Blueprint for a Teacher Librarian
Alternative Placement Practicum
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A practical guide to hosting a Teacher Candidate
in your School Library Learning Commons

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Preamble:
In keeping with the goals of Treasure Mountain Canada 4's theme *Growing Impact of Leading Learning: Standards of Practice for School Libraries in Canada*, this submission aims to contribute to the practical toolbox supporting the *Leading Learning* blue standard Advancing the Learning Community to Achieve School Goals.

An identified area of need in the School Library Learning Commons learning community is to raise awareness levels of pre-service teachers (referred to as Teacher Candidates or TCs in Ontario) about School Libraries, the Learning Commons approach to School Libraries and Teacher Librarianship as a unique specialization in Ontario's teacher certification system. See additional references; Lunn, P., 2014; CLA (2014) L*eading Learning...* p4; Lee, Laverty and Reed, 2012; Haycock, 2003.

If approached as a holistic learning and teaching experience, and moreover, if the experience is clearly laid out with tasks and assessment categories that outline explicitly and provides examples of the range of objectives, tasks, linkages and skills that can be obtained respective to roles of both TC as learner and of Teacher Librarian as Associate Teacher and mentor, an Alternative Practicum placement in a School Library Learning Commons can be a rich contributor to a stronger culture of Teacher Librarianship in Ontario.

It is hoped that by creating this guide, early participants can create positive momentum in the key participant areas necessary to create a strong culture of Teacher Librarianship. Participating Teacher Candidates will be more knowledgeable about this area of teaching and its body of supporting professional literature at the outset of their careers. Participating Teacher Librarians will be more equipped to take on the responsibilities of a Teacher Candidate practicum, and can create potentially richer learning experiences for a TC than they could working in isolation. Teacher Librarianship and School Library Learning Commons programs will receive heightened visibility amongst participating School Administrators as they must approve student placements, and with recurrent requests for a placement of this kind, Faculties of Education will similarly gain heightened awareness of Teacher Librarianship and the School Library Learning Commons movement.

Objectives:
1. To provide Faculty of Education practicum placement offices with a supporting document that allows for greater awareness of the Teacher Librarian role and how a placement in a School Library can provide a robust learning opportunity completing Alternative Practicum requirements.

2. To provide those Teacher Candidates who are interested in exploring Teacher Librarianship with an opportunity to concretely expand their understanding of how a Teacher Librarian works to champion a school culture of reading, enables and enriches the educational use of

technology; both in collaboration with classroom teachers and independently through Learning Commons facilities, and contributes to overall student success.

3. To provide Teacher Librarians who want to advocate and advance the School Library Learning Commons learning community in their district a practical Learning Commons toolkit for supporting a TC in a practicum placement. It ensures consistency of the TC experience in School Library settings with diverse staffing and program models, and ensures consistency with the language of the CLA's *Leading Learning*…document.

4. To advocate for the School Library Learning Commons approach by expanding visibility and awareness within Faculties of Education across Canada. Through open sharing of this document to other Canadian Faculties of Education, it allows them to customize a placement to match their respective practicum model's guidelines.

Context:

In the Ontario context, while some TCs are given specific time in the School Library with a Teacher Librarian as part of a practicum placement, the amount of time and the depth of this experience varies significantly depending on school and /or District. There does not currently exist a mechanism to allow a TC to complete a practicum placement in a School Library setting that satisfies the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) requirements for a teaching practicum placement.

The Alternative Practicum is an additional 3 week practicum requirement available through the Queen's Bachelor of Education program. It is designed as an opportunity to explore an area of educational interest within a context that is not classroom or even school centred. The topic of exploration for the alternative practicum should be consistent with one of the professional learning goals of a particular FOCI concentration. FOCI courses that are applicable in the Queen's setting include: Teaching for Social Justice, Teaching at Risk Adolescents and Young Adults, School leadership, Learning Educational Technology by Design, Reading K-6.

Faculties of Education across Canada, and even across Ontario, have different models for their Teacher Candidates to acquire practical teaching experience, and correspondingly assess their growth and success differently. This particular plan is designed in accordance with the Queen's University Alternative Practicum guidelines and while Teacher Candidates are encouraged to seek placements outside of a school setting, this document makes the direct linkages to the FOCI courses and equipped with greater knowledge and awareness, the placement office staff could serve to persuade more Teacher Librarians to take on the role of Associate Teacher. Further, this blueprint is open for adaptation to be used by other advocates of Teacher Librarianship to bring forward as a model to other Faculties of Education for integration into their respective placement programs.

