

*Teacher-Librarian Resource Manual*

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**COLLABORATIVE PLANNING  
AND TEACHING**

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**THE SCHOOL LIBRARY PROGRAM**  
... assisting individuals to become  
life-long learners

## **THE SCHOOL LIBRARY PROGRAM - COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND TEACHING**

Cooperative planning and teaching is the process by which the teacher-librarian and teachers, within an equal partnership, share expertise and develop, implement, and evaluate resource-based units, integrating the Learning Outcomes Plan of the School Library Program and the curricular programs of the school.

Each partner brings a particular perspective:

### **Teacher-Librarian**

- The needs, abilities, and interests of the learners within the School Library Program
- The School Library Program learning outcomes
- The selection and effective use of resources, including information technologies

### **Teachers**

- The needs, abilities, and interests the learners within the subject/ grade
- The classroom program learning outcomes
- The subject content

Both the teacher-librarian and the teacher bring a general knowledge of learning, resources, and program, and an understanding of:

- The importance of specific skills, strategies, and processes
- The importance of connecting strategies into learning processes

## **COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND TEACHING**

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### **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

#### **Context**

#### **Long-Range Planning**

#### **Short-Term Planning**

#### **Accommodating Learners with Special Needs**

#### **Evaluation**

#### **Alternative Types of Cooperative Planning and Teaching**

#### **Planning guides**

#### **Interpersonal Skills**

#### **Communication**

#### **Planning Strategies for Specific Situations**

Beginning teachers

Teachers who are new to the school and/or the school system

Teachers who are uncomfortable with a team teaching situation

A group of teachers

Teachers who are creative and divergent thinkers

#### **Information Literacy Infusion Across the Curriculum**

Links between learned processes

Strategies for developing curricular expertise

#### **References**

#### **Appendices**

#### **Appendix A: Bloom's Taxonomy**

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## COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND TEACHING

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### CONTEXT

Collaborative planning and teaching is the method through which the teacher-librarian and teacher plan resource-based learning experiences based on learner needs.

As in any team planning and teaching situation, it is necessary for the participants to keep in mind the following premises:

One of the biggest roles that teacher-librarians have is to ensure that information literacy strategies are embedded across the curriculum. These outcomes must be taught to all students through the development of an effective collaboratively planned information literacy program. Added to this partnership is the student learner in a constructivist method of collaborative planning as outlined in David Loertscher's book "Re-Inventing your Schools Library in the Age of Technology" (Loertscher, 1998, pg. 11).

"Within school learning communities, people play interconnected and interdependent roles in making that community successful." (Canadian School Library Association and Association for Teacher-Librarianship in Canada, 2003, pg.52)

### LONG-RANGE PLANNING

Long-range planning provides a vision for the current school year and anchors the School Library Program. Long-range plans are generally in place early in the school year but can and should be adapted to meet emerging needs.

Teacher plans are integral to the use of resources, facilities, and Teacher-Librarian time. A flexible schedule is essential to accommodating resource-based learning.

If your timetable has scheduled classes, or if you are a part-time teacher-librarian, develop your long-range plan using available blocks of time. If possible, consult with administrators prior to timetabling to ensure that some blocks of flexibly scheduled time are included in your timetable. In order that all students have access to resource-based learning experiences, these blocks should be at consistent times on the timetable and occur in the mornings and afternoons.

## COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND TEACHING

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### **SHORT-TERM PLANNING**

Prior to the implementation of a resource-based learning experience, the teacher-librarian and participating teachers will meet to plan the experience in detail. This initial meeting should be held early enough to allow for borrowing resources from other libraries or making appropriate appointments. Major projects will entail a number of planning sessions and a variety of meeting formats. At least one planning session should be more formal and include decisions regarding the following:

- nature of activity
- application to curriculum
- goals of project
- learners' needs, styles, talents, backgrounds, and previous library experiences
- resources to be used, including information technologies
- timeline
- activities, including sharing and celebrating
- grouping of learners
- involvement of additional people (administrators, resource teachers, library assistants, students, volunteers, or members of the community)
- outline of responsibilities for preparation and instruction.
- deadlines
- evaluation procedures

Ensure that written records of formal meetings are made and distributed to all participants. All participants should be aware of their shared responsibilities for the project. Additional meetings will focus on updating, preparing, and revising plans. Many of these interactions will occur informally and should be brief.

### **ACCOMMODATING LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

Learners with exceptional or special needs attend special classes or are part of mainstreamed programs in nearly every school. The nature of the special needs will vary from school to school. Special needs learners will require some modifications to the learning program in order to accommodate learning rates and/or physical conditions. These modifications are best met through the collaborative planning and teaching process which occurs between the special class teachers, the participating teachers, and the teacher-librarian. If required, support resources are available through itinerant teachers and/or the Professional Learning Centre.

## COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND TEACHING

### ACCOMMODATING LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

#### Strategies for accommodating learners with special needs include:

- Combining a special class with a regular class to provide increased flexibility.
- Encouraging multi-age groupings to provide increased flexibility.
- Encouraging "buddy" systems.
- Identifying, and encouraging, the use of resources that facilitate understanding of exceptional needs.
- Planning a disability awareness theme for the school. Involve the special needs learners wherever possible and encourage them to "teach" their peers about their own disabilities and those of others.
- Borrowing samples of Braille, Twin-Vision, and large-print books for displays and discussion.
- Highlighting instructional strategies that are used by all learners including learners with special needs, e.g., talking books, captioned films/videos.
- Selecting resources that have broad scope and applicability, e.g., ESL resources are often suitable for mentally handicapped learners, while language resources for hearing impaired learners may also be of assistance in the ESL program.
- Awareness of differentiated instruction.

### Evaluation

Evaluation must be discussed and decisions made early in the planning process. It is important that learners are aware of evaluation procedures at the outset of the learning experience.

Evaluation should include the following:

- evaluation of the *learners* (both process and product) by the teacher-librarian, teachers involved, and the learners themselves. Additional information and suggestions for evaluation of learners are found in the "Learning" section of the *Teacher-Librarian Resource Manual*
- evaluation of the *project* itself on an ongoing basis, in written format, based on input from the learners, teachers, and teacher-librarian.

## COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND TEACHING

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### **ALTERNATIVE TYPES OF COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND TEACHING**

Ideally, the teacher-librarian and teacher collaborate in information literacy projects. These are degrees of involvement with the planning, such as:

- the teacher-librarian supervises the locating and managing of resources
- the teacher and teacher-librarian determine the suitability of resources
- the teacher-librarian offers suggestions about using resources, when appropriate
- the teacher-librarian teaches the specific lessons or may be involved in a major portion of the learning experience

Teacher-librarians help with the planning of learning experiences in which they will not have a major teaching responsibility. This is an appropriate use of the expertise of the teacher-librarian who can suggest specific lessons that will incorporate appropriate learning outcomes.

### **INTER- PERSONAL SKILLS**

Strong interpersonal skills are among the most important attributes a teacher-librarian possesses. In order to develop and implement the School Library Program, a teacher-librarian must plan with a wide variety of teachers, each with a unique planning and teaching style. It is imperative that teacher-librarians use their understanding of themselves and their colleagues, as well as a full repertoire of interpersonal skills in the collaborative planning and teaching process.

### **COMMUNI- CATION**

In order to effectively develop and implement resource-based learning experiences, the teacher-librarian must be aware of, and use, a wide variety of effective leadership and communication strategies. In most instances, it will be the responsibility of the teacher-librarian to articulate the benefits of collaborative planning and teaching and to initiate the process with teaching colleagues. (Additional information on the teacher-librarian as leader is available in the "Leadership Role of the Teacher-Librarian" section of the *Teacher-Librarian Resource Manual*.)

## COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND TEACHING

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### **PLANNING STRATEGIES FOR SPECIFIC SITUATIONS**

#### **Strategies for planning with beginning teachers include:**

- Create partnerships in learning.
- Providing an orientation session in which the School Library Program is explained.
- Ensuring that they feel comfortable with resource access, routines, etc.
- Helping them understand that library experiences include dealing with expressions of the imagination, as well as ideas and information.
- Assuring them that their concerns are understood and appreciated.
- Being available as a resource person and teaching partner.
- Being willing to lead them, when appropriate, seeking input from them about the learners, their programs, and their ideas.
- Capitalizing on their enthusiasm.
- Reassuring them that discipline, as with all aspects of the cooperatively planned and taught learning experiences, will be a shared responsibility.
- Providing positive feedback.
- Joint implementation
- Joint evaluation
- Helping establish assessment tools: rubrics

#### **Strategies for planning with teachers new to the school and/or school system include:**

- Providing an orientation session.
- Making teachers aware of Information literacy processes.
- Ensuring that they understand that their students are a part of the long-range plans.
- Valuing the input and experience that they bring to the planning process and incorporating their program ideas.
- Building credibility as a teaching partner as well as a planning partner.

## COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND TEACHING

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### **PLANNING STRATEGIES FOR SPECIFIC SITUATIONS**

**Strategies for encouraging teachers who are uncomfortable with a teaming situation include:**

- Making it clear that your concern is for the growth of the learners.
- Listening to their concerns.
- Showing them that you value their experience as a teacher.
- Providing them with unique resources that complement their program.
- Providing them with the opportunity to share their expertise as it relates to the library program, e.g., have them review an appropriate new resource. 7
- Encouraging discussions with other colleagues regarding the benefits of collaboration.
- Approaching collaborative planning and teaching in a non-threatening fashion at an appropriate time.
- Inviting them to a planning session and ensuring that the meeting has a clear agenda.
- Communicating your knowledge of their program.
- Encouraging them to observe a resource-based learning experience in progress.
- Celebrating successful cooperatively planned and taught projects through displays of student work and class presentations.
- Articulating your role in evaluation of the learner and the project.

Remember, it is important that you interact with all learners thereby ensuring that they have the opportunity to participate in resource-based learning experiences. Therefore, if it seems impossible, at the present time, to work with a particular teacher, consider these alternatives:

- Reaching the learners through another program or teacher.
- Splitting the class into two groups, one group to participate in a resource-based learning experience with the teacher-librarian, while the other remains with the teacher in the classroom. Suggest that the classroom activity be related to the library activity; then trade groups.
- Seeking ideas and support from administrators.
- Requesting consultative assistance.

## COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND TEACHING

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### PLANNING STRATEGIES FOR SPECIFIC SITUATIONS

#### **Strategies for planning with a group of teachers include:**

- Determining who will chair the meetings and who will act as recorder.
- Informing each person of meetings, agendas, and resources required.
- Acting as a facilitator, if necessary, ensuring that all participants are involved and that all agenda items are covered.
- Ensuring that each person has input and that the input is valued.

#### **Strategies for capitalizing on the strengths of the creative and divergent thinkers in a planning session include:**

- Allowing many opportunities to verbally explore broad issues. A Using brainstorming to generate ideas.
- Using flow charts, mind-maps, and/or webs to record results.
- Ensuring that there is sufficient time at the meeting to discuss the organizational details of the resource-based learning experience, e.g., timeline, learner activities.

## COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND TEACHING

### INFORMATION LITERACY INTEGRATION ACROSS CURRICULUM

**Information literacy is integrated into instructional programs of the school in the following ways:**

- by providing a variety of current, accurate, and relevant resources to support all programs within the school
- by providing professional resources that assist teachers to remain current in specific programs and in general educational philosophy
- by integrating specific programs through cooperatively planned and taught resource-based learning experiences, thereby ensuring that the identified learning outcomes are incorporated.
- by utilizing similar models to describe the processes for learning in all programs. Comparison of the School Library Program, as represented below, and other models currently suggested by Alberta Education and the Calgary Board of Education are outlined on the next page of this document
- *by emphasizing interdisciplinary connections*



## COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND TEACHING

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**INFORMATION  
LITERACY  
INTEGRATION  
ACROSS  
CURRICULUM**

In order to plan effectively with teachers, it is essential that teacher-librarians be knowledgeable about all curricula and programs offered in the school. To acquire this knowledge, maintain a complete set of curriculum guides in the library and become familiar with their content.

**Strategies for developing curricular expertise include the following:**

- Being knowledgeable about recent and pending curriculum changes (see Appendix B, p. 4-68 to 4-70).
- Reading curriculum newsletters.
- Keeping current with professional reading in program/curriculum areas.
- Discussing curricular issues and innovations with colleagues.
- Attending curriculum-specific workshops, as time allows.

The teacher-librarian will take the initiative to approach teachers in a variety of program areas to ensure that learning experiences lead to the development of information literate students.

## TEACHER-LIBRARIAN RESOURCE MANUAL

The new CSLA and ATLC Canadian School Library Standards, "Achieving Information Literacy", is the most significant Canadian School Library publication printed to date. Developed jointly by the Canadian School Library Association, and the Association for Teacher-Librarianship in Canada.

<http://www.lerc.educ.ubc.ca/fac/mcpherson/standards2.htm>

An information literate citizen:

- Works independently and collaboratively to solve problems
- Analyses information critically in all its formats and in all media contexts
- Applies information strategically to solve personal and social problems
- Makes decisions based on accurate and current information
- Uses information and communication technologies
- Respects information sources and diverse perspectives
- Honours intellectual property and privacy rights
- Appreciates the aesthetic qualities of various creative and scientific expressions
- Communicates effectively and expressively using a variety of information and media formats

Eight Outcomes

- Uses Information with Aesthetic Appreciation
- Uses Information Responsibly
- Uses Information Respectfully
- Uses Information Critically
- Uses Information Strategically
- Uses Information for Decision Making
- Uses Information Expressively
- Uses Information and Media Tools with Technical Competence