

# MSLA JOURNAL

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**Libraries Lead Learning**



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Manitoba School  
Libraries Association



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2	Messages
4	MSLA Business
15	MTS Professional Development Day
20	Literacy
25	Indigenous
27	Cataloguing Corner
32	Leading Learning

# MSLA Executive, 2021–2022

**MSLA Executive:****Board of Directors:****President**

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**Past President**

Brandi Bartok

**President Elect**

OPEN

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**Standing Committees:****Publications**

Morgan Arksey

**Membership**

Alison Bodner

**Website**

Cheryl Antonio

**SAGE Conference 2020**

Brandi Bartok

**Advocacy/Publicity**

Niki Card

**Professional Learning**

Michelle Barclay

**Awards**

Brandi Bartok

**Archives**

Heidi Cromwell

**Members-at-Large**

Alison Marshall

Katie Williams

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Karin Borland

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# Table of Contents

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## MESSAGES

President's Message - <i>Sandy Wellbergen</i> .....	2
Editor's Message - <i>Morgan Arksey</i> .....	3

## MSLA BUSINESS

Manitoba School Library Association Annual General Meeting .....	4
The 2022-2023 Executive members and Standing Committee Chairs: .....	4
Welcome to our New Executive Members: .....	5
MSLA Awards .....	7
MSLA 2021-2022 Financial Statements - <i>Treasurer</i> .....	9
In Memoriam .....	13

## MTS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY

Children's Rights are Human Rights .....	14
Dr. James Turk Keynote Overview - School Libraries; Protectors of the Public Discourse Integral to Democracy - <i>Morgan Arksey</i> .....	15
Equitable School Libraries: A Conversation - <i>Lisa Bova</i> .....	16
Legos and Literacy - <i>Michelle Carlos</i> .....	18

## LITERACY

L.I.T. Forum: Simple Strategies to Incorporate SEL into the School Library .....	19
Manitoba Young Reader's Choice Award 2022 Winners .....	21
Manitoba Young Reader's Choice Award 2023 Nominees Announced - <i>Colette Dufault</i> .....	22

## INDIGENOUS

Hot Off The Press .....	24
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## CATALOGUING CORNER

Equity Informed Weeding .....	26
-------------------------------	----

## LEADING LEARNING

Kevin Osachuk - Leading from the Library and Tackling Disinformation - <i>Sharron Arksey</i> .....	31
School Library Programs Lead Learning - A Letter of Advocacy - <i>Morgan Arksey</i> .....	33
IFLA Releases New School Library Manifesto .....	37

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# President's Message

By Sandy Welbergen



The 2021-2022 school year marks the third year our association and members have been called to serve within the challenges of the global pandemic. Thankfully, we are finally seeing a gradual re-introduction of in-person events, and less-restrictive teaching structures, allowing us to again embrace the full spectrum of our profession. We are celebrating the return of in-person book circulation, hands-on design and inquiry projects, and cross-grade clubs. With that, we are looking forward to recognizing the work of our amazing library professionals with the return of the MSLA grant programs next year.

The exhaustion that came with over two years of uncertainty and constant adaptation and change has been reflected in dwindling MSLA membership as teachers re-evaluate priorities and prioritize time with family and self-care. As MSLA president, I have attempted to be mindful of the demands put on our members and executives by maintaining the flexibility of remote meetings and workshops. With that, I do hope that the fall will usher in a return to in-person

professional learning experiences, but I also recognize that there may be a need to also offer hybrid opportunities.

On that note, I do wish a big thank you to our current and outgoing executive members for helping to facilitate some amazing events this year despite our on-going challenges.

- A big thank you to SAGE Conference chair, Brandi Bartok and her team for their hard work on our very successful MTS PD Day event titled MSLA - Multiliteracies: Opening Windows to the World. Hopefully this was our last fully virtual event, and we can meet again in person this upcoming fall!
- Thank you to Michelle Barclay for organizing our very successful L.I.T. forum this March. It was titled Introducing SEL Strategies in the Library and was presented by author Holly Dobbie.
- Thank you to our Publications Chair, Morgan Arksey and team for their great work on curating interesting articles and continuing our fine tradition of a biyearly journal publication.
- Thank you to Bev Werbuk for organizing and collecting all the reports for each of our monthly executive meetings. Thank you also for taking such great notes and keeping us honest in our commitments and responsibilities each month!
- Thank you to Ella Munroe for keeping detailed financial records and for ensuring that reimbursements and payments are timely.
- A big thank you to Cheryl Antonio for taking on the big task of maintaining our website and domain

names. We are excited to look at updating the website with a new look for next fall!

- Thank you so much to Alison Bodner for her work with the MSLA's Membership portfolio. Alison has worked tirelessly with MTS these past few years to ensure that our membership information is up-to-date and accurate.
- Thank you to Niki Card for her work creating visually appealing and engaging social media posts and digital posters for the many important endeavors the MSLA promotes.
- And last but not least, thank you to members-at-large Katie Williams and Alison Marshall for always being available to lend a hand to our committee chairs!

This past year has brought many challenges, and through this amazing team we have met those challenges head-on and come out stronger as an SAGE group. You all make a discernible difference for school libraries, teachers and students every day. It has been my pleasure to serve with you as the Manitoba School Library Association president this year and I am looking forward to serving a second term as president for 2022-2023

# Editor's Message

By Morgan Arksey



No times are truly certain, but I'm sure that it's an understatement to say that these past several years have felt less so than our previous baseline. We've all been called to pivot and adapt, and taken on roles that (sometimes) felt outside of our regular job descriptions.

From my perspective, none of the adaptations we made (and the multitude of ways that school libraries helped students, teachers, and their communities get through the pandemic) were surprising – we are leaders in inquiry, and what has this whole experience been if not a gigantic inquiry project? How do we adapt and provide services during a pandemic? Like all inquiry we have succeeded in learning many things. We probably messed up a bit too (I know I did). But we took that information and used it to shape our next steps. We hit walls and found limits in our systems that need to be addressed.

If I could go back in time, I would find a way to research the impact of strong school library programs on school communities during the pandemic. Academic achievement yes, but also community mental health, the support and development of sound

digital pedagogy, and any other of the multitude of ways that school library staff supported their communities.

Now that we are moving into a time where it seems there will be fewer restrictions, and where important decisions will be made about the future of school library programs, I think it's important to take stock of all of the things that school library programs provide. We know we were integral in making sure that our schools made it through this experience with much needed support. What integral services do we provide for our students, teachers, and larger communities? I hope this issue provides you the opportunity to reflect on the multitude of ways school libraries better their communities and encourages you to advocate strongly for their continued support.

# MSLA Business

## Manitoba School Library Association Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Manitoba School Library Association took place on May 9, 2022 on Google Meet.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the AGM and the members of the executive responsible for planning and implementing this virtual event.



## The 2022-2023 Executive members and Standing Committee Chairs:

### Board of Directors:

- President: Sandy Welbergen
- Past President Brandi Bartok
- President Elect: (open)
- Secretary: Bev Werbuk
- Treasurer: Ella Munro

### Standing Committees:

- Publications: Morgan Arksey
- Membership: Erin Thomas
- Website: Cheryl Antonio
- SAGE Conference 2021: Sandy Welbergen
- Advocacy/Publicity: Niki Card
- Professional Learning Michelle Barclay
- Awards: Brandi Bartok
- Archives: Heidi Cromwell
- Members-at-Large: Alison Marshall, Lindsay Stewart

## Welcome to our New Executive Members:



### **Erin Thomas – Membership**

Erin Thomas has been teaching since 2006 and in that time has filled many roles from grade 2 to grade 12, from Math to Home Ec. Having worked in the University of Winnipeg Library while completing her Bachelor of Arts degree, Erin came full circle in 2018 when she returned to the library in a teaching capacity. Currently a Teacher Librarian in the River East Transcona School Division, Erin runs tech clubs, reads voraciously, and shares her passion for sustainable living with students. Erin is a published poet and uses her writing skills when working with students. She is mum to three wonderful young men and a step-daughter, shares a century home with her husband and a tiny cat named Sophie, and her heart belongs to Manchester United.



### **Lindsay Stewart - Member-at-Large**

Lindsay Stewart is currently a Teacher-Librarian in the Pembina Trails School Division. She has spent the last 6 years at Prairie Sunrise School as part of the leadership team, building a diverse collection, collaborating with classrooms, and creating a fun and welcoming learning commons.

### **Thank you to the 2021-2022 MSLA Board and Departing members**

We would also like to thank the members who served on the MSLA Board for 2021-2022. Several members will be taking a step back from the Board this upcoming year; we would like to thank them for their service over the past many years. We wish Alison Bodner and Katie Williams all the best; you will be missed!

## MSLA Awards

### 2022 Outstanding Teacher-Librarian of the Year Award, in Memory of Lois Gervais



**Bev Werbuk**  
Teacher-Librarian  
Shaftesbury High School  
Pembina Trails

Since 2014, Bev Werbuk has worked as Teacher-Librarian at Shaftesbury High School in the Pembina Trails School Division. Prior to that, she worked as a classroom teacher for Assiniboine South School Division (1988-2002) and Pembina Trails (2002-2014). Bev holds a Bachelor of Education from the University of Manitoba and received her Diploma in Teacher Librarianship from the University of British Columbia in 2021. Her recent university coursework included Inquiry Based Pedagogy, Trends and Issues in Literacy Instruction, Administration of the School Library Resource Centre and School Library Resource Centre programs. She has applied what she has learned from this coursework helping to sharpen her focus with regards to programming the Library Learning Commons.

Bev's vision for creating a dynamic learning commons and her dedicated leadership in focusing on equity, diversity, and inclusion has been a source of inspiration for her colleagues. Her fundamental belief in school as a place of belonging for all is manifested in her student-centered approach in creating a library commons. She works tirelessly with her team of library technicians to ensure that they are approachable and welcoming to all students who enter the learning commons. Bev leverages her excellent professional relationships with classroom teachers to engage them in new ways of utilizing the resources of the library and herself as the teacher librarian. She promotes innovative projects such as magnetic poetry workshops, makerspace activities, Break-out boxes, etc. to get teachers and students excited about inquiry and what the learning commons has to offer.

