

authors that support a variety of curricular areas and we host numerous clubs, activities and events in our space. Our space is flexible and easily transformed to be a multi-purpose space for teaching and learning.

Everyone on the library team takes a customer service approach when dealing with staff and students. We welcome feedback and gather input on how we are doing. We celebrate every book a student checks out or every new idea a teacher has come up with for engaging students in learning. We honour voice and choice and give everyone a say in what gets purchased for the library learning commons. This has allowed us to become an integral part of the day to day operations of the school and a place that so many rely on.

Myth #6

Many would like to believe that a library learning commons can operate effectively on a shoestring budget and nothing could be further from the truth. Adequate funding is a must and we have been fortunate enough to have the support of the administration to ensure that we are able to meet the needs of our school. However, we consistently advocate for our library learning commons and promote what we have to offer to staff, students, parents and the community.

Our budget plan lines up with two things: meeting the needs of our school goals and meeting the criteria of an effective library learning commons, according to the *Together for Learning* document. We have been able to improve our physical space through the addition of club chairs, mobile tables, plants, posters, book displays and art. We also cut down our shelving to improve site lines and to make our space feel more open and welcoming. We added an online collection so that our library learning commons could be accessible at any time and from anywhere.

We give our students opportunities to access technology when they need it and we frequently use technology when teaching to prepare students for what lies ahead. We run field trips to McMaster University and the University of Toronto for library research workshops and campus tours and we participated in the Culture Days event at the Brampton Library. None of this would have been possible without a meaningful budget. An effective library learning commons must have the funding to make great ideas a reality.

Elementary Perspective: Jennifer

Myth #1

The foundation of any relationship is trust. In the library learning commons, a space where students and staff from all grades should feel welcome and included, trust is the foundation of serving the entire school community. In an elementary school this means that some of our learners are as young as 3-years-old when they start with us in the fall. To suggest that we cannot trust our young students (or the older ones for that matter) starts us off in a deficit frame of mind. If we believe that all learners are competent and capable, then we must convey trust in our systemic structures, words and actions.

In our school that means a gradual release approach to independent library use through free flow book exchange for Kindergarten to Grade 8. It means that we do not lock technology behind cabinet doors. It means that we allow each child to take out any book they want right from day one. It means that we do not charge for damaged or lost books. We understand that mistakes occur as part of learning and developing responsibility but, we want the children to know that they are more important than any book, or device, or maker material we might own.

Myth #2

The shhhhhing librarian of old does not exist in our LLC. The space is active and, yes, loud. Students and staff can move chairs and tables to meet their immediate needs and create a responsive, collaborative learning environment. The learning is purposeful but, exploration, play and inquiry require conversation, questioning and occasionally the loud rumble of a bucket of LEGO crashing to the ground. That is not to say that quiet moments are not valued and that the negotiation of the movement and noise within the space is always easy. We often need to “stop the bus” as one of my TL friends used to say and ask everyone to take a pause and reflect on the types of learning happening around them. This is not meant to be seen as “getting in trouble” but, rather, as a lesson in community building and a chance for self-regulation.

Recently, thanks to fellow PDSB teacher-librarian Nicole Baron, I learned about the great strategy of creating a “quiet” zone by adding some noise cancelling headphones to our