

# MSLA JOURNAL

Volume 48, Number 1  
Celebrating 2020



## Celebrating the Libraries' Masked Crusaders



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# President's Message

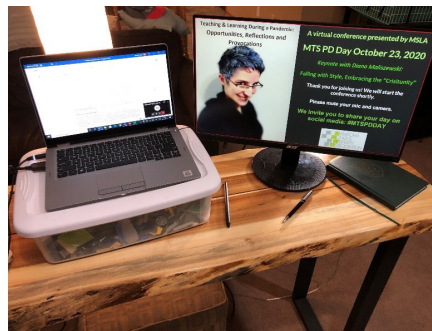
By Brandi Bartok



When I wrote my message for the spring MSLA journal, we were just at the beginning of an immense disruption to our school system due to Covid-19. I'm not sure what I expected for the beginning of the school year in September, but I'm sure like many of you, I hoped things would be somewhat back to normal. Instead we find ourselves in the midst of even more challenges. Two meter distancing at school, masks, constant disinfection of surfaces, and cohorting or alternate days of school for students are only some of the logistical challenges facing schools. In order to implement some of these measures, some school libraries have been converted into classrooms, many Teacher-Librarians have been re-tasked to teach online classes or support grade level teachers, and we are all doing our best to contribute to the creation of a safe welcoming space for students and staff.

The extent of the pandemic has impacted every aspect of the education system and its support structures. For the MSLA SAGE Committee, the task of planning for MTS PD day became a confusing and challenging endeavor. Plans were made, and then changed and then changed again, until the decision to move to an entirely virtual conference was finally made. Then plans were changed yet again as we re-worked the entire theme of the conference to comply with the provincial mandate that all professional development for teachers be related to teaching in a Covid-19 environment in some way.

Moving to a virtual setting meant that we would be able to hold the conference and could stop worrying about the ever-changing limits on public gatherings, but it opened up a whole new set of questions and challenges. None of us had ever facilitated a day long, virtual conference before. What would that even look like? How many sessions should we have? Could we run sessions concurrently? How much should the conference fee be? Would people attend even though some school divisions were not supporting MTS PD Day? What kind of technology would we need?



What platform would be the best for hosting? Some of these questions were almost enough to make us throw up our hands and cancel the entire event. We didn't, only because we know the value of timely and relevant professional development and we felt strongly that educators needed the opportunity to connect and learn in this time of rapid change.

Even with all the challenges, there were positive aspects to hosting the conference virtually. One of these was that we were able to record all of the sessions and make them available to conference attendees after the conference ended. I appreciated this option because I spent the majority of the afternoon

bouncing around between the different concurrent sessions so I could ensure everything was running smoothly on the technology end and I missed some of the content that I wanted to hear. I look forward to watching the sessions in their entirety at my leisure. I also enjoyed the fact that the entire conference ran right out of my living room on two laptops and an extra monitor. The set-up wasn't sophisticated, but it was functional.

In the end, our virtual conference, titled "Teaching and Learning During a Pandemic: Opportunities, Reflections, and Provocations," had just over 40 attendees and went about as smoothly as we could have hoped. Our keynote speaker, Diana Maliszewski offered an upbeat and affirmative message descriptively called, *Falling with Style, Embracing the "Crisitunity": How Emergency Response Remote Learning Shook Us Up for Better and Worse*. That was followed by a morning of sessions revolving around student agency in the Library Learning Commons and information about supporting blended learning in an anywhere, anytime environment. The afternoon sessions offered a good mix of technology and online resources balanced with resources for outdoor, science based learning and literacy.

Planning the virtual conference was a bit of a risk but it seems everything is this year. As you progress through the school year, I hope you also take risks with the goal of furthering student learning, supporting student literacy and working with your fellow teachers to solve problems and face challenges in whatever teaching and learning context in which you find yourself. Stay healthy and safe.



# Editor's Message

By Morgan Arksey

There wasn't much of a debate about what our main topic for this fall's journal would be. Covid-19 is what looms over us all in practically every aspect of our daily lives, so there was little question that this issue would focus on the impacts it has had in School Libraries across the province. Many of us working in libraries have had our roles change. Some of us are cleaning and sanitizing surfaces almost non-stop to ensure that students can still use our spaces. Some of us have had our libraries turned into classrooms but are still working diligently to make sure that students still have access to physical and digital materials. We are balancing added and changing responsibilities at work with the everyday stresses of daily life and the realities of living during a pandemic. I'm certain that it is not an understatement to say that this is not what any of us were called to the library to do.

Several weeks ago, I was scrolling

through the internet searching for a few hits of dopamine to get me through a challenging day that was full of many of the things listed above. I stumbled across a screenshot of



a Tweet virally circulating on Reddit, another social media site, and it really resonated with me.

It is art, whether written, visual, or media in format that helps us get through these challenging days. This

is a gift that our libraries can share with students, whether by ensuring safe access to physical texts, curating materials to allow for students to find new and fascinating materials, growing our digital collections, or planning technology-based learning experiences that help us share and document the times in which we are living. We will all do this in very different ways, and they are all good.

Art is not created in isolation, and neither are librarians. We hope this issue gives you some ideas for ways to connect students with materials, points you towards grants that you can access to further develop your collections, or gives you individuals to connect with on innovative ideas. Most of all,

I hope this issue reminds you that **YOU ARE NOT ALONE**. You are doing great work that is appreciated by your students, community members, and colleagues.



# MSLA Business

## Manitoba School Library Association 2019-2020 Financial Statements

By Erin Thomas, MSLA Secretary

MANITOBA SCHOOL  
LIBRARY ASSOCIATION INC.  
BALANCE SHEET  
AS AT AUGUST 31, 2020

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Current Assets:</b>		
Cash	\$ 9,226	\$ 7,379
Prepaid expenses	<u>          -</u>	<u>          -</u>
	9,226	7,379
	<u>\$ 9,226</u>	<u>\$ 7,379</u>
 <b>LIABILITIES And Net Assets</b>		
<b>Current liabilities:</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	<u>\$ 381</u>	<u>\$ 381</u>
	381	381
 <b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Unrestricted net assets	<u>8,846</u>	<u>6,999</u>
	8,846	6,999
	<u>\$ 9,226</u>	<u>\$ 7,379</u>

Approved on behalf of the Association:

Trustee \_\_\_\_\_

Trustee \_\_\_\_\_

**MANITOBA SCHOOL  
 LIBRARY ASSOCIATION INC.**  
**Statement of Operations and Deficit**  
**AS AT AUGUST 31,2020**

<b>Revenue:</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
AGM	\$ -	\$ 910
Membership Fees	2,695	2,120
SAG Revenue	8,098	6,439
SAG Publishers/Display	2,001	1,245
	<u>12,794</u>	<u>10,714</u>
<b>Other Income:</b>		
Interest	121	181
MTS Grant	-	2,000
Other Income - T Shirts	398	-
	<u>520</u>	<u>2,181</u>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>13,314</b>	<b>12,895</b>
<b>Expenditures:</b>		
AGM	-	1,768
Archive expense	-	1,575
Conferences	1,992	1,882
Event Brite Fees	-	57
Executive meetings	72	80
L.I.T.forum	-	132
Memberships	120	282
I Love to Read Grant	-	300
Seed Grant	-	990
Sponsorship	900	900
Supplies	-	(322)
	<u>3,083</u>	<u>7,643</u>
<b>SAG Conference:</b>		
Books	-	444
Catering	2,441	2,753
Event Brite fees	32	78
Speaker fee	3,550	3,997
Supplies	813	137
T Shirts	322	-
Travel	-	605
	<u>7,158</u>	<u>8,015</u>
<b>Administration:</b>		
Dues and fees	40	40
Insurance	482	459
Interest and bank charges	3	49
Office	-	52
Professional fees	381	381
Website	320	32
	<u>1,225</u>	<u>1,012</u>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>11,467</b>	<b>16,671</b>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenditures for the year</b>	<b>1,847</b>	<b>(3,776)</b>
<b>Unrestricted net assets, beginning of year</b>	<b>6,999</b>	<b>10,774</b>
<b>Unrestricted net assets, end of year</b>	<b>8,846</b>	<b>6,999</b>

**MANITOBA SCHOOL  
LIBRARY ASSOCIATION INC.  
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
AS AT AUGUST 31, 2020**

<b>Cash Flows from Operating Activities</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
Excess of revenue over expenditures for the year	\$ 1,847	-\$ 3,776
<b>Changes in non-cash working capital balances</b>	-	(503)
	<u>1,847</u>	<u>(4,279)</u>
<b>Increase (Decrease) in Cash Position</b>	1,847	(4,279)
Cash Position, Beginning of Year	7,379	11,658
Cash Position, End of Year	9,226	7,379



**MANITOBA SCHOOL  
LIBRARY ASSOCIATION INC.  
Notes to Financial Statements  
AS AT AUGUST 31, 2020**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE ORGANIZATION**

Manitoba School Library Association Inc. is a corporation without share capital, incorporated under the laws of Manitoba. The Organization promotes school libraries by providing professional growth opportunities, encouraging improvements and promoting high standards in educational programs that use a variety of information sources and technologies. It is a non-for-profit organization under section 149 of the Income Tax Act (Canada) and is therefore exempt from tax.

**2. NATURE OF OPERATIONS AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**Basis of presentation**

The financial statements of the organization have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for no-for-profit organizations.

**Financial Instruments**

Financial assets and liabilities are initially measured at fair value. Subsequent measurement of financial assets and liabilities are at amortized cost unless otherwise noted. Financial assets and liabilities measured at amortized cost consist of cash and accounts payable.

