A New Model for the School Library at Vincent Massey Collegiate and Beyond

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The 21st Century School Library

The Learning Commons Shift:

“The library learning commons is the physical and virtual collaborative learning hub of the school”

-- Leading Learning, p.5

• Emphasis on:
  • Providing collaborative teaching and learning space;
  • Fostering multiple literacies;
  • Being a 3rd space for learning;
  • Giving open access to scarce physical and technological resources.
The learning commons shift in Quebec school libraries is still new;

QSLiN: “Our mission is to advocate for the revitalization of school libraries as learning commons, to promote literacy, information literacy skills, and digital citizenship throughout the K-11 curriculum across Quebec.”

A time of great opportunity, but...

- Very tenuous time for cuts to school library programs.
Vincent Massey Collegiate Library

• Print collection: Well stocked and well weeded;

• Digital presence: EMSB Virtual Library, OPAC, Overdrive eBooks, VMC Library site;

• We lack digital resources for advanced research;

• Space is small, in terrible shape, does not reflect our current technological landscape;

Photo by Stephanie Germain, 2015
Making a 21st Century Library at VMC

• A complete makeover for the physical space;

• Technology:
  o 3D printing,
  o Multitouch wall,
  o Lendable devices,
  o Sound and video equipment,
  o Tech compatible furniture.

Photo by Stephanie Germain, 2015
Inspiration

Lounge seating and low shelving with multiple and accessible outlets

Eventbrite Office, San Francisco

Hamilton Grange Library Teen Center, New York Public Library
Image from: http://www.ricelipka.com/work_detail.php?id=46
Inspiration

- Creating spaces that accommodate group collaboration and individual work,
- Emphasizing flexibility, and mobility, and the importance of information technology.

South Mountain Community Library, Phoenix
Applying the Learning Commons Principles

- Create a space that facilitates collaboration between librarians and teachers;
- Diversifying the information landscape of our students by providing a wider variety of technological tools;
- Providing a desirable third space atmosphere that fosters all forms of learning;
- A place where lifelong learning starts...
Collaborating Beyond the School Library

• An essential part of our learning commons model is partnership and collaboration within the school, but it lends well to looking outward:

“Local, regional and global connections and collaborations are a vital part of progressive future-oriented learning environments.”

-- Leading Learning, p.11

• Transitioning our school library into learning commons creates a natural pathway to fostering new collaborative relationships.
What we all get from more collaboration

• A smoother transition from high school to CEGEP and University research;

• A better knowledge and understanding of our users;

• Shared resources for a shared responsibility;

• Library awareness and advocacy;

• Fostering lifelong learning.
School and University Library Collaboration: Background


• Burhanna, K. J. (2013). *Informed transitions: Libraries supporting the high school to college transition*. ABC-CLIO.
  o Case studies of collaborative projects.
A Proposal for Collaboration : First Steps

Form a working group:

- Potential players could include: high school, CEGEP, University librarians, teachers, faculties of education and Information Studies, shared professional associations.

- **Form a working group** with representatives from various backgrounds to **assess the potential and the logistics of a partnership**.
Establishing Collaboration : The Ground Work

Gather information on users and their needs:

- Create **information literacy performance indicators**: Use indicators to survey high school students to assess the gaps in their level of information literacy;

- Speak with professors, and study syllabi to **assess the information needs of first year CEGEP and University students**;

- Use gathered information to **create checklists for the college bound**, indicating what information seeking skills high school students should have.
Realizing Collaboration : Potential Projects

Using gathered data, develop instructional programs:

• **Organized Visits:**
  o Co-teaching in high school classes,
  o Trips to CEGEP and/or University Libraries.

• **Workshops on Information Literacy:**
  o Workshops with school librarians;
  o Workshops in schools with teachers.
Realizing Collaboration : Sharing Results

Share the research and/or practical experience:

• Co-Authoring and/or co-presenting on collaboration:
  
  o Making a lasting and replicable model;
  
  o Fostering continued networking between school and academic librarians.
Thank you!

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