Through her membership and involvement in MSLA, Bev introduced Shaftesbury to the Project of the Heart Tiles as part of the school's work of engaging in the Truth and Reconciliation process. Bev also participated as a school steering committee member for a divisional Human Right Project and facilitated the creation of over 650 tiles by each student at Shaftesbury High School. One of many highlights in Bev's role as a teacher librarian was her selection to participate in the prestigious training seminar in teaching about the Holocaust and Human Rights in the Montreal Holocaust Museum in 2018. She has taken on the role of supporting students and staff in connecting and troubleshooting issues in EDSBY and Teams so that students could continue to engage and learn from home during the pandemic. Bev continues to innovate and grow professionally to bring classrooms to the learning commons and vice versa! The learning commons is now a robust and inclusive "hub" in the school.

Not only is Bev supportive of the teachers in her own school, she is also quite active divisionally, supporting the TL community with expertise about Library Learning Commons and Makerspace design. On a divisional day of learning this year, she offered and recorded a workshop on how to use Microsoft Teams. To this day many teachers in our division use this as a reference point and refresher when using Teams.

Adrian Deakin, a former teacher now vice-principal shared this about Bev: "with every interaction I have had with Bev, it has always been pleasant, kind and professional. Being able to speak openly with a colleague and to learn about what they are doing in the library is truly a collaborative endeavour. Whenever I needed an idea, or wanted to bounce something off her, she was open, inviting and helpful."

Bev is an active member of the Manitoba School Library Association and currently holds the position of secretary, a role she plans to reprise for the next school year.

## 2022 Outstanding Teacher-Librarian of the Year Award, in Memory of Lois Gervais



### Jennifer Stevenson

Library Assistant  
Windsor Park Collegiate  
Louis Riel School Division

Jennifer Stevenson graduated from the University of Manitoba with her Bachelor of Education degree in the spring of 2008 and that fall she joined the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) as a library assistant. She has worked at Windsor Park Collegiate for the past three years but in her time with LRSD she has shared her talents with many fortunate schools. Jenni even spent several summers working with the ASPIRE program to ensure all the students enrolled in the program had access to library books and enjoyed some engaging library programming.

Known to be a book whisperer, Jenni has the uncanny ability to recommend the just right book for every reader. Students are quite convinced she's read every book in the school's collection! Her weekly book talks on the library's social media accounts have been liked, retweeted, and commented on by popular authors and when done in person for classes, often create waiting lists for the books featured. The monthly displays Jenni creates range from humorous and 'punny' to thought provoking and topical, but they are always engaging for students and staff.

Alongside WPC's Teacher-Librarian, Jenni has helped to plan and coordinate events such as I Love to Read month, book tastings, and M.Y.R.C.A. club. She has used her technology skills to help create and host activities such as OneNote Escape Rooms, Kahoots, and Quiz Nights. Working collaboratively with classroom teachers, Jenni has also led novel study groups and run lessons on Blackout Poetry and Book Spine Poetry. Her fellow library assistants regularly turn to her for advice troubleshooting the library management system.

Beyond sharing her creativity, technology skills, and her love of and knowledge about books, Jenni is also known for her kind and welcoming personality. She has helped to make the library learning commons at WPC a safe space for all students where they feel cared about, seen, and valued. The WPC Library really is the heart of the school and Jenni is instrumental in making that heartbeat.

## 2022 MSLA Distinguished Service Award



**Niki Card**  
Teacher Librarian  
Miles MacDonnell Collegiate



**Nicole Ziemianski**  
Teacher Librarian  
Bernie Wolfe School



**Christine Robinson**  
Teacher Librarian  
River East Collegiate

### River East Transcona School Division

Throughout their careers as teacher-librarians, Niki Card, Nicole Ziemianski and Christine Robinson have demonstrated their ability to develop and sustain exemplary library programs in their schools. Each holds a master's degree in teacher-librarianship and have contributed to their profession through MSLA and other related organizations. Collectively, they have empowered K-12 students in the River East Transcona School division for almost two decades and helped them embrace learning. They became

innovators and risk takers in their schools and as a result became natural leaders who wanted to help others whenever and wherever they could.

Niki, Christine and Nicole have served on River East Transcona School Library Leaders (RETTLL) and/or divisional library leadership committees over at least the past decade. They work tirelessly to provide ongoing support and mentorship to all teacher-librarians. This dedicated trio of leaders exhibit the necessary traits to motivate others to build their capacity and create innovative learning environments for our students.

Niki, Christine and Nicole, (RETTLL) are key contributors in the writing of the River East Transcona School Library Learning Commons Guidelines manual, recently revised in March 2022. This 64-page document was originally developed to provide vision and practical information to all those responsible for the success of school libraries. It was recently revised to meet the ever-changing needs of today's learners. The leaders collaborated with other teacher-librarians and library technicians to establish a vision and structure paramount to support our libraries with efficient operation and ensure that the library learning commons is maximized to reach its full potential.

RETTLL provided a focused study and discussion of this document as part of monthly "Check and Connect" professional learning sessions for teacher-librarians. Teacher-librarians collaborated to plan lessons and develop best practices and they explored new ideas and discovered new technologies. Cross-curricular partnerships that promote critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making and communication skills were a large part of the discussion. The RETTLL trio shared examples of lessons and projects that are part of their planning and implementation of the exemplary programming taking place in their libraries. Some examples, to name a few, are supporting teachers with IBL, developing skills through coding, creating vibrant makerspaces and design challenges, helping students choose the right book, celebrating special events and bringing in authors. They build capacity in the team by encouraging other teacher-librarians to share, too. Special focus was offered to teachers new to teacher-librarianship. They provided them with additional support through visitations and modeling at all grade levels. Modeling research skills, strategies for effective teaching, the importance of having a thorough understanding of curriculum, keeping current in their practice and bringing fresh ideas to the classroom are always at the forefront of the learning. RETTLL supported all teacher-librarians throughout the pandemic by facilitating conversations surrounding remote learning as the role and the space for teacher-librarians changed dramatically in order to support the needs of all schools.

RETTLL was the driving force behind establishing various teams of teacher-librarians to meet three times per year to manage collection development for the division e-book and audio book library. This digital library increased access to books for students, not just to use at home but for developing readers to engage in similar content to their peers. In addition, RETTLL promoted a pilot project to have Overdrive Advantage Accounts established in each of the 42 schools. This allowed each teacher-librarian to add relevant content to supplement the divisional library. Along with a small group of teacher-librarians, RETTLL tested procedures and wrote a guidelines document to help the implementation.

As strong advocates for libraries, Christine, Niki and Nicole speak passionately about the impact of school libraries on student achievement. Treasure Mountain Canada is a research symposium and think tank building collective knowledge about the library learning commons and school improvement. Their collection of papers present action research that demonstrates the connection between school library programs and student success.

This trio of teacher-librarians are dynamic leaders who promote and guide the necessary work needed to push school libraries to the forefront. Niki Card, Nicole Ziemianski and Christine Robinson are highly respected educators, innovative leaders and school library advocates. Their work serves as a shining example to other Teacher-Librarians in their division and across the province.

## MSLA 2021-2022 Financial Statements

By Treasurer

MANITOBA SCHOOL  
LIBRARY ASSOCIATION INC.  
BALANCE SHEET  
AS AT AUGUST 31, 2022

ASSETS	2022	2021
<b>Current Assets:</b>		
Cash	\$ 14,311	\$ 5,306
Prepaid expenses	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
	14,311	5,306
	<u>\$ 14,311</u>	<u>\$ 5,306</u>
 <b>LIABILITIES And Net Assets</b>		
<b>Current liabilities:</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 381	\$ 381
	<u>381</u>	<u>381</u>
 <b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Unrestricted net assets	<u>13,931</u>	<u>4,926</u>
	13,931	4,926
	<u>\$ 14,311</u>	<u>\$ 5,306</u>

**MANITOBA SCHOOL  
LIBRARY ASSOCIATION INC.  
Statement of Operations and Deficit  
AS AT AUGUST 31, 2022**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Revenue:</b>		
AGM	\$ -	\$ -
Membership Fees	580	1,550
SAG Revenue	5,926	649
SAG Publishers/Display	-	-
	<hr/> 6,506	<hr/> 2,199
<b>Other Income:</b>		
Interest	23	30
MTS Grant	3,754	-
Other Income - Paypal	1,470	-
	<hr/> 5,247	<hr/> 30
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>11,753</b>	<b>2,229</b>
<b>Expenditures:</b>		
Award Plaques	401	418
Conferences	-	280
Credit card fees	273	-
I Love to Read Grant	106	150
Seed Grant	-	500
Sponsorship	-	2,673
	<hr/> 780	<hr/> 4,021
<b>SAG Conference:</b>		
Catering	-	-
Event Brite fees	-	-
Honorarium & Gifts	300	100
Speaker fee	275	750
Supplies	-	282
	<hr/> 575	<hr/> 1,132
<b>Administration:</b>		
Donations and gifts	50	-
Dues and fees	-	40
Insurance	582	554
Interest and bank charges	-	5
Office supplies	85	-
Professional fees	381	381
Website	295	16
	<hr/> 1,393	<hr/> 996
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>2,748</b>	<b>6,149</b>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenditures for the year</b>	<b>9,005</b>	<b>(3,920)</b>
<b>Unrestricted net assets, beginning of year</b>	<b>4,926</b>	<b>8,846</b>
<b>Unrestricted net assets, end of year</b>	<b>13,931</b>	<b>4,926</b>

**MANITOBA SCHOOL  
LIBRARY ASSOCIATION INC.  
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
AS AT AUGUST 31, 2022**

<b>Cash Flows from Operating Activities</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
Excess of revenue over expenditures for the year	\$ 9,005	-\$ 3,920
<b>Changes in non-cash working capital balances</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>
	9,005	(3,920)
<b>Increase (Decrease) in Cash Position</b>	<b>9,005</b>	<b>(3,920)</b>
 Cash Position, Beginning of Year	 5,306	 9,226
 Cash Position, End of Year	 14,311	 5,306

**MANITOBA SCHOOL  
LIBRARY ASSOCIATION INC.  
Notes to Financial Statements  
AS AT AUGUST 31, 2022**

**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.

**MANITOBA SCHOOL  
LIBRARY ASSOCIATION INC.  
Notes to Financial Statements  
AS AT AUGUST 31, 2022**

**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.

## In Memoriam:

Edith Eleanor Doyle, 29 March 1938 - 12 February 2022



Over the years at IASL conferences, there was nearly always one familiar face. Edith Doyle from Winnipeg Canada attended almost all of the IASL conferences from 1971 when IASL was born at WCOTP (World Council of Organizations of the Teaching Profession) in Jamaica, to the 1972 inaugural conference in England, and until as recently 2014. In the later few years ill health made it impossible for her to travel. Edith was an active and loyal member of IASL. Edith passed away 12 February 2002. A memorial service was held 05 March at Bardal Funeral Chapel. An urn with her ashes will be shipped to Australia where family members will take them to the Ollera Cemetery where her parents and many relatives are buried.