If is management`s opinion that the organization is not exposed to significant credit currency, interest rate, liquidity of market risks arising from these financial instruments, unless otherwise noted.

**Capital Assets**

Capital assets are recorded as an expense in the year of acquisition. No capital assets were acquired in either the current of previous fiscal year.

**Revenue recognition**

The organization follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Restricted contributions are recognised as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognised as revenue when received or receivable.

**Use of estimates**

The preparation of the financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities as at the date of the financial statements, as well as reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. These estimates are subject to measurement uncertainty, and the effect on the financial statements of changes in such estimates in future periods could be significant.

**MANITOBA SCHOOL  
LIBRARY ASSOCIATION INC.  
Notes to Financial Statements  
AS AT AUGUST 31, 2020**

**Contributed materials and service**

A substantial number of volunteers contribute a significant amount of their time each year. Due to the difficulty of determining the fair market value, contributed services are not recognized in the financial statements.

Contributed materials and services which are used in the normal course of the organization's operations and would otherwise have been purchased are recorded at the fair market value at the date of contribution if fair value can be reasonably estimated.

## MSLA Executive Update



### Welcome to Morgan Arksey

Morgan Arksey joins the MSLA board this year as co-chair of publications. Currently a Teacher-Librarian at Arthur A. Leach School, he's particularly interested in technology, ensuring equitable access to said technology, rural and remote access issues, and promoting writing amongst students. When not librariansing, he's probably reading, sleeping, or laughing at memes.



# MSLA Leading from the Library Grant

By Cheryl Antonio,  
Kelsey Community School

Cree Nation. Our patrons include students, family members, and the community. With this in mind combined with the plans for a community maker space, we have purchased Botley Coding Robots and accessories as well as hands on learning tools such as magnetic polydrons, legos, and tangrams.

As we move ahead with a Covid-19-friendly plan, children are able to

following directions, team building, and more! The best part is the kids don't even know they are learning! The Botley Robots are geared for younger children and prepares them for more advanced coding which they will receive in grade 3 and later. How exciting and rewarding it is to watch such young minds soak up and learn these modern skills and techniques!



Kelsey Community School was honored to be chosen for the MSLA Leading From the Library Grant! Our school serves the tri-area of The Pas, RM of Kelsey, and Opaskwayak



safely use the robots and accessories. Coding provides so many learning aspects including patience, logical thinking, problem solving, math,



We thank the MSLA for their support as our library moves forward into the new futures of libraries everywhere.

**Teaching & Learning During a Pandemic:  
Opportunities, Reflections and  
Provocations**



A virtual conference presented by MSLA  
**MTS PD Day October 23, 2020**

*Keynote with Diana Maliszewski:*

**Falling with Style, Embracing the "Crisitunity"**  
How Emergency Response Remote Learning Shook Us Up for  
Better and Worse

**For more details, visit:**

<https://www.manitobaschoollibraries.ca/>



# MTS Professional Development Day

Teaching and Learning During a Pandemic: Opportunities, Reflections, and Provocations

## Sharing some reflections from the day

By Joyce Riddell, St. John's-Ravenscourt School

On October 23, 2020, I sat down at my computer in my home office with a cup of coffee ready to rejuvenate my librarian soul. It was a very busy start to the school year and I knew I needed to recharge my batteries. I really missed the opportunity to meet and greet the library staff across the province as you arrived at our MTS Professional Development Day this year. It is the first time in close to a decade that I attended the SAGE Day as simply a participant. I looked forward to attending the sessions without having to worry about the back-end details. Indeed, I was ready to fully engage with the ideas prepared by the MTS Executive and their keynote speaker. Here are a few of my observations based on the notes I took.

Diana Maliszewski, a teacher-librarian at Agnes Macphail Public School in the Toronto District School Board, shared her expertise gained through over 20 years as a school library professional in her keynote address. Her perspective, which was refreshingly Canadian, mirrored what many teacher-librarians and other library staff experienced in the spring. From that commonality, she introduced us to the concept of Crisitivity.

Crisitivity is created from the words crisis and opportunity. From the crisis of closed schools came opportunities to try new teaching strategies and methodologies with

her students. Her keynote provided me with the space to consider what changes to my practice and my teaching have evolved because of the pandemic.

In the next session, Agency and Equity: Students Shaping School Library Collections Pre- and Post-Covid-19, Diana Maliszewski and Jonelle St. Aubyn shared their experiences of student agency in the library. It was a clear example of the synergy and serendipity of a professional idea exchange. Diana related how she presented at Treasure Mountain about a project in which she invited student choice into the library through asking the student to help with the purchasing of library books.

When Jonelle heard about this project, she felt it resonated with her concepts of student voice in her senior school library. So, she expanded the idea to include the physical space of the library. Her students toured other libraries and then presented what they wanted for their library. Jonelle placed stickers that read, "Student Selected", on the resources purchased that students requested. Because of their engagement, her students were excited to present book talks and persuasive arguments about their choices of books and equipment, which they did through video presentations. Jonelle used their presentations as advocacy for funding for her library to her

Board. Through this process, her students feel valued and the school recognizes their needs and interests.

My take-away: Share what is happening in your library. Take the opportunity to present or participate with Canadian School Libraries or Treasure Mountain. "Your ordinary is someone else's extraordinary."

Ross Johnson of the National Film Board shared some excellent material available to schools from the NFB. He shared information about the NFB's full online educational offer. Did you know that the NFB teacher resources include digital lessons, teacher guides, curated playlists and teacher blogs? The NFB also has some excellent Indigenous-made film and educational resources that focus on teaching Reconciliation.

Campus is the NFB's subscription streaming service for educators. It also has new inquiry-based digital resources.

Professional development opportunities in Manitoba are important in developing community and in supporting our continued growth as professionals in the library field. Thank you to MSLA for taking the time to plan this event during a pandemic. Thank you also to the schools and school divisions that place such high value in professional growth to allow us to attend the MTS Professional Development Day this year.

# Nutrients for Life

By Ray Cochrane



## Soils Station



The presentation provided an overview of the Nutrients for Life Canada website. Various resources introduced included: a downloadable classroom resource on soil science and agricultural sustainability, e-Learning lessons, games, videos and print materials.



Some visual examples of activities during classroom and field presentations demonstrated how the Regional Managers interact with teachers and students. There was an emphasis on NFL's Learning Garden program, which included funding opportunities, the application procedure and examples of how school gardens could be implemented within a school setting.



### NFL HAS 2 LEVELS OF SCHOOL GRANTS

- \$500.00 SCHOOL GRANT
- \$3000.00 LEARNING GARDEN GRANT OVER 2 YEARS

**\*\*DEADLINE TO APPLY\*\*  
MARCH 31, 2021**

**APPLY ONLINE TODAY**

<https://www.nutrientsforlife.ca/learning-gardens/how-to-apply/>

**NUTRIENTS FOR LIFE LEARNING GARDEN INITIATIVE**

Nutrients for Life (NFL) believes that gardens, when used as teaching tools, provide students with authentic, first-hand learning experiences about the valuable role nutrients play in food production, health, and sustainability.

In 2011, Nutrients for Life launched the Learning Garden Initiative. The program sponsored the creation and expansion of new gardens in schools across Manitoba. Due to the success of the initiative, NFL Learning Gardens are now being rolled out nation-wide. NFL's Educational Coordinator, along with our partners, share learning resources and track the successes of the participating schools.

There are two programs under the NFL Learning Garden Initiative – the Learning Garden Program (\$3000 over two years) and School Garden Program (\$500 one-time payment).



# StoryWalk® - What is it and How to Create Your Own

By Holly Pike and Karen Burkett. LRSD

## What is a StoryWalk®?

A StoryWalk is a great way to read a picture book and go for a walk at the same time. Pages of a book mounted on signs are posted throughout a neighbourhood, and readers walk from sign to sign to enjoy the story.

Each sign features one page of the story and a fun physical activity suggestion to do at each stop. A variety of technology can be incorporated in your signs. A QR code with a link to the map of the sign locations is a handy feature. The final sign could include a code to a Flipgrid digital guest book so readers have an opportunity to share their experience.

How to select a book for your StoryWalk

- Large or bold illustrations
- Small amount of text
- An exciting story!
- A local author/illustrator is recommended. Why not feature a local author?

## What do you need to create your own StoryWalk?

- 2 physical copies of your chosen book
- Signs and stakes to mount the pages

We contacted our local MLA who donated campaign signs and stakes!

- A way to waterproof the signs
- Extra information for the signs, if desired. For example, paper cut-outs with physical activity suggestions, and printouts of the QR code linked to the map or the online guest book

## The Process

Assembling and setting up the StoryWalk requires a significant investment in time. Beginning steps include cutting the book apart, printing the paper cut-outs, gluing the pieces onto the cards and laminating the cards. Then the cards need to be mounted to the foam core signs and taped in place.

The next step is to design your route and create your digital map, if you choose to use one. Keep in mind that public spaces are preferred, as opposed to private property. The school playground could be a good option.

Installing the signs in the neighbourhood is next. It is helpful to use a roll of garden twist ties to fasten the signs to a fixed object.

Once the StoryWalk has been created and installed, we recommend you check it daily.

StoryWalks can also be set up for a one-day specific event such as a Family Fun day or a Literacy event.

## Concerns

### Copyright

- Buy two copies of the book.
- Do not photocopy the pages as that breaks copyright
- Request permission from the publisher

### Vandalism and Theft

- We used a roll of garden twist ties to attach the stakes to permanent structures. Eg. Fence, light pole, tree, public bench
- We recommend using heavy-duty clear packing tape to tape

the sign to metal stakes.

