

President's Report



Kelly Maggiras

Our Library Learning Commons (LLC) brings together all members of the school community, providing a place to inquire, problem solve and explore together. While the LLC is a fun and supportive learning environment, it can also be a safe haven, a place of solace, or a break in our daily school lives. The LLC fulfills a special role in the school – an innovative learning environment that supports and fosters a love for reading, learning and well-being. Whether we are using our spaces for making, inquiry or supporting our school's needs, it brings me comfort and pride knowing that we are able to support the social and emotional needs of our students through the unique space we call the Library Learning Commons.

The LLC functions as a multi-faceted learning environment. It is a place that can support well-being, as well as coping, strategies to support both individuals and the entire school community. In our spaces we focus on continuity and learning about developing socio-emotional needs of students through strategies such as growth mindset as well as Zones of Regulation. By helping our students with diverse needs, we are able to support the learning and well-being for all. Reducing anxiety for students is also about the relationships that we develop with our school community, staff, and parents. We are able to support students and teachers through developing home-school connections as well as creating opportunities for outreach.

Identity

The LLC supports students and allows them to explore their identities as well as their backgrounds. Students come together to explore culturally-relevant resources that represent their social identities, cultures and backgrounds where they can inquire, problem solve and build empathy and compassion towards others. In the intermediate and senior grades, the Library Learning Commons often acts as a safe haven, a place to go that is supervised and yet public. As students mature and begin forming their own identities, they often choose to “hang out” with friends – or alone – in a place where they can be themselves before or after school, at lunchtime and on spares. Creating a welcoming environment is pivotal to the informal support for student mental health and well-being. In terms of identity, every school library should function as both a mirror

and a window for all members of the school community. Students should be able to recognize themselves in the space and in the resources available, and also have the opportunity to see the perspectives of others. This ability to connect is one of the elements that makes a vibrant LLC a true living-learning space. Diverse supports include developing social skills with others and collaboration, as well as providing opportunities for mindfulness, reflection and relaxation.

Makerspace

The Makerspace is a unique learning environment that engages and supports student learning and interests. We are able to boost our brains, engage and meet the different needs of students. Students visit our space to participate in meaningful and authentic learning tasks to support play, project based learning, assessment and student interests. When our hands engage in tasks such as building, knitting and STEAM activities, our minds can let go. We can daydream, reflect and think about what truly engages and interests us. Through makerspaces, students learn about themselves and develop different perspectives and interests. As teacher-librarians, we work with teachers and students to foster creativity, innovation and support socio-emotional well-being. Anxiety is reduced and better understood.

Collaboration and Curriculum Support

As teacher-librarians, we are uniquely situated as professional learning supports and coaches for those new to teaching or simply new to our schools. As the school year begins, we seize the opportunity to reach out to colleagues – some of whom have been in our school for years and some who are brand new to us – to support professional practice, co-teach, co-learn and develop new lessons and units, lessening the potential stress and anxiety of our co-workers. We provide relevant and useful resources and strategies for implementing new and existing curricula. Through modelling healthy team-teaching experiences, we can positively influence school climate.

Parent Community

As curriculum refreshes and evolves, we need to think about how the LLC supports our families through these changes to