Edith was an inveterate traveller. She

loved seeing new countries and their international cuisine and cultures. She really enjoyed visiting with long-time friends from around the world. As her daughter Tanya said, "She liked to open doors on the world." Edith travelled economically. She would take bus or train if possible, and usually found places to stay that were unique and adequate.

Edith Eleanor was born 29 March 1938 in Glen Innes, New South Wales, Australia to Alan and Jenny Pearson. She spent her early years at the family sheep farm, Kooringle, where she acquired her love of horses. She attained her Bachelor of Arts and a Diploma of Education at the University of New England, Armidale. She met her first husband, Garry Doyle, who shared her joy of travel and adventure, at university, and her first daughter, Manon was born while they still lived in Australia.

The family travelled to Africa where Edith and Garry taught for 2 years. The next step was a short time in England, 6 months in Scotland followed by immigration to Canada in 1965. Barely settled in Canada, the family was welcomed by one of the worst blizzards in Manitoba history (March 1966).

In Manitoba, Edith taught in Whitemouth, Eriksdale and Selkirk before moving to Winnipeg. While she was teaching, she earned her Bachelor of Education at the University of Manitoba. Prior to joining the teacher-librarian staff in Winnipeg, she obtained her Master of Library Science degree from

George Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee. Although she enjoyed teaching, she relished the opportunity to work in the school library, sharing her love of books and learning with elementary school students.

While in Winnipeg, she met and married her second husband, Ray Draper, who also shared her desire to travel, seeing new places and meeting new people. A few years later, Edith's second daughter Tanya, was born and was quickly introduced to the family passion for travel. This was just in time for her to be taken as a 'babe in arms' to the 1982 conference in Red Deer Alberta (and many succeeding conferences around the world.)

Edith was also a member of the Manitoba School Library Association, the Reading Council of Greater Winnipeg, the IBBY CANADA (International Board on Books for Youth), the Winnipeg Press Club, and several others. Her support over the years has been greatly appreciated. Hopefully, some of IASL members will have stories about their relationships with Edith at the next IASL conference. Warmest good wishes to all.

Compiled by Gerald R. Brown, IASL Honorary Ambassador 1998; Chief Librarian Winnipeg School Division 1978-92; Independent Consultant, School Library and Information Services 1992-2014.

# MTS Professional Development Day

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

## Children's Rights are Human Rights

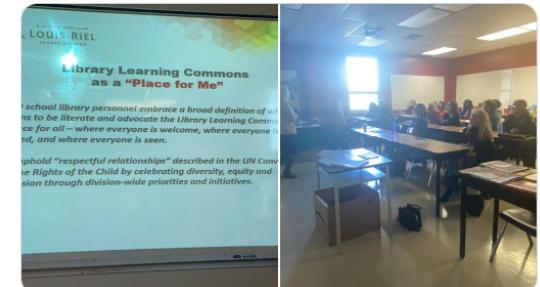


The Manitoba School Library Association held our annual MTS PD Day session on October 21st,

in our first in person event since the fall of 2019. Spearheaded by Sandy Welbergen, Bev Warbuk, Michelle Barclay, and Brandi Bartok the event focused on the role of school libraries in supporting children's rights. Also to be thanked were Nancy Hill, Michelle Carlos, Niki Card and Cheryl Antonio for their help in preparations for the event.

School Libraries have a leading role to play in education on and dissemination of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. Our day was broken into sessions, ranging across many of these rights, including the rights to rest, play, culture and arts, the

 MB School Library Retweeted  
Brandi Bartok @Brandi\_Edu · Oct 21  
Library Learning Commons. "A Place for Me." Thank you to LRSD, for sharing how you are strategically making the LLC a vibrant and inclusive place. @MSLA\_ #MTSPDDAY @keatin...



 MB School Library @MSLA\_ · Oct 21  
Thank you to Elise and Brandon from the @CHRRmanitoba's Speakers Bureau for being a part of our conference today.  
#MTSPDDAY



right to health, water, food and environment, and the right to see themselves represented in materials. All participants left the day with new ideas to bring back to their teaching, a renewed appreciation for the power of story, and community connections to help students move between the classroom and the world at large.

# Dr. James Turk Keynote Overview - School Libraries; Protectors of the Public Discourse Integral to Democracy

By Morgan Arksey



How are libraries best to prepare for an increasingly polarized world where the 'culture wars' are brought into our school spaces, and our library collections are targeted for book banning? This was the crucial topic discussed by Keynote Speaker Dr. James L. Turk, Director of the Centre for Free Expression and Distinguished Visiting Scholar at Toronto Metropolitan University.

What are culture wars? According to Cambridge Dictionary it is disagreements between sections of society about cultural and social beliefs. In library collections, we see this most regularly when discussing what is appropriate for students to read. In classrooms, it is about what ideas we can discuss. This gets especially difficult when subgroups of people have vastly different visions of what is appropriate. Are some topics inappropriate for all? And who gets to make these decisions?

Dr. Turk reminded us that although we often see this as an American issue, that these have trickled into Canadian discourse as well; as evidenced by

conflicts seen in the Waterloo District School Board, and issues raised by candidates in local school board elections across Canada this fall. In terms of reading materials, challenges are most frequently raised on books that feature characters outside of the heteronormative and cisgendered Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) norms or feature Black or Indigenous People of Colour (BIPOC) characters. While data is not collected on book challenges in Canada, the top 5 challenges reported by the American Library Association in 2021 fit into both of these categories.

But what is the role of libraries in this? As an attendee, what resonated most



people with which they might disagree" limiting the opportunity for democratic discourse and decision making.

So, what do we do? According to Dr. Turk, it is integral that we become aware of divisional policies and values, as these will help support us. Then, it is our role to recognize that public has a right to engage with us on these issues;

listen to community members concerns and opinions without sharing our viewpoints and with respect; inform the person the school's commitment that all students are successful; refer the person to the administrator and have them put their concerns in writing so that they can be followed up on; discuss with colleagues, administration and our unions about the issues being faced; and participate in public discussions about what should be done by sharing expertise and experiences and our own unique understanding of the things that students in our schools require.

Ultimately it is our role in the library is to help protect the ongoing public discourse that is key to democracy.



for myself was the idea that everyone is against censorship until they find something that they do not like, and that we need to understand why censorship is the wrong approach to use. As Dr. Turk highlighted, it can't stop what it wants to prevent, it often tends to exacerbate the problem, and draws more attention to the topic or person being censored, it victimizes those who are being helped, and can help make martyrs of free speech. Ultimately it "Denies people the chance to see and confront ideas and

# Equitable School Libraries: A Conversation

By Lisa Bova

At the MSLA PD Day on October 21st, 2022, I had the pleasure of speaking about how Teacher-Librarians can work towards making the Learning Commons a more equitable place. “Equitable School Libraries: a conversation” was a presentation and an opportunity for fellow Learning Commons staff to share their experiences. As a former Public Children’s Librarian and now a Teacher-Librarian, I often reflect upon how I can make the Learning Commons a space for everyone. During my presentation, I shared personal experiences followed by a set of questions I use to help me evaluate the equitability of my library services, collections, and physical space. Feel free to use these questions when thinking about your Learning Commons.

## When reflecting on the effectiveness of service, ask yourself...

- Assess and identify the barriers that might exist
- Are certain policies discouraging students from borrowing books?
- These could include late fees, damage fees, and limits on loan periods
- Who do you need to include in your decision making?
- Principals, parents, community members?
- Is it possible to include students and families in adapting the rules?
- Would your school/division benefit from a library rules/policies working group?
- Do all students and families

understand how the library service in your Learning Commons works? Are there language barriers? Is there enough communication between the library, the students, and their families?

## Next time you take on a weeding project, ask yourself...

- When reviewing the entire collection through an inclusive lens whose perspective is there? Whose is missing?
- When I look through my entire collection through an equity lens whose story and perspective has historically been centered? Who has told this story and information?
- How are people represented? Communities ‘positioned’ and which ‘gaze’ is the text from?
- Does this book engage in cultural appropriation or show people as ‘different’, ‘exotic’ or through a deficit lens?
- Will my students enjoy this story? Is it relevant for their lived experiences? Does it teach them authentically about diverse lived experiences?

Khokhar, Rabia (2020). Reflections of a New Teacher-Librarian: Weeding is an Equity Issue. Canadian School Libraries Journal 4(3).

Please note, I use Rabia Khokhar’s questions for evaluating collections. She is a teacher-librarian and activist and I reference her work to inform my own. Check out her website for more resources. [www.rabiakhokhar.com](http://www.rabiakhokhar.com)

## Find yourself rearranging the

## Learning Commons furniture?

### Ask yourself...

- Assess and identify the multiple uses of your Learning Commons.
- Does the Learning Commons furniture accommodate the physical needs of all students in your building?
- Can students easily access the books and materials for their age group?
- Are there designated zones for certain activities? Can multiple ages of students use the space at the same time? Can multiple activities happen at the same time?
- Is it a welcoming and comfy space for reading enjoyment?

A special thank you to everyone who contributed to the conversation! It was wonderful to meet all of you, listen to your advice, recommendations and what is going on in your spaces. I look forward to the MSLA SAGE Conference in 2023.