- Post the StoryWalk® for a short time – maybe 10 days with one weekend in the middle.
- Check your StoryWalk daily or every other day.

## Benefits

A StoryWalk is a relaxing and fun way to be outside and enjoy a story. It helps families to feel more connected to the school community and makes the school a part of the wider community.

It's a great way to collaborate with other staff members such as the phys. ed. teacher or music teacher and enrich the experience for everyone.

## Origins of the StoryWalk®

The StoryWalk® Project was created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, VT and developed in collaboration with the Kellogg-Hubbard Library. StoryWalk® is a registered service mark owned by Ms. Ferguson.

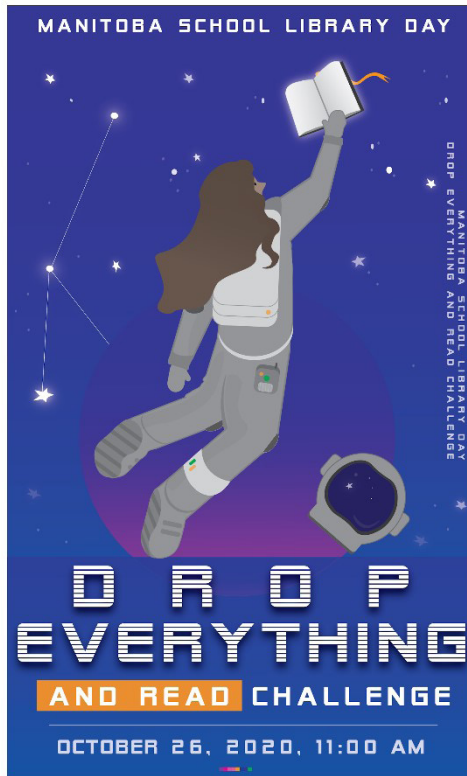
Learn more about the history at <https://www.kellogghubbard.org/storywalk>

## Any questions?

Contact Karen Burkett  
([karen.burkett@lrdsd.net](mailto:karen.burkett@lrdsd.net))

or Holly Pike  
([holly.pike@lrdsd.net](mailto:holly.pike@lrdsd.net)).

# Literacy



## Manitoba School Library Day October 26, 2020

By Brandi Bartok, MSLA President

Many things are different this year for Teacher-Librarians, Library Technicians and school libraries, but one thing that has remained consistent is the declaration of the last Monday of October as Manitoba School Library Day. The theme of the day this year was “A Day in the Library Learning Commons.” Manitoba school libraries have always been dynamic centres, working to support the school



community, and the pace at which we have had to evolve, reinvent and demonstrate our value has never been more intense. What exactly a day in the Library Learning Commons looks like this year is a moving target.

One of the ways we celebrate Manitoba School Library Day is through our annual Drop Everything and Read challenge. This year,

we encouraged schools to continue that tradition, and we're sure that many schools found creative ways to get kids reading. A quick scan through our twitter feed saw many acknowledgements of the day and the DEAR challenge. Celebrating Manitoba School Library Day

provides teachers and students with an opportunity to acknowledge the important role school libraries play in the academic and cultural lives of our students. The members of the Manitoba School Library Association appreciate the opportunity to highlight school

libraries with a special day, and we are grateful for the efforts of Teacher-Librarians and library technicians as they work to ensure that the day is acknowledged in schools across the province.



**Laura Cowie** @LHCowie · Oct 26 ⋮

This year's celebration of school libraries is poignant. We know all of our schools can't open their school libraries right now. In some schools, we see reinvented libraries - mobile carts, delivery service, holds! All true reminders of how crucial libraries & library staff are.



**Cdn School Libraries** @CdnSchoolLibrar · Oct 26

The MB provincial gov't has declared today Manitoba School Library Day, the same day as our national celebration #CSLD2020! Have a wonderful Drop Everything and Read Challenge, @\_MSLA\_! Check out the MB declaration, everyone! [manitobaschoollibraries.ca](http://manitobaschoollibraries.ca)

💬
↻ 2
♥ 9
📤



**Beaverlodge School** @thelodgerocks · Oct 26 ⋮

Our 3/4s were getting comfy during Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) time to celebrate #mbsld2020 and #cdnsld2020.

#mbdear2020





💬
↻
♥ 5
📤



**Niki Card** @NikiCard · Oct 26 ⋮

Happy Manitoba School Library Day! ❤️📖❤️  
We celebrated with contests, writing about our library, story times, and MB-wide DEAR time.

We also talked about how special our school library is...even this year! ❤️  
#mbsld2020 #mbdear #CSLD2020  
@mbschoollibrary @CdnSchoolLibrar






💬
↻ 1
♥ 8
📤



# #BookADay Summer Reading Challenge

By Niki Card, RETSD Teacher-Librarian and MSLA Past-President



In 2012 I caught the #bookaday summer reading challenge bug from passionate educators and readers, like Donalyn Miller, John Schu and Pernille Ripp. Starting then, I participated in the challenge every summer, usually knocking it out of the park. The guidelines I set for myself were simple, however many days we had between school years was my goal, any book counted, with the exception of picture books I had read before. (I added that caveat when I began because I had two young children at the time and could find myself reading the same picture book over and over again in just one single day, so wanted to set guidelines that pushed me as a reader!) Otherwise, every novel, graphic novel, audiobook, education text, and new-to-me picture book counted.

During our stay at home time in the spring of 2020, I read a lot. At first, I struggled to get my mind to settle into reading, but after a while, it became my escape during unsettling times. I took the time to read some longer books that had sat on my bookshelf for a while and tidied up my digital bookshelf too. I tracked that reading with #stayathome2020 and, no rules attached, read 31 books before we had to return in June to end out the school year.

As the summer of 2020 approached, I felt restless. I wasn't sure I wanted to lock myself into a summer reading goal. I wasn't sure I wanted to dedicate so much time to reading this summer and instead envisioned (and craved) a return to something more "normal"; busy with outings with my now teen and pre-teen children, road trips, and lazy days outdoors. I half-heartedly counted the days (shorter this year thanks to our early return to school in September), set my rules, prepped my tracking spreadsheet, and tweeted about my challenge anyway.

Summer began and I realized all the road trips and activities I imagined were still not to be due to the pandemic and I often found myself curled up with a book. Because the libraries weren't open for browsing, my regular strategy of hitting up their new picture book section for a giant stack of books out and I wasn't spending unnecessary time in stores, so spending hours mulling over books in McNally Robinson was out too. Thankfully, a friend who works at a rural library, Kathie MacIsaac, helped me out mid-summer and curated a stack of fiction and non-fiction picture books for me to borrow. I also seemed to have enough books fall into my lap and miraculously, I made it. I read my reading goal of 63 books, just in the nick of time.

More importantly, I enjoyed it. I found solace and comfort in the pages of the books. Reading was a time to disconnect and lose myself, at least for a while. I am so grateful that I have a job that I can help our students lose themselves in books too.

Usually when I talk about my summer #bookaday challenge to fellow educators and book lovers, the follow up question is, "What were your favourites?". Each week I tweeted and Instagramed my progress

and would give a little heart to those I particularly enjoyed that week. Here are the ones that stood out to me the most in each category:

**Picture books:** "Our Favourite Day" by Joowon Oh, "One Little Bag: An Amazing Journey" by Henry Cole and "Peace" by Miranda Paul

**Middle grade novels:** "Sara and the Search for Normal" by Wesley King and "King and the Dragonflies" by Kacen Callender

**Young Adult:** "Parachutes" by Kelly Yang

**Adult Fiction:** "American Dirt" by Jeanine Cummins, "The Guest List" by Lucy Foley, "Anxious People" by Fredrik Backman, and "Indian Horse" by Richard Wagamese

**Adult Non-Fiction:** "Kids these Days" by Jody Carrington

2020 has been an unsettling year and while I thought I didn't want to commit to so much reading, I am not overly surprised that when the times were tough, I turned to reading. Who knows what the summer of 2021 will be like, but I think it is safe to assume, I'll be reading.



# Copyright Rules Still Apply During a Pandemic

By Jonine Bergen, St. John's-Ravenscourt School

We are all trying to be creative in how we are administering library programs but we also need to model good digital citizenship. As our schools work within a variety of models - face-to-face, blended learning, and virtual learning - we may need to consider what we can and cannot do under Copyright. Fortunately, Manitoba Education has provided some guidance through a post on their website entitled "Copyright and Education during a Pandemic."

The document provides an excellent FAQ section that provides guidance about read-alouds, copying resources for online classrooms, and other questions we may be asked to answer in the library. The FAQ was developed by the legal counsel for the Copyright Consortium Committee of CMEC. It is also important that we continue to use the Fair Dealing Decision Tool and the 4th edition of Copyright Matters in our decision making.

We included a couple of sections from

the FAQ below. We strongly encourage you to explore the entire FAQ document so that you can support your faculty.

## **Question 5 – Can teachers record themselves reading books aloud to their students?**

No. Recording a book reading requires permission from the copyright owner. Copyright owners have the exclusive right to reproduce their copyright-protected literary works. Recording a book reading is a reproduction of the book. There is no users' right in the Copyright Act authorizing this educational use.

