments provide diverse opportunities to naturally bridge the gap between isolated classrooms and the networked worlds of modern learning.

Recognizing that every school is unique in their needs, the following list provides a few creative scenarios for ensuring that the library learning commons is never 'down' but always 'on and alive' and ready to provide added value to everyone's learning at school and wherever they can connect.

- Full time teacher-librarians working in partnership with other specialist and classroom teachers and supported by central consultants to initiate and lead learning growth with the standards.

- Part time teacher-librarians sharing the role with other specialist teachers (technology, reading, student success) working in partnership with classroom teachers and supported by central consultants to initiate learning growth with the standards.

- Part time teacher-librarians working in partnership with library support staff (library technician, clerk) and classroom teachers and supported by central consultants to initiate learning growth with the standards.

- A learning commons teacher(s) working in partnership with library support staff and classroom teachers and supported by central consultants to initiate the early stages of the standards.

- Librarians/Library Technicians working in partnership with a learning commons teacher and classroom teachers and supported by central consultants to initiate the early stages of the standards.

- Librarians/Library Technicians working in partnership with a travelling or virtual teacher librarian and classroom teachers and supported by central consultants to initiate the early stages of the standards.

- Very small and/or remote rural schools may elect for a virtual teacher-librarian with a learning commons teacher(s) taking responsibility at the school and supported by central consultants to initiate learning growth with the standards.

- A virtual teacher-librarian supporting e-learning or blended learning experiences linked to online learning environments via a Virtual Learning Commons.

- A teacher-librarian working in partnership with a public librarian in a shared library learning commons physical and virtual space to initiate and lead learning growth with the standards.

- More creative ideas to ensure learners have the best professional support and expertise possible in their library learning commons.

Appendix 8

Recommended Resources

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More than 240 resources related to this publication are available at
http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slic/llbibliography.pdf