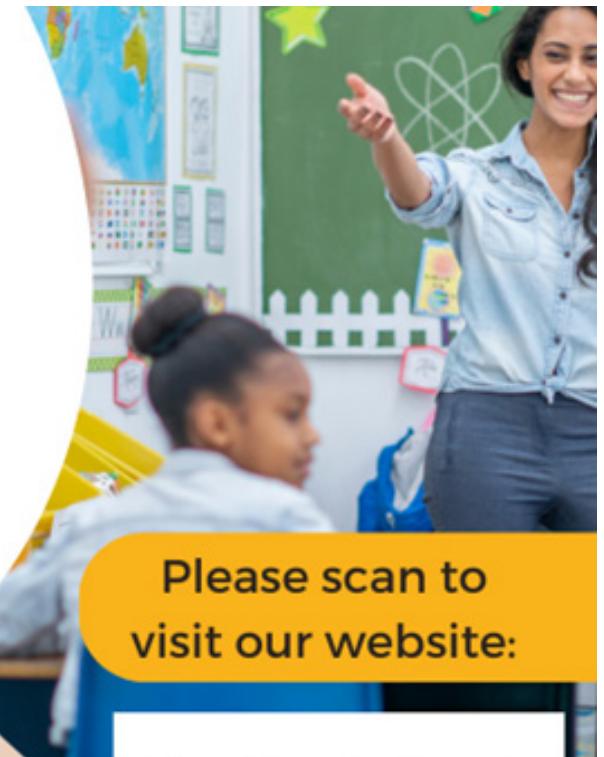
# Speakers Bureau

Looking for a fun way to meet curriculum requirements? Our presenters can help!

## Why the Speakers Bureau?

- Our presentations are free of charge and run by volunteers from the Faculty of Law and Master of Human Rights Program
- We present on a wide variety and growing list of topics such as the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Indigenous Law and topics, Water as a Human Right - and many more!
- We offer both virtual and in- person presentations and have a budget for going to rural communities

To book a presentation for your class, please contact [chrrspk@umanitoba.ca](mailto:chrrspk@umanitoba.ca) or call us at (204) 298-0944



Please scan to visit our website:

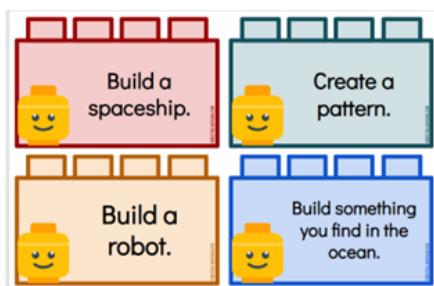


**Presentation  
Request Form:**



# Legos and Literacy

By Michelle Carlos

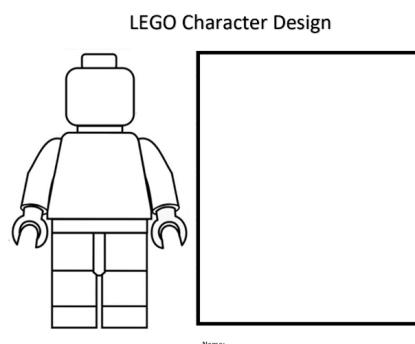


A handful of LEGO bricks can offer endless possibilities for creative play. Did you know that six LEGO blocks can form over 100,000,000 different combinations? During the MLSA MTS PD Day breakout sessions, participants explored how LEGO could engage students in play and literacy development.

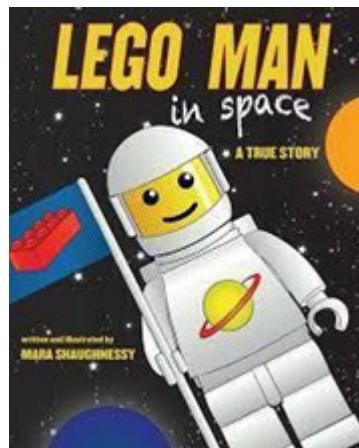


A variety of LEGO task cards were shared for students to respond in open-ended ways. Building and describing creations gives engaging opportunities for peer conversations and oral language practice. Christine Morgan offers a great set of editable LEGO task cards for students <https://christine-morgan.com/blog/f/lego-task-cards> found at this site.

LEGO bricks give a natural entry point to talk about character and setting. Two creative apps were shared to enliven LEGO setting and



character designs. Book Creator has multiple features to bring playful ideas alive. From speech to text, captions, photos, and voice recordings, students use these features to write how-to LEGO books, fictional stories, informational pieces, and even poetry. By app smashing Green Screen into Book Creator, students were able to place themselves into a LEGO-designed set. Lauren Friesen, a teacher-librarian from Pembina Trails, brought a number of student samples and shared how reluctant writers were eager to work on these projects. Another app called Chatter Kids easily allows students to add voice and description to a LEGO scene.



Scientific Literacy is another area that LEGO can support in the classroom. Using the picture book, "LEGO Man in Space," written by Mara Shaughnessy, was a highlight in a Grade 3 science class studying gravity. After reading about the real-life LEGO launch pulled off by two Canadian high school students, students were challenged to launch a LEGO person off the ground. This LEGO makerspace challenge engaged students in learning, literacy, and STEM as they sketched, labeled, listed materials, recorded results, and made jot notes for redesign ideas.

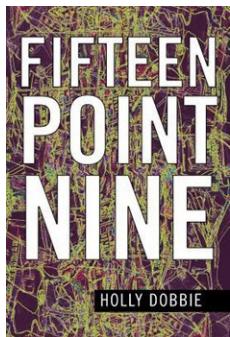
LEGO offers endless opportunities for play and learning. By sharing a few ideas, we hope that you are inspired to use play as a springboard for literacy learning at any age.

*“Because play is something every child, everywhere in the world can do. It fuels curiosity, sparks creativity, and inspires a lifelong love of learning. Children who play pick up all kinds of skills to thrive today – and lay the foundations for a happier, healthier life tomorrow.”*

– LEGO Foundation

## Literacy

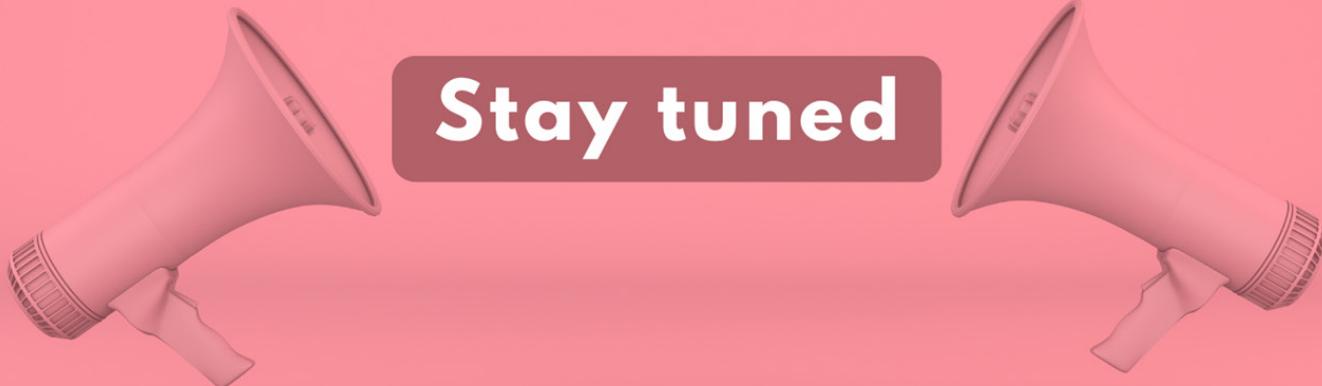
# L.I.T. Forum: Simple Strategies to Incorporate SEL into the School Library



We hosted a successful free virtual L.I.T. forum this year featuring guest speaker and author Hollie Dobbie. Holly presented on Simple Strategies to Incorporate SEL into the School Library. The session outlined different ways to empower library staff to incorporate Social Emotional Learning in their library. This included activities and a recommended book list for grades K through to 12 which focus on mental health. We had 35 tickets “purchased” with participants from Manitoba, BC and Ontario. The comments were very positive and participants enjoyed the session. Three draw prizes were also awarded to some lucky participants. Thanks to everyone who helped to make this event a success.

# Coming Soon

**Stay tuned**



**Keep an eye on the Manitoba School  
Library Association Website and Social  
Media pages for updates on**

- \* our 2023 L.I.T. Forum**
- \* I Love to Read Month grants**
- \* The Kevin Mowat Memorial Seed Grant**

## Manitoba Young Reader's Choice Award 2022 Winners

Congrats to last year's MYRCA Award Winners and Honour Books



# Manitoba Young Reader's Choice Award

## 2023 Nominees Announced

By Colette Dufault, MYRCA Chair

The Manitoba Young Reader's Choice Award has a long history with MSLA and is very appreciative of all the support we receive from teachers and librarians who encourage the love of reading to the students in their schools. By giving students a pre-selected long list, readers get a voice by voting for their favorite book.



MYRCA lists are divided into reading groups; The Sundogs list for students in grades 4-6 and the Northern Lights list for readers in grades 7-9. MYRCA is aware that some students in the recommended grades may be reading at a different level than the ones suggested, so we try to keep voting as flexible as possible. If a younger student is an avid reader and reading at a higher level, that student may vote for both lists as long as they have read 3 from each one (a total of 6). Similarly, if a student in grade 7-9 is perhaps a newcomer and has a lower reading level in English than their peers, they are more than welcome to vote on the Sundogs list.

MYRCA tries very hard to select books that are appropriate for each list. We include both novels and

graphic novels to give readers a chance to experience a range of reading options. We also do our very best to ensure representation of a diversity of characters and experiences that reflect our student populations. Every year, we struggle with choosing among the huge amount of wonderful choices that the publishers provide to us. Every year, we have to leave off some of our favourite titles while we look at the balance of the lists as a whole.

This year, there are some truly wonderful books to enjoy. At the Sundogs level, local author Colleen Nelson's *The Undercover Book List* explores the mystery of finding an anonymous note in a library book and has a heart-warming theme of acceptance. Peter Lee's *Notes from the Field* by Angela Ang will appeal to readers who love dinosaurs and enjoy books with doodles and sketches in them. Rob Justus's *Death and Sparkles* is a graphic novel that introduces Death as a paper pushing bureaucrat unable to make friends until he meets a self-absorbed teenage superstar unicorn named Sparkles.