## **Question 11 – Can teachers post online chapters of textbooks that have been purchased for all the students but which may not be accessible to them because the books are in a closed school?**

A teacher can post one chapter under the Fair Dealing Guidelines (but note, as a reminder, that a teacher cannot post a new chapter every week). A single copy of the chapter may be provided or communicated to each student enrolled in a class or course by posting the chapter to a learning or course management system that is password protected or otherwise restricted to the students in the class. Owning a physical copy of a book does not give the owner the right to make a copy of any more of the book than is permitted under fair dealing.

Copyright and Education during a Pandemic: <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/Covid-19/faq/copyright.html>





# Cataloguing Corner

## You Can't Touch This

By Morgan Arksey, Arthur A. Leach School

How can we help students browse for books in a post-Covid-19 world?

All readers know that browsing for a new book is one of the best parts about coming to the library. Sometimes the best thing about looking for a book is that you don't know what gems you will find in the stacks. But what about when we can't touch books? How do we make sure that students can find new and interesting books while keeping students safe and physically distanced?

Links to helpful how-to guides and videos have been provided at the end of this article.



### Destiny Collections

If your school is using Destiny Discover, the Collections feature is an excellent way to build digital bookshelves that students can browse. Think of it as a virtual resource bin! When paired together with QR codes, these collections provide an excellent way for students to browse your shelves. Collections can also be made on curricular themes, and can feature books in the library catalog, digital resources, and links to other pre-selected materials from the internet. A Collection can even contain other Collections.

Collections can be created from the Collections homepage, found by selecting

the three horizontal lines at the top left-hand side of Destiny Discover, and then choosing collections. Make sure you are logged in first! Choose the plus-sign at the bottom-right of the page. A workflow will then take you through the steps of setting up your collection, including titles, description, grade and subject tags, and color and images. Privacy can be set to school, district and public levels.

To add books in your library to your collection, simply search them in Destiny Discover, and select 'Add to your collections' from the details screen. To add URLs, open your collection and choose the plus sign at the bottom right-hand corner.

**Pro-Tip:** Set your collections to public so that you can copy their URL into a QR code generator. Print the QR codes and print them out to bring to classrooms, so that students can browse on iPads or other devices!

### Symbaloo

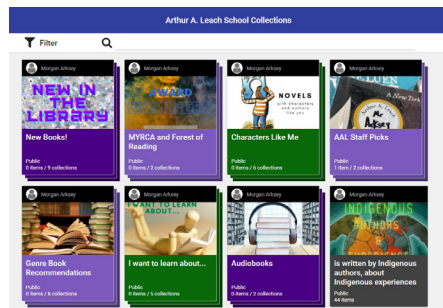
If your division is not using Destiny Discover, there are other online collection tools that can create visual collections for you. Symbaloo is one that has a free educator plan. Add links to the Goodreads pages of books to the tiled Symbaloo board for new materials, popular topics or themes, or really any kind of collection you would like to promote. Clicked links will take you to the linked URL in a new tab. Symbaloo can be embedded onto your current library website – a handy feature.

### Goodreads App

If you have a lot of horizontal display space, or are taking books up to classes and have access to iPads or student devices, the



Goodreads app is a great choice. Goodreads is a social media site for book lovers. But it doesn't have to just be used as social media - its app is an amazing tool for browsing books. You can search them up in app manually using the search feature, but it's the built-in book scanner that really takes it to the next level. This tool has been my saviour while book shopping when I can't touch. Simply open the book scanner, point at the front cover of the book (or the back barcode) and head right on over to the book's Goodreads page where you can read an overview, reviews, and for some books



even samples.

Covid-19 has meant getting creative with how we promote books to our students. Tools like the ones above help us reimagine how we share with one another. Consider getting students involved in the creation process! Head to <https://linktr.ee/bookbrowsing> to learn more and watch videos about the three browsing tools listed above.

# Leading Learning through a Pandemic

## Yes! Libraries are Working During the Pandemic – a Look at Schools Across Manitoba

Across the province, school libraries celebrated Manitoba School Libraries day on October 26, 2020. The letter, written by the Honorable Kelvin Goertzen, that accompanied the Proclamation included this sentence, “Although school libraries are temporarily closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Manitoba Education recognizes the important role libraries play in supporting the education of all students.”

We know that school libraries are more than walls and bulletin boards. The term “school library” encompasses the trained and dedicated professional staff who support their whole school community - teachers, students, staff, and families. The school library includes the programs run by these enthusiastic problem-solvers. The school library includes resources - physical and digital. It includes makerspaces, coding, literacy, and all the other ingenious initiatives that are still ongoing. The phrase school library is synonymous with learning commons and community. Yes, in some schools, the physical space may be closed but many schools value their library programming enough that they have found a way to keep the physical doors open, with all the safety protocols to ensure students and staff are safe. Even if the physical space may have had to be adapted for other uses, the library still operates - it just looks a little different this year!

### River East Transcona School Division (RETSD)

While Covid-19 has altered River

East Transcona School Division’s (RETSD) physical library learning commons (LLC), LLC staff have demonstrated creativity, flexibility and perseverance to ensure library programming continues.

This includes:

- All library-technicians were reinstated at the end of August and returned to work in our schools, ensuring our LLCs are properly staffed
- Even while LLC space may be closed to students or repurposed, Tls have continued to maintain the LLC’s vital role in the school
- All RETSD students have access to physical and digital library materials and resources to borrow
- Library staff have modified book exchange processes in a variety of ways, including mobile book carts and contactless curbside pick-up
- Until schools entered modified Code Orange, teacher-librarians have largely been able to be responsive to school needs and support staff with technology, inquiry, and digital citizenship
- Tls have been supporting the pedagogical and professional development and tech integration needs of teachers as they move to blended, flipped or remote learning models with an emphasis on digital tools and resources.



- Tls continue to curate and share multiple online information-based resources, as well as print materials
- Tls have continued to advocate



for the literacy needs of our students to ensure equity of access to quality literature

Pictures:

- Erin Clarke – Wonder Wagon and mobile book cart

### East Selkirk Middle School

*Terri Stewart*

My name is Terri Stewart, and I am the Library Clerk here at East Selkirk Middle School.

Yes, my role has been shaken up a little in the new Covid-19-reality. When it was first announced that schools would be shutting down and as support staff we were told that we would be provided with ‘meaningful work’ in the absence of the students. Easier said than done.

However, I quickly realized that I was going to have to get creative in how I would reach our students.

I created a webpage and have been maintaining a weekly blog on new books being added to the library, the Sora App/Overdrive e-book service that our division is subscribing to, and a new MYRCA (Manitoba Young Reader’s Choice Awards) book club, amongst other things. Here is the link if you would like to check it out: <https://eastselkirkmiddleschoollibrary.weebly.com/>

I have also recently requested to have my own Microsoft Teams platform set up, specifically for our MYRCA book club. This will give me the opportunity of continuing with book club, regardless of the future of remote learning. I have introduced the students to the platform and have already started using it, so that the students can try it out and provide their feedback.

We are one of the fortunate libraries in the Lord Selkirk School Division, in that we have an expansive space and can easily spread out and mind our social distancing. So for now, it’s business as usual. We have assigned our cohorts

specific days of the week to visit the library. Everyone sanitizes their hands as they enter the library, so that they can freely browse the library shelves, masks are worn by all students and tables and chairs are nicely spaced apart. When the students return their library books, they are quarantined for 72 hours before they can be re-shelved.

I have been encouraging our students to explore our library platform catalogue on Destiny Discover, and talking to them about logging in using their username and password so that they can easily place a book on hold.

And the other work in progress, is collaborating with the teachers in curating collections on Destiny so that when they are working on a project it will help the students to find vetted and reliable resources all in one place. This is a huge time saver, and will help prevent the students from going down the proverbial ‘rabbit hole’ of Google or Wikipedia.

### Kelsey Community School

*Cheryl Antonio*

Here, at Kelsey Community School (K-5), we are striving to maintain as much normality and peace for the students as we can. Even with this goal, there have been many changes to the library.

- We no longer have hands on stations at the tables
- We do have much more comfy chairs for the kids to crawl up in and we have also moved in more tables.
- We can safely fit a class of 25 so each student is socially distanced.
- The grades 3, 4, and 5 students must sanitize their hands upon entering the library. They bring their own shelf marker and wear a mask. They can choose from the shelves are they normally would.

- The k – 2 students have a select number of books to choose from which are placed strategically in one area of the library, on several shelves and racks.
- I sanitize all the seats and tables between classes. Shelves are wiped down, as well.
- Returned items are quarantined.
- Staff can make their sign out requests to me and I will get it to them.
- We’ve put away the listening centres and I haven’t brought out the iPads, Chromebooks, Launchpads, or Tablets.

### Linden Christian School

*Kim Marr and Liz Inglis*

All Library classes are happening in the classrooms. The library is a grade 11 cohort space where classes are taught and students have a place to study.

A library cart of preselected books is taken to the K-4 classes. A scanner and a chromebook are taken to the classroom for circulation purposes. Grade 3+ are also using Destiny to place holds. The grade 4 teachers give their students time to place holds the day before their scheduled class, which allows us to have the books pulled and signed out, ready to deliver during their library class.

All holds are pulled on a daily basis and distributed to the K to 7 homeroom teachers. Library space is marked so grade 8- 12 students can come into the library only to pick up holds and print jobs.

Stories are read live in the K-2 and 4 classes.

As time permits, working on adding missing cover images and summaries to the OPAC.

Finding that different books are being circulated both because of limited selection taken to class or because students are finding different things when using the OPAC.

Returned books are signed in and then out to quarantine. (Follet is working on a better system so that returned books can be returned directly to Quarantine). We have a quarantine box for every day of the week. The following week they are returned again and then either shelved or signed out to next hold. The exceptions are the books that show up as having holds when they are first returned. We are using some empty shelves to lay these books flat so that the quarantine time is shorter and they can move down the Hold queue quicker.