Role of Teacher Librarian as Associate Teacher:
Teachers in Associate Schools are essential to the successful education of Teacher Candidates. Associate Teachers/Mentors play a pivotal role in shaping Teacher Candidates' professional attitudes and instructional approaches. While it is the responsibility of the university to provide Teacher Candidates with knowledge, skills, and strategies, it is the Associate Teachers who, through their mentorship, demonstrate the care and competency that contribute to a productive learning environment for students. (See Additional References; Queen's University Practicum Guidebook… p. 2)

Role and Expected Duties of Associate Teacher-Librarian:

Orientation
- orient the Teacher Candidate to the school; layout, facilities, school day
- provide opportunities to observe routines and instruction
- share general information about the School Library program and provide overview of the Practicum 3 week plan.

Teaching and Curriculum
- model best practice teaching
- ensure adequate observation time for Teacher Candidates throughout the practicum
- provide the Teacher Candidate with clear timelines to allow for adequate preparation
- communicate openly and regularly with the Teacher Candidate
- provide guidance in assessment, lesson planning, and unit planning; share daily, unit, and long-range plans (i.e. *Library Year at a Glance*) with the Teacher Candidate
- state explicitly all non-instructional as well as instructional duties expected
- co-plan units of study; ensure the Teacher Candidate never assumes the responsibility of a certified teacher

Daily Feedback
- negotiate procedures for providing daily feedback to the Teacher Candidate
- provide daily constructive feedback, verbal and written, as though mentoring a beginning teacher
- contact the Faculty Liaison immediately, if you have concerns about the Teacher Candidate's progress or performance
- guide the Teacher Candidate in the development of more effective teaching and assessment strategies

Assessment and Evaluation

The Teacher Librarian will formally assess and evaluate the Teacher Candidate in accordance with the practices outlined by the Faculty. (see Additional References, p12.)

By stepping into the Associate Teacher role, practicing Teacher Librarians raise their profiles in schools as leaders and have an opportunity to make a direct and lasting impact on a new education professional about the actual work of a Teacher Librarian, and can demonstrate the potential for further initiatives with a supportive School Administration and District Board with a fully developed School Library Learning Commons model.

The Role of the School Library and Teacher Librarian as Outlined in Ontario Curriculum:

The Teacher Librarian Practicum Activities Chart embodies the language of Ontario Curriculum documents stating the role of the School Library for both Secondary and Elementary divisions. This language is consistent across subject area documents including, *Canadian and World Studies, Science and Technology, Health and Physical Education*. In Elementary, this language is consistent across subject area documents, including *Language, Health and Physical Education, Social Studies, History and Geography.*

Excerpts taken from: The Ontario Curriculum Grades 11 and 12: *Canadian and World Studies,* 2015, pp 60 – 61.

[Excerpts taken from: The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1 to 6, and 7 to 8: *Social Studies, History and Geography,* 2013, pp 52 – 53; presence of [ ] indicates content from this document]

 "The school library program can help build and transform students' knowledge in order to support lifelong learning in our information- and knowledge-based society. The school library program supports student success across the Canadian and world studies curriculum by encouraging students to read widely, teaching them to examine and read many forms of text for understanding and enjoyment, and helping them improve their research skills and effectively use information gathered through research.

The school library program enables students to:
- *develop a love of reading for learning and for pleasure;*
- *acquire an understanding of the richness and diversity of texts produced in Canada and around the world;*
- *obtain access to programs, resources, and integrated technologies that support all curriculum areas;*
- *understand and value the role of public library systems as a resource for lifelong learning.*

The school library program plays a key role in the development of information literacy and research skills. Teacher-librarians, where available, collaborate with classroom or content-area teachers to design, teach, and provide students with authentic information and research tasks that foster learning, including the ability to:

- *access, select, gather, process, critically evaluate, create, and communicate information;*
- *use the information obtained to explore and investigate issues, solve problems, make decisions, build knowledge, create personal meaning, and enrich their lives;*
- *communicate their findings to different audiences, using a variety of formats and technologies;*
- *use information and research with understanding, responsibility, and imagination.*

In addition, teacher-librarians can work with teachers of Canadian and World Studies or [social studies, history and geography] to help students:

- *develop literacy in using non-print forms, such as the Internet, CDs, DVDs, and videos, in order to access Canadian and world studies information, databases, demonstrations, and a variety of performances;*
  [web quests, web-based graphical tools, satellite images, global positioning systems (GPS) resources, interactive on-line maps and atlases, and a variety of primary sources;
  • design inquiry questions for research for social studies, history, and geography projects;]
- *create and produce single-medium or multimedia presentations.*

Teachers of Canadian and World Studies/social studies, history and geography are also encouraged to collaborate with both local librarians and teacher-librarians on collecting digital, print, and visual resources for projects (e.g., biographies and/or autobiographies of people who have contributed to Canada or to the global community; books with historical, geographic, and/or political photographs and maps of the world; collections of legal documents or political cartoons; graphic representations of economic data from Canada and countries around the world; culture-specific image collections; and informational videos). Librarians may also be able to assist in accessing a variety of online resources and collections (e.g., professional articles, image galleries, videos, databases).
Teachers need to discuss with students the concept of ownership of work and the importance of copyright in all forms of media."