On the Northern Lights list, we have local author Harriet Zaidman's *Second Chances* which explores the Polio epidemic from the points of view of a young and talented hockey player and a Metis girl from Rooster Town. First time novelist Primrose Madayag Knazan's *Lessons in Fusion* has main character Sarah compete in an online cooking show and includes recipes from both her Jewish and Filipinx heritages. You can follow her Winnipeg food blog on Instagram at primrosemk. Thomas

King's short story *Borders* has been transformed into a graphic novel and illustrates in sparse, elegant detail how an Indigenous family navigates the colonialist construct of international borders.



We hope that you will find meaningful ways to share these important and deeply touching novels with the students in your libraries. We are always eager to see what you are doing: your displays, students' reactions to the books, each school's winners and any activities you do in your clubs. Share it all with us on our social media sites @myrcaward or email us at myrcaward@gmail.com.

Unfortunately, because of the pandemic, MYRCA has been unable to hold in person award ceremonies. Connecting readers with the authors they love is the single best way to foster a lifelong love of reading. We encourage you all to host class visits by contacting the authors themselves. Our experience has always been that they are more than thrilled to be asked and are willing to accommodate any needs you have. This year, MYRCA will be

working on a new partnership with Thin Air, The Winnipeg International Writer's Festival that will (hopefully) bring content to you during February.

What better way to celebrate I Love to Read month? We are also in talks regarding having something for you to share with your clubs in June as a wrap

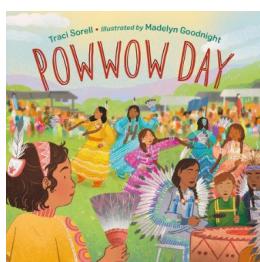
up party to celebrate the student's year-long reading achievements. We can't wait to share the news with you when it is official, so stay tuned!



# Indigenous

## Hot off the press!

The following titles have been released since our last issues and would make great additions to your collections.



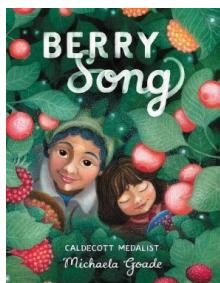
### Picture Book

**Title:** Powwow Day

**Author:** Traci Sorrell – Cherokee

**Illustrator:** Madelyn Goodnight – Chickasaw

**Synopsis:** River is recovering from an illness, and worries that she won't be able to dance at the powwow again. The story is a beautiful tale of how healing community is. Filled with additional information on the history and importance of powwows.



### Picture Book

**Title:** Berry Song

**Author/Illustrator:** Michaela Goade – Tlingit and Haida

**Synopsis:** Coming out July 19th. This is Caldecott Medal winner Michaela Goade's, who illustrated *We Are Water Protectors*, first authored publication. A tale of the gifts of the earth as a grandmother and granddaughter travel the land throughout the seasons.

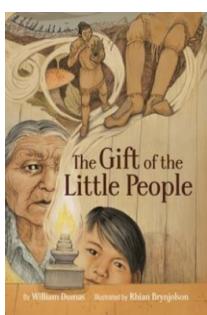


### Middle Years

**Title:** Autumn Bird & The Runaway

**Authors:** Melanie Florence – Cree and settler; Richard Scrimber – settler

**Synopsis:** A story told in alternating perspectives about kids from two very different worlds that form an unexpected friendship. Autumn lives a loving and secure life, and fits in with the popular kids at school, while Cody has a very difficult home life. When she finds Cody in her laneway one night on her way home, she decides not to turn her back on him even though they weren't friends before. A story of identity, belonging and compassion.



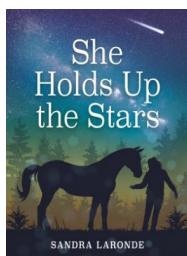
### Middle Years

**Title:** The Gift of the Little People

**Author:** William Dumas - Rocky Cree

**Illustrator:** Rhian Brynjolson

**Synopsis:** To save his people from certain death, Kākakiw must overcome doubt to follow the traditional teachings of the Asiniskaw Īthiniwak and trust in the gift of the Little People. In this illustrated short story for all ages, celebrated Rocky Cree storyteller William Dumas shares a teaching about hope in the face of adversity. This book is a companion story to The Six Seasons of the Asiniskaw Īthiniwak series.


**Middle Years**
**Title:** She Holds Up the Stars

**Author:** Sandra Laronde - Anishanaabe

**Synopsis:** From publisher - A young Indigenous girl searching for a sense of home finds strength and courage in her gifts, her deepening connection to the land, and her own cultural awakening in this moving coming-of-age story. A story of reconciliation and the threads that connect us to family, to the land, and to our own sense of self.


**Middle Years**
**Title:** Forever Birchwood

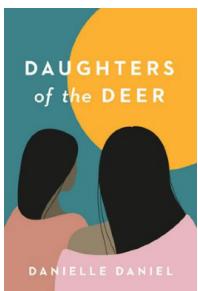
**Author:** Danielle Daniel - Metis

**Synopsis:** The first of two books on this list by Daniel, this middle grade debut tells the story of Wolf, who spends the days exploring the wilderness surrounding her northern mining community and in her secret tree-house hideaway - Birchwood. Her grandmother tells her that she is the great-granddaughter of a tree talker and Wolf knows that she is destined to protect the wildlife around her. Her mother and her new construction worker boyfriend, however, don't understand this connection. When orange plastic bands are wrapped around the trees at Wolf's hangout, she has to find a way to save them.


**Young Adult**
**Title:** A Snake Falls to Earth

**Author:** Darcie Little Badger - Lipan Apache

**Synopsis:** You may remember author Darcie Little Badger from last year's YA Global Read Aloud selection *Elatsoe*. She's back this year with this excellent futuristic work that winds together Lipan Apache storytelling and tales of monster, magic, and family. In this work, Nina, a Lipan girl who is drawn to the old stories, and Oli, a cottonmouth from the land of spirits, find their worlds brought together - and there are many that would kill to keep them apart.


**Senior Years/Staff Reads**
**Title:** Daughters of the Deer

**Author:** Danielle Daniel - Metis

**Synopsis:** From publisher - In this haunting and groundbreaking historical novel, Danielle Daniel imagines the lives of women in the Algonquin territories of the 1600s, a story inspired by her family's ancestral link to a young girl who was murdered by French settlers.


**Title:** Buffalo is the New Buffalo

**Author:** Chelsea Vowel - Metis

**Synopsis:** From publisher - Powerful stories of "Metis futurism" that envision a world without violence, capitalism, or colonization. Indigenous futurisms seek to discover the impact of colonization, remove its psychological baggage, and recover ancestral traditions.

# Cataloguing Corner

## Equity Informed Weeding

The following is a section from the Canadian School Library's 'Collection Diversity Toolkit', which can be viewed in entirety at <https://www.canadianschoollibraries.ca/collection-diversity-toolkit/>. It, is available for use and sharing on an CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 license.

### What is Weeding?

Weeding is the process of re-evaluating resources in the library collection and removing items that are worn out, have outdated or inaccurate information, or no longer serve the learning needs and reading interests of students at the school. The weeding process is a planned, systematic, and thoughtful activity, and a critical part of collection development.

### The Role of Weeding in Collection Development

Resource collections remain relevant and useful through strategic selection of new resources, and the de-selection, or weeding, of resources that no longer meet current principles of selection. Weeding is a continuous and ongoing process, and is critical for keeping the resource collection current, relevant, and appealing.

### Weeding: The Basics

Library professionals frequently use the CREW (Continuous Review, Evaluation and Weeding) Method as a framework for weeding. The model provides specific criteria, captured in the acronym, MUSTIE.

There are many reasons to weed as you can see. We recommend that you consult your own school district's guidelines for collection development and weeding. For the purposes of this toolkit, we will focus on weeding as an equity issue.

### Weeding Is An Equity Issue

Weeding our collection is an important way to ensure it remains relevant, responsive and current. It is also one of the ways we can critically consider and take action to ensure that our collection represents our local, broader and global communities.

Weeding is the removal of resources that no longer meet selection principles. Knowledge evolves over time, attitudes shift, societal values expand and evolve, and we begin to see historical and social events from different perspectives. A resource that was selected a decade or more ago may have reflected understandings of the time, but assessed through the lens of current knowledge and understandings, may now fall short. It cannot be overstated how important it is to engage in a continuous cycle of weeding, when we view the process through this equity lens.

The core foundational elements of equity is to work towards fairness and justice for all through tangible actions. It is to recognize that historically and currently people of various identities have not been treated in a fair manner and that they require different things to succeed. Weeding to keep library collections current and responsive to the evolving needs of the learning community is one such tangible action. As teacher-librarians and library professionals we have an important role and responsibility to play in ensuring

our collection is of the highest quality and represents people authentically.

### Weeding Through an Equity Lens Taking an equity stance to weeding means:

- Being aware of our own positionality to our work and our implicit biases
- Being knowledgeable about our context and community we are serving locally and globally
- Having knowledge of our entire collection
- Ensuring the collection shows multiple perspectives, reflects and is responsive to the sociopolitical contexts
- Knowing that there are resources that have silenced, left out or misrepresented people and communities in the past/present
- Ensuring the collection shows multiple perspectives, reflects and is responsive to the sociopolitical contexts
- Considering all aspects of the accessibility of resources in the collection
- Weeding the collection in an ongoing and systematic way, continuously reassessing the collection using the MUSTIE model and through an equity lens.

## Some of the questions to be considered when weeding for equity are:

- *When I look through my entire collection through an inclusive lens whose perspective is there? Whose is missing?*
- *When I look through my entire collection through an equity lens whose story and perspective has historically been centered? Who has told this story and information?*
- *How are people represented? Communities 'positioned' and which 'gaze' is the text from?*
- *Does this book engage in cultural appropriation or show people as 'different', 'exotic' or through a deficit lens?*
- *Will my students enjoy this story? Is it relevant for their lived experiences? Does it teach them authentically about diverse lived experiences?*

Khokhar, Rabia (2020). Reflections of a New Teacher-Librarian: Weeding is an Equity Issue. Canadian School Libraries Journal 4(3).