One new thing we tried was sharing a Google form with the Middle Years students and inviting them to recommend books to purchase for the library. They gave great suggestions, many of which we ordered at the McNally PD Day and ULS sales.

As much as we miss having the students in the library, many positives have come out of the new ways of doing things.

### St. James-Assiniboia School Division

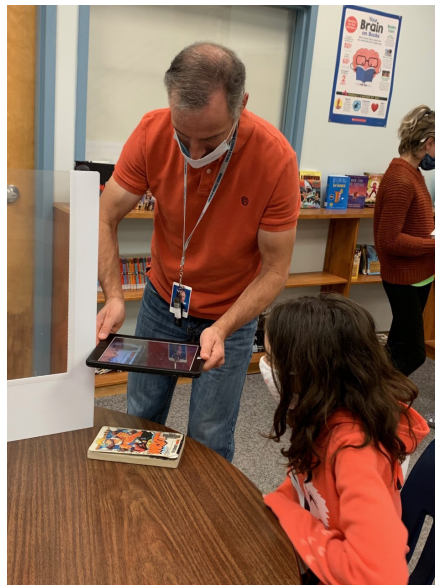
Library programs look different this year. Classes are not coming into our libraries but staff are finding creative and safe ways to continue to get books into the hands of children. Staff are setting up carousels, topics, and Learning Links on Destiny.

We are following the REALM testing results when establishing testing protocols. Most staff are displaying picture books upright for shorter quarantine times, if they have the space. These pictures celebrate those front-line workers who are advocating for literacy in their schools. They also depict how the library program may differ from school to school depending on space. The pictures are from two different schools to show different loaning models.

Linwood has the books in bins and quarantining on the tables, they are using a classroom delivery model with holds placed in Destiny for the older grades, materials



Books in quarantine on tables and bins of books for delivery to classrooms - Linwood Elementary School, September 2020



Mobile circulation and safe table use - Lincoln Middle School, September 2020 NOTE: Mr. Leonard Brisebois, the Library Technician at Lincoln is using the iPad to circulate books.

selected by the Library Technician for younger grades.

Lincoln (Middle school) has a very large

space and is having students using the library. They safely choose from the shelves, never returning a touched book to the shelf. They sit two per table with a plexi divider between students. The Library Technician uses an iPad to move table to table and sign out materials.

Books in quarantine on tables and bins of books for delivery to classrooms - Linwood Elementary School, September 2020

Mobile circulation and safe table use - Lincoln Middle School, September 2020 NOTE: Mr. Leonard Brisebois, the Library Technician at Lincoln is using the iPad to circulate books.

### Durocher Library, St. Mary's Academy Kelsey Jennings

- To ensure social distancing standards, we have removed chairs, shut off every other computer, and spread out tables.
- Between each use, we spray tables and chairs with hospital-grade sanitizer, and wipe computer mice and keyboards to keep



everything as clean as possible.

- The stacks are closed for browsing.
- At the beginning of the year, we visited each homeroom to show the girls how to search, browse, and place holds on Destiny.
- During the day, we pull holds three times: in the morning before class start, at noon before lunch, and at three o'clock before afternoon dismissal.
- Library is limited to 40 students (prior limit was 130)

Despite all the new things that needed to be introduced this year, I have been thankful for the library projects that were completed during the 2019-2020 school year that have eased our processes during this Covid-19 pandemic. Last year, our student workers completed our generify project by assigning 'copy categories', cover images, summaries, and subject headings to all our fiction titles in our OPAC, Destiny.

Without this work, browsing through Destiny would be a lot harder on our students and would have impacted circulation a lot more. So far, the girls have been happy that they can still browse the books at all, but the lack of physical displays and browsing has dropped our circulation by about 30%.

The quarantine process for items has been widely successful. We have labeled bins Monday through Friday for our return chute and items are held behind the counter for a full week before being processed. There is a lot of conflicting information on how long books should be held for, but we are following the World Health Organization's (WHO) recommendation of 4-5 days. One challenge with this system is overdues—we are brainstorming ways to resolve the issue without affecting

circulation statistics.

We have been able to create a Microsoft Teams group where we post digital displays of new material and other topics that might be of interest to students. We are also making use of the bulletin boards for displays. We are also hoping to use Teams to bring back some of the popular activities from previous years: book clubs, online gaming (our library is the host of the school's board game club), and other interactive activities can all be done there. Building engagement with the students on the platform has been hard to sell—digital engagement does not come close to replacing in-person and physical activities—but it is still early in the school year, so we will keep trying.

With all these changes, the biggest impact I have noticed has been how I interact with the students. It is a lot harder to build rapport when you are constantly reminding them to distance themselves and wear their masks properly. There is no more roaming reader's advisory (very little reader's advisory in general), I am no longer able to sit down and join in on a round or two of Uno, and instead of encouraging friend groups to mix it up and mingle with students in other grades, I hesitate to do so.

I look forward to days when the library is again a bustling space, full of diverse activities, and excited students. In the mean time, we celebrate small opportunities to welcome and serve teachers and students as best we can.

### **Balmoral Hall**

*Colleen Einarson*

All elementary classes get a weekly or biweekly visit from the travelling library. JK-2 get a story. Depending on class arrangement, I read from chair at front, walk around the room while reading or use the document camera.

All grades give me requests for what

specific or general kinds of books I should bring to the next class.

Grade 3-5 students have learnt how to use Destiny to place holds and are using that well. Circulation is done using an iPad.

As the school is on three floors with no elevator, a big challenge was how to get 30 or so books to the classrooms. For me two sturdy tote bags has been the solution.

Teachers are requesting fewer books to support their units of inquiry. I have had requests for Destiny collections that have online resources only to support units of inquiry and expect this to continue throughout the year. Limited choice has been more successful than anticipated.

Middle and Senior students need to place holds and books are delivered to their homeroom class.

The wing that the library is in is the grade 9-10 cohort space. Those students can come into the library to look for a book or pick up their holds. The new library maximum capacity is 27.

### **St. John Brebeuf School**

*Colleen Einarson*

All students come to the library once per cycle. Class size is around 24.

Grades K-3 are read a story and then get to choose books. Grades 4-8 receive instruction on the catalogue or talk about books, library organization, and so forth before choosing books.

Story time is a bit of a challenge as the students are far apart, so I walk around with the book. If selection and circulation goes smoothly we have a second story at the end of class using the smart board for an online book reading.

K and Grade 1 are limited to choosing a book from their table. Other grades go to the shelf.

Physical distancing is a challenge. Having to quarantine all books that are touched has increased shelving time.



The library computers are off limits, so I do all the book searching during library class. Students can place books on hold from home. They are avid readers and are quite frustrated with not being able to get a book they have on hold until it gets out of quarantine from the previous borrower.

Tables and chairs are sanitized after each class. Classes are scheduled with a period in between to allow for sanitization, placing touched books in quarantine and changing book selections.

### **What's Happening in Pembina Trails During the Covid-19 Pandemic?**

*Jo-Anne Gibson, Library Learning Consultant*

Like all employee groups in Pembina Trails School Division, during the Covid-19-19 pandemic teacher-librarians and library technicians find themselves doing tasks well beyond their job descriptions. The "all hands-on deck" attitude within Pembina Trails means that all employees pitch in wherever they are needed and complete tasks that just need doing. As the Library Learning Commons Consultant, I continue to support the library staff, however, this is now exclusively completed through phone, email and Microsoft Teams.

Similar to all consultants in Pembina Trails, my primary responsibility since September has been to support all teachers who are teaching in an online, concurrent, blended or hybrid learning environment. Taking up where I left off last spring, I continue to be the Seesaw expert within Pembina Trails. This has expanded this year to providing information sessions to parents on how to support their child using Seesaw.

I have also been the point person responsible for translating safety protocols established by Manitoba

Health and Manitoba Education to a library setting. Although I have provided the safety protocols which all schools must follow, since all schools are unique, each school has decided independently how their library spaces are used and staff deployed. Before Code Orange, some schools completed book exchanges in the library and others brought books to classrooms. Almost all schools have worked on teaching students how to use Destiny to put holds on books; these books were either picked up in the library or brought to classes. Some teacher-librarians taught lessons in the library, others in classrooms and some even outside.

Code Orange has completely changed how our libraries and library staff function in K-8 schools in Pembina Trails. Most teacher-librarians in K-8 schools have either been partially or completely been reassigned to teach or co-teach a specific class. Some library technicians find themselves supervising students even more than they normally would have done in the past. Since library spaces in K-8 are now being used as classrooms, books are exclusively being brought to classrooms.

Code Orange has not affected our high school library staff as much as their K-8 counterparts. Since September, all our high school students have attended every second day so numbers in classes have not been affected. High school students in Pembina Trails continue to use the library in their spares to "chill out," to eat their lunches, sign out books and complete their schoolwork. For contract-tracing purposes anyone who enters a school library must be accounted for. We are particularly proud of the ingenuity of Chantal Rochon, a teacher-librarian at Fort Richmond Collegiate who designed a QR tracking system using Microsoft Forms that makes contact tracking

much easier. Chantal's tracking system is now being used within all common areas in all five of our high schools and has been embraced by students and staff, alike. The tracking system even caught the attention of City of Winnipeg officials who thought the system could be used for contract tracing within their facilities.