The activities also reflect the language of the Ontario Ministry of Education's 2013 document, *The School Effectiveness Framework*; specifically Indicator 4.3, "Teaching and learning in the 21st Century is collaborative, innovative and creative within a global context" and Indicator 4.6, "Resources for students are relevant, current, accessible, inclusive and monitored for bias." (pp29, 31 respectively).

Expanded roles of the Teacher Librarian and the School Library Learning Commons

In addition to the prescribed role outlined in the above documents, there are also several ways the Teacher Librarian can actively contribute to student achievement, school effectiveness and creating a safe and inclusive learning environment. These roles, reflected in the referred sites and documents below, have been incorporated into the activities of the Teacher Librarian Practicum placement.

- **Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools as outlined in :**
  Ontario Ministry of Education, GUIDELINES FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION, *How do we know we are making a difference – checklist*
  Retrieved from www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/ministry.html

- **Libraries and TLs as contributor to Culture of Inquiry**
  E.g.) Makerspace movement, scientific thinking, inquiry based learning
  See; Loertscher, D.V. (2012).Maker Spaces and the Learning Commons. *Teacher Librarian*. 40:1, pp45-46,63.

- **Libraries and TLs as contributor to Digital Citizenship, as outlined in :**
  Ribble, M. (2015) Digital Citizenship in Schools, 3rd edt. ISTE publications.
  Retrieved from: www.digitalcitizenship.net/Nine_Elements.htmlethical use of information

- **Libraries and TLs as contributor to recreational reading; an essential component of reading success as highlighted in the following :**
  i) National Reading Campaign: reading facts. Retrieved from
  www.nationalreadingcampaign.ca/wpcontent/uploads/2013/09/ReadingFacts1.pdf

  ii) People for Education*, Reading for joy*. Retrieved from
  https://www.accessola.org/web/Documents/OLA/issues/Reading-for-Joy.pdf

- **School Libraries as support for Students at Risk or in Care as highlighted in the following:**
  Ontario Ministry of Education. *Capacity Building Series, Special Edition 27, Improving the educational outcomes of children and youth in care.* Retrieved from
  www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/CBS_ImproveEducation.pdf

Teacher Librarian Practicum Activities Chart – 3 week plan

Reflecting the 5 colour coded themes of *Leading Learning*…
- **Facilitating Collaborative Engagement to Cultivate and Empower a Community of Learners**
- **Advancing the Learning Community to Achieve School Goals**
- **Cultivating Effective Instructional Design to Co-Plan, Teach and Assess learning**
- **Fostering Literacies to Empower Life-Long Learners**
- **Designing Learning Environments to Support Participatory Learning**

Tasks	Skill or Activity	Technique or Task	Element of Practice for Assessment *See: Practicum Summative Assessment Rubric*
Week #1	1. **Observe/shadow a Teacher Librarian**	**Observe TL performing a variety of tasks, with participation wherever possible.**	
	2. **Become aware of library resources and technologies and their respective access points**	**Thoroughly examine District and local school resource materials available through School Library/Learning Commons Portal and/or District Virtual Learning Commons Resources access page/portal**	**Section III Planning and Preparing**
	3. **To become familiar with foundational documents**	**Read a variety of professional learning materials (See professional readings list)** **Reflective Journal entry #1 : Reflect specifically on these observations, resources and readings.**	
Week #2	1. **Collaborate with a Teacher to create/enhance a classroom assignment.**	**Elementary Setting: Teacher Candidate guides students in use of technology tools, i.e. text-to-speech, interactive website or APP.** **Secondary Setting: Create a webpage/LibGuide including School Library print materials, external**	**Section III Planning and Preparing (Strategies 1-4)**

		websites, and internal digital resources for students to access in support of the assignment	Section IV Lesson Presentation (Instructional Strategies, 1, 2, 3, 5)
	2. Assist students with application of their information literacies.	By the end of week two, the TC should be: i. circulating around the classroom/Library Learning Commons, assisting students across the learning continuum to self-select reading materials – fiction, non-fiction, electronic or print ii. assisting students to successfully access information sources, including trouble-shooting with technology Reflective Journal entry #2 : Reflect specifically on skills and knowledge either gained or utilized through this activity.	
Week #3	Create learning environments that reflect school effectiveness goals and / or the expanded roles of the TL.	Develop a Makerspace or a multi-format thematic resource display (see listed professional reading for designing a Makerspace for guidance) Plan and deliver a book talk on a theme, including variety of literacy levels, including an electronic format (i.e. text-to-speech, e-book shelf, or audiobook) Reflective Journal entry #3: Reflect specifically on skills and knowledge either gained or utilized through these activities AND Select 2 topics from the list of suggested topics to create Reflective Journal entries #4 & # 5.	Section II Supporting a Community of Learners (Strategies 1, 2) Section IV Lesson Presentation (Strategies 1-5)

Topic Suggestions for Entries #4, 5 in Reflection Journals.

