WHAT CAN COLLABORATION WITH A TEACHER-LIBRARIAN LOOK LIKE?

Collaboration in Preparation
- Acquiring Resources
- Gathering Resources
- Making Resource Lists/Special collections
- Evaluating and curating websites and apps
- Managing Devices
- Co-Planning Lessons, Units, Inquiries

Collaboration in Action
- Assessment
- Debriefing
- Mentoring
- Networking
- Inquiry
- Award Book Programs
- Literature Circles
- Maker Space Activities (ADST)
- Information Media Literacy
- Book Talks
- Co-Planning Lessons, Units, Inquiries

Collaboration in Reflection
- Assessment
- Debriefing
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- Award Book Programs
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- Book Talks
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PRODUCED BY THE SURREY CHAPTER OF THE BCTLA AND THE SURREY TEACHERS’ ASSOCIATION
Collaboration is an explicit part of every teacher-librarian’s job description, and scheduled activities may take a variety of forms. All collaborative activity aims to support and extend learning opportunities. All collaborative activity is valuable.

The examples of collaborative activity which follow is not a prescriptive list. Collaboration looks different in every school community, and is dependent upon the needs of all the learners involved.

**COLLABORATION AS PREPARATION**

**Acquiring Resources**
The core of a strong school library is a collection of resources that enable student learning. When selecting new materials, teacher-librarians respond to both student interests and teacher needs, as well as to evolving curricula and topics in education. On an ongoing basis, teacher-librarians curate collections which consider current resource requests and anticipate emerging and future needs.

**Gathering Resources**
Frequently, teachers need library resources for short- or long-term classroom activities. Teacher-librarians use their specialized knowledge of texts and library collections and familiarity with OPAC searches to provide the resources most suitable to the task and learners involved. Informed by curricula, this may include adapted forms (such as audiobooks and DVDs) and alternate text selections. Teacher-librarian familiarity with newly published resources enhances learning activities for both students and teachers.

**Making Resource Lists**
For ease of use, and to support classroom learning, teacher-librarians curate and make available lists of resources designed for a specific purpose. Resource lists can be accessed at school or offsite by staff and student users, and describe and locate key selections on topical areas. Teacher-librarians gather print and digital resources for specific lessons and units, create Research Guides on unique topics, and provide support with access and use of available resources. Again, such work considers both current usage and provisions for future needs.

**Evaluating & Curating Websites and Apps**
Many teacher-librarians share responsibility for instruction on critical evaluation of digital resources, including websites and apps. Teacher-librarians have specialized knowledge and experience with current tools and resources in this emerging area. Teacher-librarians preview and select websites and apps for specific lessons and units and to promote independent research and learning.

**Managing Devices**
Many teacher-librarians share responsibility in their schools for the management of devices such as ipads, laptops, digital cameras and printers. To facilitate access to and use of these devices, teacher-librarians may maintain booking calendars, manage distribution and storage, and troubleshoot problems.

**Co-Planning Lessons, Units, Inquiries**
Having experience with a wide range of grades and subjects, teacher-librarians extend ideas from teachers and help develop lessons, units and student activities. These can range from planning the math lesson required to measure for hula hoops to helping students access community resources for an inquiry project.

**COLLABORATION IN ACTION**

**Information Media Literacy**
Teacher-librarians help teach research skills such as how to locate information, differentiate fact from fiction, properly use search terms, make a bibliography and access digital resources such as databases. They may also show students how to use different digital tools like Prezi, Google Slides, etc.

**Book Talks**
Many learning activities require students to explore different text styles and genres. Teacher-librarians are informed about and familiar with a range of the resources in their collections, allowing them to speak passionately and informatively about diverse examples. Allowing teacher-librarians to feature texts at differing reading levels, this “book chat” format models critical and creative thinking skills, honours student choice, and offers exposure to different voices and themes.

**Literature Circles**
Some teacher-librarians share responsibility for promoting and facilitating literature circles, a format which offers flexibility for students to choose books to read that may appeal to them for different reasons. Activities include book exploration, group discussions and project work.

**Inquiry**
Teacher-librarians champion inquiry, instructing and participating in all stages of the process, curating and using resources with teachers and students, and providing opportunities for the sharing of student work. Inquiry is as powerful in kindergarten as it is in grade 12, and is accessible to all students, wherever they are in their learning.

**Award Book Programs**
Teacher-librarians actively support four award book programs in Surrey: the Surrey Schools Picture Book of the Year, Surrey Schools Book of the Year, Surrey Schools Non-Fiction Book of the Year, and Surrey Teens Read. Teacher-librarians promote student participation in these programs and may recommend listed titles to teachers.

**Maker Space Activities (ADST)**
Teacher-librarians support the integration of ADST into the new curriculum in many ways. These may include providing venues and opportunities for hands-on student creation activities (textiles, papercraft, blocks). It may include exploring the new robotics equipment and coding applications with teachers and their classes and clubs.

**COLLABORATION IN REFLECTION**

**Assessment**
Some teacher-librarians share responsibility for a variety of forms of assessment, both formative and summative. This might include providing feedback (written or oral), more detailed conferencing with students and teachers, and, in some cases, evaluating student work.

**Debriefing**
Debriefing and reflection with colleagues is necessary to understand the challenges and successes of any collaborative experience, and to improve future collaborations. The format depends on the personalities involved: email, conversation, surveys. Often, a thoughtful debrief can lead to the inclusion of more colleagues in future collaborations.

**Mentoring**
Through their knowledge of curriculum and resources, and their own prior teaching experience, teacher-librarians are well-positioned to assist teachers new to a specific grade level, subject area, or simply new to teaching. Together, they may develop lesson plans and build units.

**Networking**
On an ongoing basis, teacher-librarians support and build relationships with colleagues throughout the school community, creating opportunities for new kinds of shared work, and bringing colleagues together.

**CONCLUSION**
Collaboration is a complex and vital component of every teacher-librarian position. The success of the library, and its ability to deliver the many programs and services available, requires a high degree of collaboration. The new curriculum demands this too, as personally driven learning, inquiry research models and knowledge creation becomes the norm for B.C. students. All stakeholders (administrators, parents, teachers, education assistants and students) are best served when collaboration and communication are allowed to flourish and effective partnerships develop within a culture that supports them.