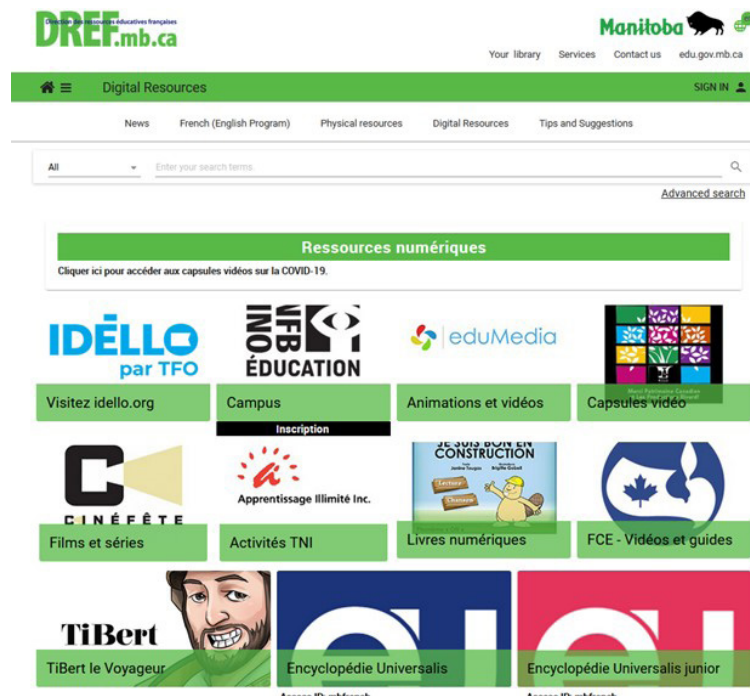
Throughout the pandemic, our Pembina Trails library staff have been committed to ensuring that learning and reading materials reach the hands of students and staff. As in all schools, digital resources and technology have become key. The support our library staff have provided from a technology point of view has and continues to be amazing. The number of division-wide digital resources has recently been increased in Pembina Trails. I am pleased that the trustees in Pembina Trails recently voted in favour of increasing digital resources in our school division after listening to my presentation on this topic in mid-October. Now the real work begins as our dedicated library staff work to promote and integrate these resources and our existing digital and print resources in the classroom. Not an easy task when you have little to no time scheduled for your regular library duties, you are constantly cleaning and ensuring that students and staff are following the Covid-19 protocols! Did I mention the endless cleaning all while wearing a hot, sweaty mask???

# French Second Language Revitalization Program (FSLRP) – how the Pandemic Opened an Opportunity for Partnership

By Jonine Bergen, St. John's-Ravenscourt School

We were very excited when we learned we were the recipients of a French Second Language Revitalization Program Grant in February. We planned on using the grant money to purchase resources to allow our students more choice in their French reading. We also planned to use the grant to shine a light on the French program in the school through signage and some French activities that would occur in the library. In partnership with our French teachers, we developed a list of resources to purchase – games, books, magazines – and were planning to start our initiative after Spring Break. And then Covid-19 caused the schools to close.

Our library, like all the of the school libraries, had to pivot to ensure that we could support students at home. The Grant was placed on the backburner while we jumped on the roller coaster and held on while navigating the new world of online learning. For the students in our French program, we realized our plans we had developed in association with the grant were not going to be effective. It was time to find digital resources to support our French learners. It should be noted that St. John's-Ravenscourt is not a French Immersion school. Many of the online resources we looked at were not appropriate for our French classes. The library community in Manitoba is filled with enthusiastic professionals who are willing to share their expertise to support other learners. With this group of educators and with the support of DREF, we were able to locate three online platforms that would support our French learners while they were learning from home.

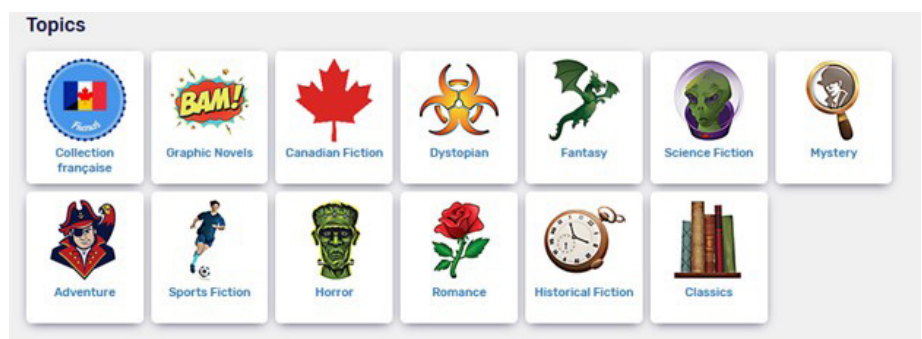


Fast forward to September. St. John's-Ravenscourt's Middle School decided to increase the length of the classes to decrease student movement through the day. Because of that extended time period, teachers were actively considering ways of chunking their class time. Providing an opportunity for the library to come into the class to support student's French reading was an effective

way for the library to support teachers and students. It also increased the library's presence in the classroom and provided an opportunity for the library staff to develop relationships with some French teachers that we didn't have before.

The library created a "topic" for the French resources on Destiny so students can search and select their own reading material. French ebooks, Curio, and other French resources have also been added to support student who are learning from home. These resources are accessible through the library's website.

This initiative has proven so successful that it has also moved to the Senior School. In fact, the demand for French reading materials is so great, the library is unable to meet the demand with the resources acquired through the grant. We are very fortunate in Manitoba that we have access to all the resources available through DREF. The staff at DREF are very helpful and continue to support us in locating and lending grade appropriate French reading materials for our students.



# A high school library learning commons: Questions explored.

By Mona-Lynne Ayotte, Teacher-Librarian, Institut collegial Vincent Massey Collegiate



When we opened our newly renovated Library Learning Commons (LLC), we wondered how to best navigate the spaces in such a way that would open it up to all student learners and staff. Our renovation of three floors was remarkable, architecturally pleasing, expensive and created a welcoming space for everyone. So much had changed and one of the most welcome changes was how the new lighting panels were designed to absorb sound, one of the former biggest drawbacks.

Here are some of the questions we explored in order to create the LLC space for high school students in a way that worked for multiple learning experiences, accessibility, and large group presentations.

## How did you furnish the new space?

Lower level. Since phase one (lower level of library) of our space had been remodeled the year before, we had purchased new furniture that was



movable, foldable, and comfortable. We selected tables that could fold and roll away easily, and could move from room to room when needed. One of our middle rooms had a folding wall and could accommodate a larger group of 22 with conference-like table support when needed. Across from the glassed-in rooms were café-style tables/study carrels with white boards acting as dividers and higher chairs. These spaces had electrical outlets at desk level and allowed students to work independently or quietly together using whiteboards to study and plan. Two comfortable green chairs with side tables and wired-divider complemented the remaining space.

## How do students use these rooms and study carrels in the lower level?

In an LLC, you need spaces that offer different levels of activity and participation. Our lower level has a space for quiet work, while the rooms can be used for quiet or group/partner work and activities. The biggest challenge we faced as the rest of the space re-opened was in determining the best way to share the rooms. These rooms had been available prior to the second stage of renovations, and we noticed a trend with students – they had decided to make these rooms an almost permanent room for meeting, working and being together. In a way to promote equity, we asked students to use the room once a week other than when we suggested they use them, as there might be a class or presentation taking place on one of the levels. As students used the rooms, we found it was important they write down their names at our circulation desk so that a more equitable sharing could occur while being able to monitor if there had been an issue with the use of the room. Those issues might be leaving the room in a mess, damage to the room, extra garbage from unwanted

food. When damage did occur some students wanted to hide, however, our principal assured us that these things happened and it was better to encourage students to be open and honest with us about what had occurred.

As second semester rolled around, we decided to try something new. Students would simply look at our chart located at our circulation desk, sign in and use the room. We did work in second term with students in a different way as the schedule shifted and there were less students during some periods, so we talked with groups of students who would benefit from working together possibly more than one time a week. Any students who were fooling around, playing videos and loud music as entertainment, were asked to go elsewhere in the school to meet.

## What did you do to furnish the newly renovated top and main level?



We kept all of our old furniture in storage and redeployed them mostly in library fanning out the rest to classrooms in need. When it was time to move back into our LLC our vice-principal suggested we create more spaciousness in the upper floor and we lessened the amount of tables and chairs. In phase 3 of the renovation, we expect to have an elevator, and my daughter who was taking a disability studies class demonstrated to me how important accessible space was to those with accessibility issues. This was a new



concept to share with our users, as many questioned why they did not just make space when someone with accessibility issues entered. We explained to them gently that those with accessibility issues needed to feel welcomed always, and deserved the same level of access as everyone. Now that we had fewer tables on the main floor, students in wheelchairs felt more comfortable navigating around tables moving towards computer stations and bookshelves.

Since the library was no longer congested with tables, chairs and students one on top of each other while trying to work, the space opened up and students started to select the right space for the right activity.

We have since looked at purchasing new furniture to upgrade the space in a more modern way. We are considering movable and folding tables for our main floor and bubble; some might be round, have room for larger groups, and might include media tables that would include access to larger monitor screens. In our makerspace, we are looking to tables that have adjustable heights as we have a sewing makerspace, which requires table height adjustments. As well, we are considering soft seating for students on the main floor to relax and have a place to read.

Our grandstand, which lies between the top and main floor, would benefit by having comfortable pillows to sit or lean on when working or just hanging out. Right now students and staff sit on them during large presentations as we can accommodate 60+ students with a view of our new large screen for teaching and welcomed guests.