## Decolonizing Libraries

Weeding the school library collection is an essential process in addressing concerns about representation of Indigenous peoples and their role in history, society and culture. Over the past few years Canadians have come to realize that our understanding of history is generally written from a colonial point of view. The final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (NCTR 2015) revealed harsh truths of our troubled past. Resources about Canada's history and its Indigenous peoples with older publication dates require scrutiny during the weeding process. It is

likely that a thorough weeding may leave the shelves a bit bare. Weeding can help us establish priorities for selection and acquisition. The TRC and other recent and dramatic events have inspired the publication of a wide range of new resources, telling a more balanced and truthful story, including a view of Canada's history through an Indigenous lens and from the voices of Indigenous writers.

### Decolonize the Library Catalogue

Work to decolonize your library's catalogue: consider access points such as subject headings, tags, The DDC subject heading for this number remains "Native Americans": Canadian libraries are moving forward in replacing this and similar classifications, in this case replacing "Native Americans" with "Indigenous peoples". Refer the University of British Columbia's subject guide on Indigenous Knowledge Organization for more information and resources.

More Recommendations for decolonizing libraries:

Recommendations from the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA-FCAB) Indigenous Matters Committee

Ontario Library Association (2019) Information Brief: Indigenous Matters

## Weeding in a World of Constant Change

Significant world, national, and social events may disrupt perceptions, and we must respond by taking a critical look at the information held in collections. Current examples of this include the Black Lives Matter movement, the dramatic uncovering of the colonial brutality of Canada's residential school system, hate-motivated violence, and the social disruption of the pandemic. Especially in school libraries, where our collections inform formal and informal

inquiry for students, it is extremely important to constantly assess collections through an informed and critical lens in light of constant change.

## Critical Look-Fors When Weeding the Library Collection

Weeding Fiction, Literature, and Picture Books

Resource selection is based on sound educational criteria unbiased by personal, political, social, or religious views. As selectors and weeder, library professionals are faced with difficult decisions when it comes to literature in particular. Literature offers a window into the diversity of human and social experiences and values, past and present. It is those very complexities that make literature appealing and relevant. It is sometimes those complexities that draw the attention of censors. Resources should be chosen because the balance of positive qualities far outweighs potential negative qualities, and this should be the primary consideration when making decisions about weeding.

**It is very important that the school library continue to provide access to a wide-ranging fiction and literature collection, and that the weeding process not be used as a vehicle for censorship.**

Put briefly, censorship is the removal, suppression, or restricted circulation of literary, artistic, or educational materials – of images, ideas, and information – on the grounds that these are morally or otherwise objectionable in light of standards applied by the censor. Frequently, the single occurrence of an offending word will arouse protest. In other cases, objection will be made to the underlying values and basic message conveyed – or said to be conveyed – by a given work. (p. 2)

In general, selection is carried out by trained professionals, familiar with the wide variety of available choices

and guided by a clear grasp of the educational purposes to be fulfilled. The professional should also know how to take into account and work with community and parental concerns, while still maintaining a high tolerance for diversity. By contrast, the censor's judgment is that of the individual, and it is most frequently based on criteria that are inherently personal and often intolerant. (p.7)

Henry Reichman (2001). *Censorship and Selection: Issues and Answers for Schools*, 3rd Edition. American Library Association.

When it comes to children's literature, the word "classic" is arguably over-used. Children's books that were very popular decades ago may not have enduring appeal, and calling them classic may be a nod to nostalgia rather than to their actual merit.

"When we defend classics, we're sometimes just defending childhood memories. Pippi Longstocking has its merits. But could Pippi make room for other spunky characters whose fathers aren't white kings of black cannibal tribes?"

Venkatraman, Padma. *Weeding Out Racism: Challenging old classics is akin to replacing statues of racist figures*.

*School Library Journal* (August 2020)

Being labelled a "classic" should not protect books from a critical look. This came into public consciousness recently when the publishers of Dr. Seuss made the decision to cease publication of six of the beloved author's books, stating that "they portray people in ways that are hurtful or wrong" (NPR, March 2, 2021). Beloved books, when viewed through an equity lens, may appear shockingly racist. The prospect of re-evaluating beloved texts may seem daunting. Simply rereading a text that was loved by previous generations may be the best way to put decisions about

weeding into perspective.

Making decisions about whether or not to weed classics of children's literature may come down to the purpose for these resources being in the collection in the first place. If they are included in picture book or fiction collections for the purpose of engaging our youngest readers, then it is clear that some beloved classics may be past their glory, and are candidates for removal from the collection. If, on the other hand, they are part of a secondary library collection for the purpose of literary study, as examples of the changing nature of children's literature, for example, then it may be appropriate to keep them. A considered choice to keep the resource fosters students' critical thinking capacity through the exploration of controversial issues and materials.

**Picture Books:** In addition to the criteria for weeding fiction, it is important to consider the quality and relevance of the illustrations, and design elements that either increase or decrease the appeal of the book. A critical eye should be applied to looking for stereotypes in illustrations, overt or subtle.

### Weeding Non-Fiction

In addition to all of the good reasons for ongoing and systematic weeding of non-fiction resources outlined in the MUSTIE guide, it is important to review the collections for equitable representation and diverse voices. Particular areas of attention should include:

### Philosophy & Psychology (DDC 100s)

Works on psychology and ethics may need frequent review. Values of the past may not respect current rights and freedoms – stereotypical gender roles, for example.

### Religion (DDC 200s)

Students need current, unbiased information about world religions. Titles that proselytize, or on the other hand denigrate a religion or religions have no place in the publicly-funded school library.

### Social Sciences (DDC 300s)

Resources on society and culture should be evaluated regularly with an eye to currency and bias. Portrayals of specific groups of people change over time and vary by perspective. Particularly scrutiny should be applied to books about customs, etiquette, holidays and folklore (DDC 390s). Holiday books may not reflect diversity. Whose voice is represented? For folklore, look at the quality of the retelling. Older editions may reflect racial stereotypes typical of the era in which the edition was published, for example. Indigenous celebrations may be represented as part of a past culture and not represent lived culture today. Indigenous stories may not be told through an Indigenous lens.

### Literature and Rhetoric (DDC 800s)

Criteria for weeding literature is very similar to those covered under Weeding Fiction, above.

- **Humour and Satire:** Review all titles in this collection for gender or nationality bias, and outdated sensibilities. Review illustrations for similar stereotypes and biases.

### History and Geography (DDC 900s)

History doesn't change, but perspectives on history change radically over time as more is uncovered and more voices are represented. Student inquiry should be informed by current perspectives.

- **History of Africa:** Review this

collection carefully for biased and stereotyped representations in text and in images of the geography and people of Africa.

- History of North America: In 2021 we find ourselves in the midst of major shifts in understanding of historical perspectives on the colonial and modern histories of the United States and Canada. It is critical that student inquiry is not misinformed by overtly colonial perspectives or the subtle or even overt racism that may be represented in outdated publications.
- Indigenous Peoples – North America: Weed with a critical eye, looking for biased or stereotyped representations. Weeding for age will go a long way towards removing resources written from

a colonial point of view.

- History of Canada: Older resources should be weeded and replaced with newer resources that reflect our growing awareness of aspects of Canada's history which have been previously excluded, and particularly resources that tell Canada's story through an Indigenous lens. Have a close look at biographies of Canadian leaders. Who is represented? Who is not? How is their story told?

#### ***Weeding Primary Source Materials***

Exploring primary sources is a vital part of learning. The Ontario Canada and World Studies curriculum, for example, includes expectations in every course requiring students to collect relevant evidence and information from a variety of primary sources and

secondary sources. The school library collection supports inquiry learning: the inclusion of primary source materials supports the development of critical thinking and skills for research and inquiry. Some primary sources relevant to the study of 20th century history, for example, may represent ideas that are at the very least controversial in today's context, and may represent ideas that we find objectionable or even abhorrent. Developing critical understanding of historical events, however, involves the study of these materials. Such primary source material should therefore be selected carefully and may be held in non-fiction print or online database collections. Decisions about keeping these resources during the weeding process must consider the purpose for inclusion in the collection.

# Just Weed It!

## Library Girl's Tips For Keeping Your Collection...

IF THE ANSWER'S NO... IT'S GOT TO GO!

F

Does it **FOSTER** a Love of Reading?  
The books in your library should help students see themselves as readers and make them want to read **MORE**.

R

Does it **REFLECT** your diverse population? Every student in your school should be able to see themselves in your collection.

E

Does it reflect an **EQUITABLE** global view? Your collection should represent a variety of view points and encourage global connections.

S

Does it **SUPPORT** the curricula?  
Your collection should be age & developmentally appropriate **AND** it should support the learning goals of your school.

H

Is it a **HIGH-QUALITY** text?  
Your collection should be made up of materials that connect your students and teachers to up to date and accurate information.



# Leading Learning

## Kevin Osachuk - Leading from the Library and Tackling Disinformation

By Sharron Arksey

A Winnipeg teacher librarian says that TLs are a perfect fit for the task of providing students with the media literacy skills they need to navigate in an age of media oversaturation.

Kevin Osachuk is the teacher-librarian at Dakota Collegiate in Winnipeg's Louis Riel School Division and teaches a Grade 9-12 class on Information Literacy in the Age of Fake News. He has been a teacher-librarian for 20 years and came to Dakota from Nelson McIntyre.

Osachuk was interviewed by CBC Radio in late March, talking about the importance of information literacy skills across all disciplines.

As a follow-up to that interview, we had some questions of our own. These are his responses.