1. Interview a member of the School Administration Team and a head of a department and ask them questions about their view of the Learning Commons and its impact on student achievement and school goals. Consider to what degree their responses appear to reflect the role of the Learning Commons as outlined in such documents *as Leading Learning and the role of the Learning Commons in Curriculum Documents* as outlined by the Ontario Ministry of Education Curriculum Documents.

2. Teaching professionals are notoriously busy. As reflected in the infographic by the National Reading Campaign, 'no time' is a dominant reason for not reading. What is the role of recreational reading in your life? Why is it important to find time for both professional and recreational reading?

3. Through your observations of student use and student interactions, assess the role of the School Library Learning Commons as a contributor to safe and inclusive schools.

4. Through your observations, what suggestions do you have to improve/enhance and/or promote this school's Learning Commons program?
   These could include but not be limited to:
- Orientation to the library/webpage/resources
- New/different materials
- Integration with classroom curriculum; collaboration with classroom teachers
- Workshops
- Displays

5. Given the proven connectedness between strong School Libraries and student success that you were made aware of in your professional readings, and seeing the activities taking place in your placement setting, what additional advocacy strategies can you suggest for the advancement of the School Library Learning Commons with school administrators and teacher colleagues?

Suggested Professional Readings for Teacher Candidates

1. Locate and read the School Goals or School Success Plan
   NB: Depending on District, these may also be referred to as the *School Improvement Plan* (SIP) or *School Effectiveness Network* (SEN). Ask a member of the administration team for a copy of this document.

2. Canadian Library Association. (2014) *Leading Learning: Standards of Practice for School Library Learning Commons in Canada*. Available: clatoolbox.ca/casl/slic/llsop.pdf

3. Coker, Elizabeth. (2015)*Certified Teacher-Librarians, Library Quality and Student Achievement in Washington State Public Schools: The Washington State School Library Impact Study; Executive Summary.* Available:
   wala.memberclicks.net/assets/WLMA/Advocacy/wsslit%20exec%20summary%204.7.15.pdf

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7. Oberg, D.(2014*). Ignoring the Evidence: Another Decade of Decline for School Libraries. *Education Canada, 54(1).* Available : www.cea- ace.ca/education-canada/article/ignoring-evidence-another-decade-decline-school-libraries

8. Ontario Ministry of Education (2003).*Early Reading Strategy : The report of the expert panel on early reading in Ontario.* Available : http://eworkshop.on.ca/edu/resources/guides/ExpPanel_K-3_Reading.pdf

9. Ontario Library Association. (2010) *Together for Learning: School Libraries and the Emergence of the Learning Commons.* Available: https://www.accessola.org/web/OLAWEB/Together_for_Learning/T4L_Vision_Document/OLAWEB/OSLA/Together_for_Learning/T4L_Vision_Document.aspx

10. People for Education, (2011) *Reading for Joy.* Available: http://www.peopleforeducation.ca/document/reading-for-joy/.

11. Spaulding, A (2014,) *The role of recreational reading in classrooms.(Masters thesis)* State University of New York at Fredonia, Fredonia, NY. Retrieved from dspace.sunyconnect.suny.edu/bitstream/handle/1951/64524/Amanda_Spaulding_Masters_Project_May2014.pdf?sequence=1

Summary:

This document is intended to outline both an approach and the practical tools to guide a Teacher Librarian interested in hosting a Teacher Candidate in a practicum placement that is consistent with current best practice and lead documents. It is expected that this blueprint's components be adapted to suit the users' respective District staffing model and the respective affiliated Faculty of Education's practicum placement model.

Additional References

Queen's University, Faculty of Education, *Summative Assessment Rubric*, 2015-2016 edt.
Available at:
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Queen's University, Faculty of Education, *Practicum Handbook: A Guide for Teacher Candidates, Associate Teachers, School Liaisons, and Faculty Liaisons*, 2015-2016 edt.
Available at:
educ.queensu.ca/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.educwww/files/files/Services/Practicum/Practicum%20Handbook_1516.pdf

Haycock, K. (2003*). The crisis in Canada's school libraries: The case for reform and re-investment.* Toronto, ON: Association of Canadian Publishers.

Lee, E., Reed, B., & Laverty, C. (2012). *Pre-service teachers' knowledge of information literacy and their perceptions of the school library program.* Behavioral & Social Science Librarian, 31/1, 3-22.

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