### What about food in the library?

We revamped which types of food we wanted to allow students to eat in the library. Our library is right next door to the cafeteria (literally we have a door we use for emergencies that links us directly to the cafeteria!)

We decided we would allow cold sandwiches, snacks, snack bars, vegetables and fruits in containers when possible only on the upper level, the main floor and the main floor bubble. We

asked students who wanted to eat other foods like salads, pizza, hamburgers, highly-spiced and scented foods, and yogurts for example, to eat those outside of the library. We reminded them not to bring peanuts and seafood to the library as well. In order to promote this, we had purchased three stand-alone signs for each floor and displayed within them a poster listing the new requirements. We allowed students to bring covered drinks in the lower level, which made a big difference for our evening caretakers given the largeness of the space. We reminded students to care about the space and how working together was beneficial for our entire school community.

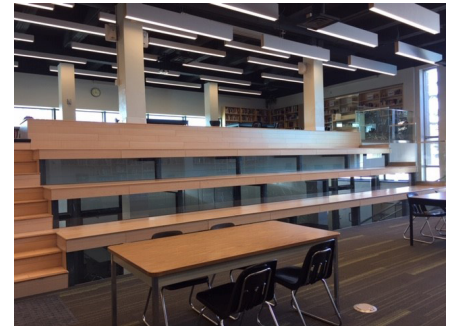
Of course, students wanted to know the reasons for the changes as there has been a social trend for people to work and eat in cafes, something they wanted replicated. However, the first and foremost point in any high school LLC, is it is a place of learning, and learning how to behave in different social locations and situations is in itself a form of social etiquette. Furthermore, we also encouraged students to take any phone calls outside of the library, mimicking the expectation within doctor's offices, hospitals and airplanes.



### How did we share with students how the new spaces would be best shared?

As a team, we discussed which level would best serve the various activities and learning that takes place in our busy LLC. During our class times, mornings and after school, students who wanted a quiet space would select the upper level, whereby, they could work individually or

in a small group and when partnering with others they could whisper respecting the need of other students on this floor who selected it for its quiet environment. Our main floor would be for larger groups, who wanted to work together on math, French, Social Studies or ELA projects for example—activities, which promoted togetherness, teamwork, partnering and indoor voices.



Our grandstand is a middle space in which students can sit and relax, meet quietly with friends, respecting that students are here to work. Many students who were friends would sit two-by-two and share items from their phones. Others, wanting space and to read or just work, would hang out and leave after their spare was over. No matter the time of day, we encouraged students to use the grandstand rather than to sit at tables chatting because tables were a commodity and students who wanted to write, use laptops or work on projects needed the table spaces. This continues to be a work in progress, as we want students to choose the right space when they enter and move when a member of their community needs a table. Developing a sensitivity and a habit that makes you notice your surroundings is an important feature for student socialization in a large multipurpose LLC.

To promote the new spaces we placed standing signs on each level with the information about each level and food choices. Despite this, many students did not visibly see or read the signs, but it helped us to show them that we had posted the new guidelines. Of course, they wanted to know the WHYs and if they could use the space the way they wanted it to be used, however, we reminded them of the many needs of our

school community.

The one thing we had not expected on our main floor, was how some students who came in alone would take up a space at a large main floor table which we promoted as a group work area. We would when times warranted ask them to move upstairs. Our upper level is a fair distance from the circulation desk, and students have figured this out with some groups wanting to hang out at the circular tables. Due to limited table space, we needed to work with certain groups of students who did not want to work in the library which for us as a high school is often the only place a student can go to get work done during the day. It is a dilemma for the quiet, independent hard-working student whose voice we often don't here requesting spaces that support their learning styles.

### What was one of the dilemmas we faced in our space?

In second term, we decided to shift our focus and shared with students a school priority, which was that the LLC was first a place for students to do their work. However, as with any high school, students need a sort of in between space and LLCs have changed around the world to give students a safe place to just be, to hang out with friends and to relax. It is a fine balance to maintain and in our case many of our students don't want to take a break in the cafeteria as it is often too noisy. The LLC is quieter and smaller groups of students like to come and play games on their devices and hang out with friends. It is a big question we continue to explore in the hopes of finding other in-school solutions. Often these groups become louder as they socialize and take up space that is needed for study and work. During the lunch hour, however, our teachers open up their classrooms for students who wish to socialize or to find a quieter environment to complete work.

We decided that before, after and during class schedules the students were to employ the guidelines set out by our LLC team. At noon hour, with a greater need as the weather gets colder, we sometimes have over 150+ students and that is not a quiet conducive

environment. As a result, many students wear noise cancelling headphones so they can concentrate as lunch hour is often the only time they have to catch up on their work. Having the rooms downstairs available at noon hours for students for whom noise is not conducive to learning has been a great benefit.

### How do students most use the new space? What have you provided for student success?



In our new space, we designed a student supply desk, offer free photocopies and work diligently to assist students with printing issues, the selection of books and resources, while offering laptops to be used anywhere in the school. Our new floor plugs allow everyone to charge phones, laptops and to use network cables when needed. Our first priority for laptop usage is either for a scheduled class in the LLC and or students on a spare. When classes need to supplement their supply of computers or laptops, we encourage teachers to book in advance,



although we will help at the last minute when we can. Students sign out laptops at our laptop station, which is located next to our circulation desk. For further information on how we set up this system please read the article in the Fall 2019 MSLA journal.

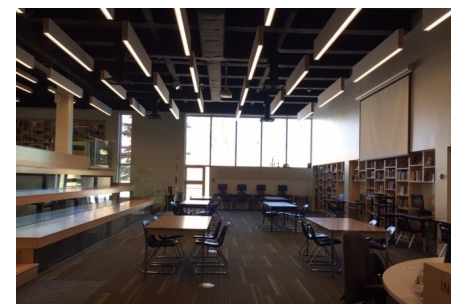
### Final words of reflection

A high school LLC has to meet so many requirements, and there are still some considerations we are working on as students suggest new and creative ways to use the space. We maintain a level of flexibility and our goal is to help them be successful. I work with many students either in group settings or individually in my office to shape their learning and manage challenging assignments.

This year I offered my meditation classes in our LLC bubble, a room that also doubled as a meeting space for our Indigenous students, their Indigenous Student Support teacher, teacher champions, and elders. I also made fireproof curtains for the LLC main floor bubble to offer privacy to our Indigenous elder and accompanying teachers during teachings and drumming. This program is so successful that they have outgrown the room and are now trying to find a larger space in the school to meet.

Our team worked together to discuss many options so that we could provide an active space that respected the activities and learning styles of our students, teachers and professional staff.

When we return to school after the pandemic, I am sure we will possibly see an increase in socializing and togetherness, which may increase noise levels in the beginning. We miss the students, the activities they engaged within our LLC, and as with many schools, the library is the heart of the school.







Manitoba School Library Association  
307 Shaftesbury Blvd.  
Winnipeg, MB R3P 0L9

mlsapresident@gmail.com

August 28, 2020

Dr. Christine Watson  
Vice-President, Academic  
Red River College

Dear Dr. Watson,

The executive of the Manitoba School Library Association (MSLA) recently learned that in July 2020, Red River College (RRC) announced that it was suspending the full time Library and Information Technology (LIT) program. As library professionals we would like to voice our support for this important program. MSLA advocates that school libraries hire well educated, qualified, knowledgeable library personnel. The loss of the only in-person, library-focused program in the province will limit the pool of qualified graduates and will impact school libraries directly.

While second year students will be able to complete the program in the up-coming year, the LIT continuing education program will be the only avenue open to future students wishing to pursue a LIT diploma after 2021. It is our understanding that many students take three or more years to graduate from the LIT continuing education program as required courses are often unavailable due to low student enrollment and qualified faculty are difficult to find for the continuing education program. MSLA would like information on how RRC plans to change or enhance the LIT continuing education program to ensure that students can graduate in a timely manner and with the skills and knowledge required to work in fast-paced, technology rich libraries. We are also seeking clarity about whether this is a permanent cut, or a temporary measure due to the additional financial stress of the current Covid-19 pandemic.

In closing, MSLA wishes to emphasize the importance of the LIT program to the K-12 school system and to reiterate our support for a robust, full time program that provides the necessary skills for qualified and knowledgeable library personnel. We look forward to learning more about how RRC will address our concerns. The executive members of MSLA would like to extend our gratitude to you for considering our concerns and hope that RRC will keep us informed of any future developments regarding the LIT or LIT continuing education program.

Sincerely,

Brandi Bartok  
President, Manitoba School Library Association

# Suspension of the Full Time Library and Information Technology Program at RRC

By Brandi Bartok

This summer, MSLA learned about the suspension of the full time Library and Information Technology program at Red River College. It is unclear whether this suspension will be permanent, but

for the foreseeable future, the only option available to those wishing to further their education in this field will be a part time program offered through continuing education. Our concern prompted us to write a letter

to Red River College, expressing our disappointment that the full time program had been discontinued. We felt it was important to print the full text of our letter in the MSLA journal for our members to read.

## REFLECTIONS on the LIT PROGRAM

By Brian Rountree, MLIS

It all began with a phone call from Gail Mireau in the fall of 2004. "If I don't find an instructor for this course by 5 p.m., I'll have to cancel it. Can you help me?" Of course, I could: I had just completed my MLIS at Western. Introduction to Reference launched me into the distance education program at Red River College. I have done one or two courses yearly since then.

In the summer of 2015, after Pat Routledge retired, I was hired to teach a single course, Introduction to Libraries. Afterwards came several courses per term and I became very involved in the on-campus program that was held at the Exchange District campus on Princess Street.