### What is the role of the school library in information literacy - specifically disinformation?

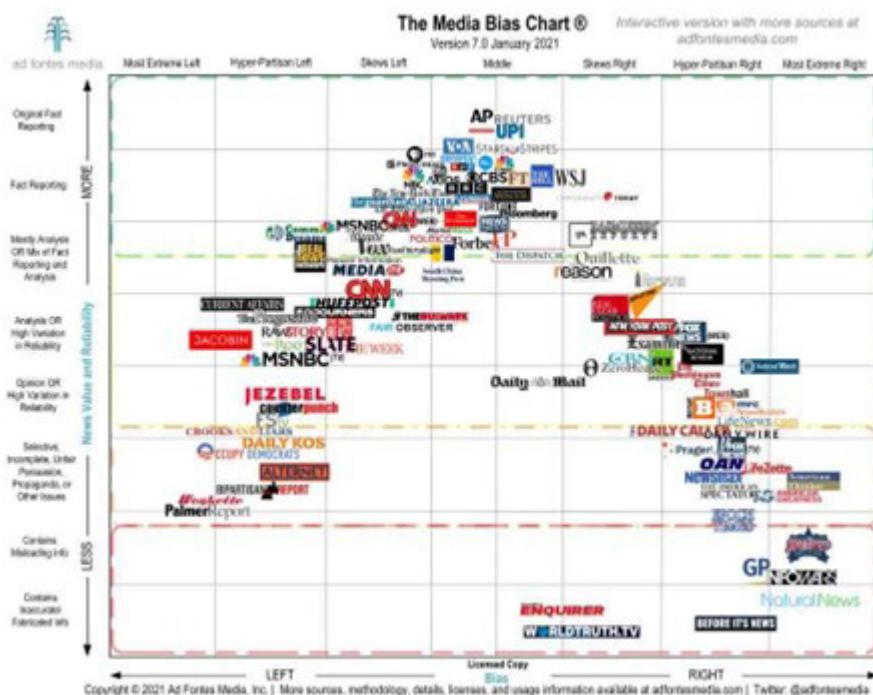
Historically, libraries were the traditional sources of vetted information through books. Today, we are the leaders in finding information (usually) digitally. We can liaise with classrooms to put information literacy in context. The position is very flexible, and I get to work in a classroom setting to co-teach across all grade levels and disciplines. We are current with disinformation trends and can provide examples and guide to better sources.

### Why is information literacy so crucial?

There are no industries that won't require information literacy skills. We used to hold books up as the best sources of information, but they are no longer as practical, especially as we make so many advancements so quickly. The ability to find and effectively use information, which can be a moving target, is crucial.

### What concepts and experiences do you think it is important for students to have/think about?

Students need to be familiar with databases. They are immensely valuable. Students also need to understand the concepts of "peer-reviewed", "triangulation" (minimum 3 independent sources when researching), "echo chamber" and "bias".



**Do you have any favourite resources that you would point other educators towards?**

I don't have any favourite resources, but I'm a big fan of databases. We have a division-wide subscription to the Ebscohost databases, and within it I really like showing "Canadian Points of View", primarily because it shows important topics from a bias-free overview, then demonstrates the various "sides" that approach that issue, along with the evidence used to support that view.

**Any tips on guiding educators towards including information literacy into core subject areas?**

I feel that it's very important for teachers to work with their teacher-librarians, although I'm conscious of the fact that our numbers are dwindling. Teacher-Librarians are PERFECTLY SITUATED to be co-teachers. Outside of that, I feel that teachers need to support accurate information that encourages students to use peer-reviewed work. When students graduate from high school, we need to put them in a position to be able to continue to access information independently. Databases during high school, then databases through post-secondary school, or accessing through the public library must be taught and expected.

I have a simple demonstration that I use in my Info Lit presentation. I stole it from something I saw online. I ask students to define "Gullible". They usually know it means easily tricked. Then, I ask if anyone noticed that I put a sticky-note with "Gullible" on it at the back of the classroom. After the look/don't look mental gymnastics, I tell

students that this is the key takeaway of Information Literacy. Then I go to the back of the room and take the sticky note (that I sneakily posted when entering the class) and point to it saying, "Even if a trusted adult tells you something, check for yourself."

# HOW TO SPOT FAKE NEWS



**CONSIDER THE SOURCE**  
Click away from the story to investigate the site, its mission and its contact info.

**READ BEYOND**  
Headlines can be outrageous in effort to get clicks. What's the whole story?

**CHECK THE AUTHOR**  
Do a quick search on the author. Are they credible? Are they real?

**SUPPORTING SOURCES?**  
Click on those links. Determine if the info given actually supports the story.

**CHECK THE DATE**  
Reposting old news stories doesn't mean they're relevant to current events.

**IS IT A JOKE?**  
If it is too outlandish, it might be satire. Research the site and author to be sure.

**CHECK YOUR BIASES**  
Consider if your own beliefs could affect your judgement.

**ASK THE EXPERTS**  
Ask a librarian, or consult a fact-checking site.

IFLA  
International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

# School Library Programs Lead Learning - A Letter of Advocacy

By Morgan Arksey

To those who make decisions on government and school budgets and/or anyone who is concerned about the success of our upcoming generations of young persons;

You may have heard that it is time to save money and trim the fat from our school budgets. The winds of austerity are blowing, and it is time to cut expenses and save the hard-working taxpayer's money. If we don't cut now, our future generations will be caught digging themselves out of our fiscal hole. And so, the work has begun to find the extraneous and whittle it away from divisional school budgets. These are doubtlessly challenging decisions, and I certainly don't envy anyone who is forced to make them.

Perhaps School Library Programs have caught your eye as an easy way to cut salaries and bring down expenditures by reducing budgets. What I would like to put forth, however, is that School Library Programs and their staff provide a significant economic benefit well greater than their immediate cost. You may have heard of the 'butterfly effect', the theory espoused by meteorologist and MIT professor Edward Lorenz that the flapping of a butterfly's wings might eventually cause a tornado. Now, I'm not saying that eliminating trained library staff like Teacher Librarians and Library Technicians will cause strange meteorologic phenomena – but instead that what seems like a simple budget cut can have significant long term costs unseen from the vantage of the chopping block.

Libraries are places of literacy and

learning. Shared community spaces and places require management and organization. For example, our learning commons is vacuumed only once or twice a week and the garbage is emptied daily. The rest of our cleaning and organization is done either by library staff or student volunteers that are mentored, coordinated, trained, and supervised by myself and our library technician. They also receive

***When teachers work in isolation, it is wasteful  
– Teacher-Librarians bring them together to make their planning and teaching more efficient and responsive to the needs of their community.***

basic training in shelving and covering books and are parts of initiatives to update and modernize our space. Cutting Library funding means cutting these kinds of activities that help maintain a space, build community ownership and voice, reduce costs for custodial and support staff, and provide important employment skills for over 30 students each year in the school I teach at alone. This doesn't even get to the role of libraries as places of literacy and learning.

But let's move on to that, shall we? Teacher Librarians are school

instructional leaders that provide student collaboration and personalized learning, they are Inquiry Based Learning experts, and they are staff collaboration experts that help pull teachers from isolation (Hayes, 2014). When teachers work in isolation, it is wasteful – Teacher-Librarians bring them together to make their planning and teaching more efficient and responsive to the needs of their community. They are aware of the physical, and virtual resources available to educators to meet those needs. They are the information experts in their schools who curate and collect materials that support best educational practices.

You probably already think of libraries as places for reading, but what about the immense ripple effect of benefits that reading confers? Not all reading is created equal – the best reading is that done by one's own choice, for pleasure, and for sustained periods of time. This is what noted linguist Dr. Stephen Krashen calls Free Voluntary Reading. Want students to improve their vocabulary? Free Voluntary Reading. Want students to be better spellers? Free Voluntary Reading. Want students to be better communicators through writing? Free Voluntary Reading. Want students to be better critical thinkers? Free Voluntary Reading! Libraries are often the only place that students get a choice in what they want to read, and by cutting funding for these spaces, by proxy you are also reducing the benefits conferred. Reading has also been connected to increased empathy, and there is evidence supporting the

hypothesis that people who read 30 minutes a day actually live longer, healthier lives (Bavishi, Slade & Levy, 2015, p. 46), with research showing a 23-month survival benefit and reduced incidences of dementia and Alzheimer's. Who'd have thought - Librarians, who purchase the books for school libraries based on the interests of the students they serve, partially responsible for alleviating stress on our future health care system!?

In a similar vein, Teacher-Librarians also are in the unique position to select learning and free voluntary reading materials that reflect the diversity of our student populations, and of the wider world around them. They are leaders in schoolwork on Reconciliation and in providing joyful and realistic representations of students from marginalized populations. Rudine Sims Bishop told us over 30 years ago that reading can be a window from which we can grow empathy and experience someone else's life, a mirror that allows us to see people like us in text and remind us that we are not alone, and a sliding door that takes us and immerses us in the world of others. Author Uma Krishnaswami has expanded that metaphor to the idea of stories as prisms, as ways for us to see alternative realities, better futures, and question the practices of our own world (Krishnaswami, 2019). In a world that seems increasingly divided, we are doing our students a disservice by reducing their access to materials that encourage and promote better, kinder futures. In a world where 10-20% of adolescents will experience mental health problems, it is also important to realize that libraries operate as a safe space for young people, that they promote and gather resources for mental health and wellbeing initiatives, and that they encourage the development of bibliotherapeutic practices as well as reading for pleasure

– which has been shown to improve mental health outcomes (Merga, 2020, p. 663).

But despite those significant benefits for supporting School Library Programs, what we've mentioned thus far seems a bit of a stereotypical view of Teacher-Librarians as shhh-ing, cardiganed, purveyors of books and other print texts in a shared physical space. But another reason we need Teacher-Librarians is their key role in supporting the use of, developing collections of, and helping educate on the creation of Multimodal texts. In the one room schoolhouses of Manitoba's past, aside from a knowledgeable adult, books were really the only mode of communication and information

***But another reason we need Teacher-Librarians is their key role in supporting the use of, developing collections of, and helping educate on the creation of Multimodal texts.***

sharing that was readily available. Nowadays, thanks to significant advances in technology, information can be shared in many different ways. As information experts in our schools, we curate and collect materials on curricular concepts and themes constantly. This includes expanding past the written word and spoken word (linguistic modes) to include modes such as visual, audio, gesture, spatial or a combination of multiple, multimodal; all ways of conveying meaning (The New London Group, 1999, p. 25). Students need to be adept at making meaning and creating understanding

from these multimodal texts if they wish to succeed in our ever-changing world. Being information and curriculum experts puts us in a unique position to put together sources in a way that classroom teachers cannot. But TLs don't just collect and organize these materials, they also play an active role in helping students create multimodal texts using coding, digital technologies, and in makerspaces. While Teacher Librarians often work on projects with classroom teachers and students using these technologies, they are often significant providers of in-house PD for a school's staff and it is through the use of these digital technologies that "learners with diverse needs build literacy skills and become emancipated from being excluded" (Oakley, 2017, p. 172).