The "Library Assistant" program began at the college in 1963, the very first program of its kind in Canada. From a class of 17 for a one-year certificate program it grew by 1994 to a two-year, 30 student program and at that time experienced a name change to "Library and Information Technology." The program was always popular and had a wait list for every intake. This was true even in 2015 when the intake was changed to

15 students per year.

By 1973-74 it became obvious that there was a need for some training for library employees who were not students in the program. Evening and Saturday courses were offered, leading to an extension certificate in Library Service. Initially coordinated by the Library Technician day program instructor, the offerings grew and were transferred to the college's Continuing Education department by 1980. In time, all of the daytime courses had their continuing education versions that were delivered by mail. As the Internet became more available, the whole program could be delivered through that medium. That also included the three field placements that were arranged to add practical experience in a library to the classroom's "book learning." This online availability of the courses meant that students could live as far away from Manitoba as British Columbia or Germany and still participate.

I have enjoyed being involved with both versions of the Library & Information Technology program. The distance version provides a

flexibility of schedule to students who work and have family to care for. Many of them do work in a library and are upgrading their skills or need the certification as required by their employers. Others do not work in a library but are looking forward to that possibility. The LEARN platform used by the college has several options that can provide interaction among students and teacher similar to what they might have in a classroom. The campus setting gave students the familiar environment of personal classes, interactions and networking with colleagues and staff, and access to resources.

As we know, the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic changed all education arrangements. The campus students became online students and have to conclude their training in that manner. The college's administration decided in the summer of 2020 to end the campus version as of May 2021, and move it all to the Continuing Education portfolio.

The LIT program staff have always kept their information up to date by undertaking professional development and consulting with

people in the library community, taking advantage of the regular meetings of the Advisory Committee to ensure that what they taught matched up with local practice. In recent years a few meetings were held between the campus staff and continuing education staff and instructors to accomplish the same purpose. Now that the program is only available in one version, the continuing education department will have to consider ways to ensure that the course material is both up-to-date and relevant, and that more of the courses are available during the year for people who want to take the program

## Things to consider

Tabitha Nordby, former instructor in the LIT program.

The loss of the Library and Information Technology (LIT) day program is a devastating one that will be far reaching, with long lasting repercussions. Red River College (RRC) has identified the suspension of the program and its transfer to an online learning environment through the Continuing Education (CE) department as a cost-recovery measure necessary during difficult times. I sympathize with the need for frugality in times of economic challenges, but my true sympathies lie with the Manitoba library community and with future students, as they will be the ones paying the price.

Manitoba schools will be especially disrupted by the loss of the RRC day program, as they rely most on library technicians and are one of the major employers of RRC's LIT graduates. The RRC LIT program is the only library education program within Manitoba. Losing the day program component could influence

future library students to choose day programs in other provinces or even choose other province's online offerings. This could result in a loss of library technicians in Manitoba, which would be a loss for all libraries, but would drastically affect school libraries and their ability to ensure their ongoing operations remain successful and effective for K-12 students.

Future library students, too, may face difficulties when presented with online learning as their only option. Although online learning is necessary, timely, and a good fit for some students, there are drastic differences between the LIT day program and the CE program. As I have taught in both programs, I can attest to those differences. First, an online learning environment does not allow for the same kind of instructor/student interaction and flexibility. As an instructor in the day program, I had the pleasure and the responsibility of identifying the learning needs of my students on a moment by moment basis. Working with a smaller class size of 15 students per cohort allowed me to be especially alert to those needs. At any given moment in a lesson, I was able to determine what was or was not working for students and to speed up, slow down, or even completely change tacks if I felt that we needed to move in a new direction. For me, one of the greatest joys of teaching was watching students learn and process in real time. In an online learning environment, students do not have the opportunity to ask for clarification, explanations, or to reach a new understanding with the instructor and their peers in the moment. While there is some face to face contact in the CE online environment, the energy and interaction of a live classroom is lost and it becomes more difficult to address challenges or specific learning needs of a student until late in the semester, often when it is too late to make sufficient changes. This is a particularly relevant issue as we are seeing more and more students entering college with mental health challenges and varying learning abilities. How will these needs be addressed properly

in an online environment?

Second, although the CELIT program has been in operation for several years at Red River College, the students who choose to enter CE versus those who enter the day program do so for vastly different reasons. Historically, many students who enter the CE program are working, are already employed in library environments, and are mature students who have been in the workplace or have completed college or university in other disciplines. As a result, they are often more skilled at time management and independent study, have a good introduction to working in library environments, and are willing to work on their studies on a part-time basis, which may mean spending four or more years completing their library certification. Conversely, the students who enter the day program are often much younger (many arriving at the program just out of high school) and have little to no experience in libraries. This group has chosen the day program for its structured environment, to engage with their peers academically and socially, and to complete their diploma in the two-year timeframe. The CE program works well for mature students engaging in part-time studies, but I am concerned about how it will address the learning needs of the student looking for a structured environment and the ability to complete their diploma in a timely manner.

Third, as it stands currently, there are significant curriculum differences between the two programs. Instructors in the day program have worked diligently to contribute to updates in the CE program as much as possible, but it became insurmountable for the day program faculty to try to maintain the currency and relevancy of both programs while also teaching full time. Furthermore, day program instructors have had more autonomy to continue to adapt our lessons to the ever changing library landscape, whereas the CE program hires instructors on a contract basis to teach already provided material and



limits their ability to implement changes or updates on an as needed basis.

When voicing these three concerns to the college, I was informed that RRC's goal is to create a cohort based LIT program within the CE department in order for students to have a classroom-like environment, to be able to interact more with their instructors and peers, and to do so within a two year timeframe. I believe this is the right approach; however, RRC's lack of communication and transparency about its decision to suspend the LIT day program has created significant doubt about how this will play out.

To my knowledge, the suspension of the day program was decided without any consultation with the LIT advisory board, current instructors, the library program coordinator, or the greater library community within Manitoba. Furthermore, there has not been any communication with the above listed groups about the work that will need to be done to create a successful transition from day program to online cohort program by Fall of 2021. This creates deep concerns about communications going forward. Who will ensure that the successful components of the day program are carefully commuted over to the CE program? Who will ensure consistency and quality of the curriculum? How will it be measured? Will the library community be consulted in any way during and after this transition takes place? Again, is there an awareness of the losses the library community will face by removing a robust program with a 50 plus year history of success and attempting to replicate it in an online environment?

My hope is that the LIT transition from a day program to an online program will be a successful one, that students will benefit from it and further their contributions to libraries in Manitoba. For this to happen, clear communication between the college and the community is crucial.

I encourage the library community to keep RRC accountable to their promises to ensure that we can continue to provide professionally staffed libraries that offer current, diverse, and accessible programs and materials for all Manitobans.

## Reflections

From a student in the Continuing Education program

In 2016 I enrolled in my first courses through Red River College's part-time distance learning, with a goal of completing the Library Training program. I found the flexibility very appealing. I was able to cater my course load to suit my work and personal commitments. At the time I was working exclusively shift work in the restaurant industry, so adhering to an in class schedule was not an option for me. I have always wanted to work in a library environment so I was thrilled to find a local education option that worked within my budget and schedule. I also liked that I was able to use any credits completed towards the Library and Information Technology program, should I decide to further my education, which I have done after graduating the Library Information program with honors in 2018.

My experience with the distance education program has been varied to say the least. There's not much consistency class to class. Some teachers are very responsive, and happy to help with questions or clarifications. Grading assignments and quizzes promptly, providing clear reasoning and explanations for those grades. Some instructors even go so far as to offer help over the phone, when needed. Others don't respond to emails, and sometimes don't provide graded assignments or quizzes until nearing the end of the course. This is especially frustrating - how is one expected to learn from their mistakes when they aren't aware they are making them in the first place? Some

courses encourage peer to peer discussion of the materials. Requiring participation in online forums, discourse and debate over relevant issues and assignments. Other classes have no way of knowing who your peers are. There is no way to reach out for help or discussion in any way. This has led me to take advantage of the in person peer tutoring option offered (pre Covid-19 times), though the only reason I found out about this program at all, was through emailing several student advisory staff members and instructors. Now that in person tutoring is not an option at all, I'm concerned that many students are struggling alone in their coursework. Often just a quick discussion about some complicated concept is enough to shine some light on the material long enough to get through that assignment you've been struggling with. Furthering my hesitation with carrying on in the Library and Information Technology program as is currently offered, is the lack of clear path of communication regarding any aspect of my enrollment, recognition of prior learning (RPL), funding and field placements. For example; I have used the email provided on the Red River College's RPL information page to get information as to whether my experience is adequate to take advantage of this option. I did not receive a timely response so I emailed again. Again no response. Over months I was able to get some information, but only after emailing and phoning several people listed in adjacent positions, and those people presumably reaching out to those that were not responding to me in the first place.

Not all programs lend themselves well to distanced learning. Certainty not every aspect of Library and Information services is well suited to the academic isolation that can be a part of any online learning platform, however I firmly believe any if not all downsides to the virtual learning experience could be mitigated by a more consistent approach, encouraging peer to peer interaction, and better response times, all around.

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Nancy Girardin

### **MTS**

Lia Gervino

Cynthia Taylor

### **MLCI**

Heather Brydon

### **AIMSL**

Christine Janzen

### **MSLA Mailing Address:**

Manitoba School Library Association

307 Shaftesbury Blvd.

Winnipeg, MB. R3P 0L9

[msslapresident@gmail.com](mailto:msslapresident@gmail.com)