As information experts, Teacher Librarians are also leaders in critical literacy. Information seeking has changed dramatically since many teachers were themselves in a classroom. Only this past week, I overheard a teacher telling their students how lucky they were to have access to the internet, instead of having to look everything up in a big and bulky encyclopedia. But with published titles like encyclopedias, one could generally have faith that what was contained in that tome would be fact checked. You wouldn't have to have the skills of critical analysis necessary to determine who wrote it, what their motives might be, and the biases hidden within the text. While typing a question into Google is simpler from the standpoint of simply finding any source of information, students are left with a cognitively much more demanding task of determining whether it is relevant, useful, and/or reliable. Fortunately for us Teacher-Librarians, through their position and training as curator of resources, come with a skillset for critically finding info

in our increasingly online world. They are experts in the subscription services and databases paid for by divisions and provide instruction for both students and staff to ensure they are used to the best of their potential; there is no worse expense than an expensive one that is never utilized. But they are also adept at searching the wider internet, how to critically read headlines and fact check, and how to separate the wheat from the chafe in Google search results.

This extends to the realm of digital and media literacy. Digital media refers to enabling students to be safe and ethical participants in online communities, while media literacy is empowering learners to students to critically consume the media they are exposed to (The intersection of digital and media literacy, 2012). As school curation and research experts, Teacher-Librarians are school leaders in ensuring that students become digitally and media literate; they provide education and instruction to staff, students, and their families. TLs are also a bulwark against the oft cited dangers of an increasingly digital society. Researchers have noted a 40% decline in empathy over the past 20 years (Wolf, 2018, p 50), potentially made ever more prominent by what mediasmarts.ca defines as "empathy traps" - how in online spaces we lack the cues necessary to determine the feelings of others or are bolstered by a sense of anonymity. The good news is that TLs are doing work educating students about digital and media literacy topics, and also that book reading is a proven way to help students develop and grow empathy, as are library initiatives like groups, clubs and even events like human libraries help grow deeper community relationships. While teachers also run clubs and groups, Teacher-Librarians can take a global view of the needs of the school and create groups where students

from across different classrooms and grade levels can interact in ways that homeroom teachers may not be able to.

Teacher Librarians are also leaders of pedagogy and best practice in their schools. Their unique position allows them to get to know an entire staff and student body and provides them with a birds-eye view of school strengths and areas of need. We readily agree that students learn best when they have a respectful and established connection with their teachers, and it seems to me that it is not a significant leap to apply that to how teachers best learn as well. TLs have the flexibility to adapt our

creation of makerspaces and other creative endeavors that provide outlets and opportunities for students that would otherwise be impossible.

The Library Learning Commons is positioned to uniquely assist learners (both staff and students) "to hone and apply an expanded notion of literacy and active reading culture" in the areas of Literacy Leadership, Engaging Readers, Information Literacy, Critical Literacy, Digital Literacy and Citizenship, Cultural Literacy, connecting with other community partners like families and the public library system (Canadian School Libraries, n.d.). As Trevor MacKenzie reminds us, TLs are in-school inquiry super teachers, who listen, assess student needs, reflect on and purchase learning resources, ask new and insightful questions to shift thinking and planning, visit classrooms, make observations, develop student research skills, and build relationships all while developing the literacies noted in Leading Learning. They do this in preparing resources, leading school actions and initiatives, and in supporting teacher and student reflection. Teacher-Librarians are a jack of all trades that teachers know can come to their assistance. When you remove Teacher-Librarians from schools, you are putting these roles back on to the plates of already overburdened classroom teachers.

Setting a dollar value for things like improved health and longevity is probably possible with some sort of algorithm. You can do a cost benefit analysis for many of the ideas mentioned here. But how do you put a monetary value to the long-term benefits from the creativity and independence provided by access to learning opportunities from trained Library Staff? How much will the elimination of Teacher-Librarian positions impact a school division in terms of future teacher burnout, when

***As school curation and research experts, Teacher-Librarians are school leaders in ensuring that students become digitally and media literate; they provide education and instruction to staff, students, and their families.***

leadership and collaboration as best fits the style of our co-teachers and are cognizant of community needs that will impact planning as well, unlike expensive and aspirational one-off presentations from educational gurus that can't speak to the intricacies or financial constraints of a school's specific context. They are experts in the web applications and tools that fit the needs of students across curricular areas, allowing students and staff to curate, present, create and network and develop the skills with 21st century technology necessary for their lives after school. They have led in the

they no longer have someone to turn to for collaboration in preparation, action, and reflection and the jobs previously tasked to TLs have been thrust onto their plates with no added time to complete them. What are the long term emotional impacts of students who no longer get to see themselves reflected in the books that they read, or whom no longer have access to a safe space because it no longer exists in the same capacity, let alone the financial impacts that those emotional impacts will have? What is the value of Teacher-Librarian advocacy for technological and other resource access for our most vulnerable students? How about the value of feeling a part of a larger school community, whether through volunteering or through Library led initiatives like English conversation nights, maker

magazines, and book clubs?

I don't know the answer to the money questions, but what I do know is that we need community now more than ever. School Library Resource Programs and their trained staff are pillars of our schools and provide benefits well beyond one fiscal year. What seems like a simple cut now, may be a tornado of cost in our future.

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# IFLA Releases New School Library Manifesto



**International  
Federation of  
Library  
Associations and Institutions**

## School Library Manifesto (2021)

### The Vision of the School Library Program

The school library program improves and enhances teaching and learning for the entire school community through its qualified school library professionals, collections and, and active collaborations for literacies, thinking, and global citizenship in inclusive and equitable education.

### The Mission of the School Library Program

The school library program and its qualified school library professionals focus on student growth by providing equitable access for learning experiences, resources, and learning spaces that enable all members of the school community to become engaged critical thinkers, effective readers, and responsible users, evaluators, and creators of information in multiple formats.

Equitable access to the learning commons in primary and secondary school library environments, resources, and differentiated instructional opportunities for all learner needs and abilities must be ensured, regardless of age, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation or identity, disability, nationality, language, professional, economic, or social status. Specific

access must be provided for those who are unable to use mainstream library services and materials.

Access to school library program services and collections should be based on the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and should not be subject to any form of ideological, political, religious censorship, or to commercial pressures.

School libraries link to public libraries and the wider information network, in accordance with the IFLA Public Library Manifesto.

### Funding Legislation and Networks

The school library program is essential to every long-term education strategy, including literacies, information provision and creation, and economic, social, and cultural development. It is the responsibility of local, regional, and national authorities to support school library programs through specific legislation and policies which ensure adequate and sustained funding for qualified school library professionals, materials, technologies, facilities, and life-long professional learning. School library programs must be free of charge to students and school staff.

The school library program is an essential partner in local, regional,

national, and international library and information networks.

Where the school library shares facilities and/or resources with another type of library, such as a public library, the unique aims of the school library must be acknowledged and maintained through an active partnership with a qualified school library professional.

### Qualified Professional Library Staff

The school librarian is a professionally qualified, and motivated and dedicated staff member responsible for planning and managing the school library program, working together with all members of the school community, and liaising with the public library and others in the wider community. S/He is should be a member of a library association. The school librarian should be supported in the school library routine by adequate clerical staff trained in school library procedures, and can be helped by well-trained volunteers.

The qualifications and role of the school librarian and clerical staff will vary according to the budget, curriculum, and teaching methodology of the school, within local and national legal and financial frameworks.

In an increasingly networked environment, qualified school library professionals must be good leaders, competent in planning and teaching evolving literacies and digital competencies, operating and managing the school library facility and program, and responsible to both teachers and students.

## Goals of the School Library Program

The school library is a common learning environment where the school librarian teaches and works collaboratively with the school community to:

- ensure expert instruction and guidance for all learners as their qualified school library professional;
- support and enhance educational goals as outlined in the school's mission and curriculum;
- support and enhance cultural and social goals as planned with the local community;
- ensure a safe learning environment for all learners where their quest for knowledge is respected and supported and personal information protected;
- curate and utilize a broad range of relevant and responsive learning resources and instructional strategies that meet all learners' needs and abilities while exposing learners to diverse ideas, experiences, and opinions;
- co-design active inquiry and discovery learning experiences in physical and virtual spaces
- foster independent reading for knowledge, understanding, imagination and enjoyment;
- stimulate and enhance reading literacy and enjoyment through a wide range of resources and strategies, including reading aloud at all ages;
- instruct learners in becoming ethical users and creators of information and knowledge;
- Influence learners to adopt the use of libraries throughout their lives;
- organize learning activities that

encourage cultural and social awareness and sensitivity;

- promote and involve the whole school community and beyond in the work of the school library;
- provide services and activities during the whole school day and beyond;
- apply and defend the concepts of intellectual freedom and access to information as essential for effective and responsible citizenship and participation in a democracy;
- facilitate professional learning opportunities for teachers and staff, especially related to new resources and technologies, curriculum, and instructional strategies;
- engage in continuous review and renewal of all school library program goals and activities;
- overcome the digital divide and other forms of exclusion.

The school library program fulfills these goals by developing equitable policies and instructional programs, selecting and acquiring high-quality resources and technologies, providing physical and intellectual access to diverse sources of information, providing participatory physical and virtual learning environments, and employing qualified school library professionals and trained clerical staff.

## Operation and Management

To ensure effective and accountable operations, the school library program must:

- have administrative support for the role of a school library learning commons in order to realize the full benefit of a school library program;
- include policies on school library services that are formulated to define goals, priorities, and services in

relation to the school's curriculum ;

- have administration-endorsed policies regarding learning resources development and preventing censorship;
- be organized and maintained according to professional standards;
- be accessible to all members of the school community and operate within the context of the local and global community;
- collaborate with teachers, senior school management, administrators, parents, other librarians and information professionals, and community groups;
- be accountable, through an ongoing monitoring, evaluation and accountability process, whose data are discussed and shared with the school and local community members and stakeholders;
- be visible in the school prospectus and webpages.

## Promoting and Disseminating the Manifesto

Every child deserves the benefits of a School Library Program as described in this Manifesto in support of UNESCO Sustainable Goal 4 of UNESCO: "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4>

Governments, through their Ministries and Departments responsible for education, are urged to develop strategies, policies, plans and ongoing reviews which implement the principles of this **Manifesto**.

Principals of schools and local school administrative boards are encouraged to adopt this **Manifesto** in their strategic documents in order to help the students to become responsible citizens.



