

Embracing Participatory Learning Through LLC Extracurricular Programming

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Guiding Questions and Understandings:

- How might we transform LLC physical spaces to drive participatory learning?
- How might we work towards a school-wide culture of participatory learning?
- How might we encourage participatory learning outside the timetable?

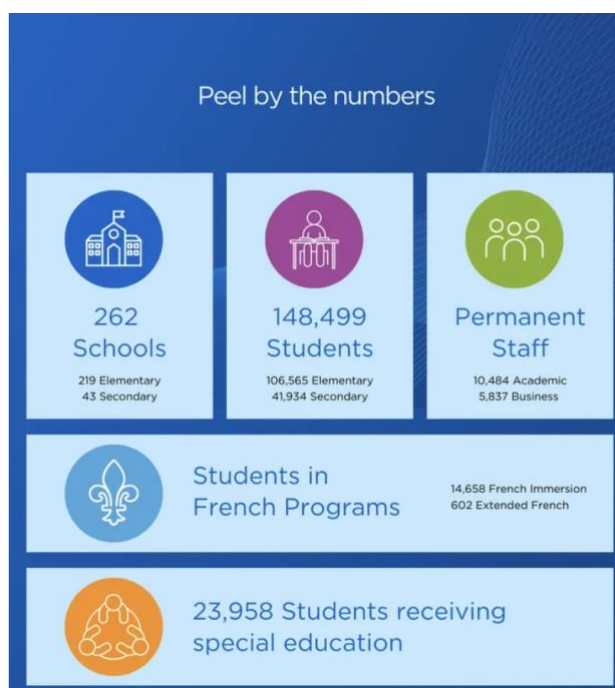
Participatory Learning: Learners work collaboratively to develop their own learning paths, build collective knowledge, and co-create the sharing of their new understandings. In the LLC, learners work in both physical and virtual participatory learning environments (Koechlin et al., 2011, p. 1).

Background

In the fall of 2022, I moved to a small K to 8 rural school in Caledon Village, Ontario called Caledon Central Public School (Caledon Central Public School, 2022). The school was built in the mid-1960s and has seen many changes over the years. With a population of just under 350 students, the role of teacher librarian is staffed at only a .5 allotment. As a result, my job is .5 teacher librarian and .5 guidance educator. The guidance role was new to me at the time of my arrival which I knew would present a significant, albeit exciting, learning curve. The majority of the school population are bussed to and from school each day. In addition to our students who are with us from Kindergarten through grade 8, we are the middle school for 2 smaller schools which means that each year we welcome a small handful of students who are with us for only grades 7 and 8. Having come from much larger schools, it was also the first time in many years that I was faced with the challenges of part-time teacher librarianship. This represented my 24th year in the teaching profession and my 10th year as a teacher librarian.

The Peel District School Board (Peel District School Board, 2022), spreads over a vast geographical area adjacent to Toronto, Ontario that includes 3 unique municipalities which include the City of Mississauga, the City of Brampton and the Town of Caledon.

Figure 1



From Peel District School Board, 2022.

While I spent the early part of my career in the Toronto District School Board (Toronto District School Board, 2025), I had been teaching solely in Brampton elementary schools since 2007. During this time I had the privilege of opening 3 brand new schools in a row in a variety of roles which included English as a Second Language teacher, In-School Support Program teacher and Teacher Librarian. In addition to the new-to-me role of guidance educator, the transition to an entirely new learning community and taking over a well-established library space added to the challenge and excitement of this change.

Physical Changes

It is well-established in the school library community and the *Leading Learning: Standards Of Practice For School Library Learning Commons In Canada* (Canadian School Libraries, 2020b), that the physical environment (Canadian School Libraries, 2020a), is essential to the successful transition to a thriving library learning commons that embraces participatory learning. Each school building will present its own gifts and challenges in this area. When I accepted the position at Caledon Central in the spring of 2022 I had yet to see the inside of the school building and I truthfully had no concept of the library space. Thankfully, I was able to pop in and visit the space in mid-June of 2022 to help me develop an initial vision over the summer.

Like all school library spaces in the Peel District School Board, the Caledon Central PS library would have been fully closed or under very strict limitations from March 2020 until June 2022 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic response in elementary schools. I note this because I recognized at the time that, while I was easily able to identify changes I wanted to make, it was important to do so from a non-judgemental stance that honoured the established legacy of a library that had been part of the learning community for over 50 years. The realities of the pandemic library limitations meant that all school libraries in our board were in a state of recovery and reimagining.

I would be remiss if I did not briefly mention that I was also taking on a space that had experienced controversy specifically related to its design. Prior to my official arrival, an ongoing equity audit of all spaces, displays and features of the school had been occurring. This had started well-prior to the administration who hired me and was a common practice in all schools throughout our board. It included many levels of school and board staff and leadership. As a result, an existing mural in the library space was painted over. The initial mural unveiling and library naming had occurred in 2014 (Hewitt, 2022).

While my administration worked hard to communicate transparently with the entire learning community about this change and the fact that the removal of the mural had happened more rapidly than anticipated, a great deal of local media coverage occurred (Hewitt, 2022).

This controversy did not deter my administration and I from our commitment to reimagining the library space, it did serve as a reminder that any changes we made would require us to have tremendous patience and understanding.

Like any established school library, some structural and design features were permanent. The most significant unchangeable design features of the space included:

- Its location in the very centre of the first floor adjacent to the gym hallway and the band room
- The drop ceiling with fluorescent lighting
- Two structural pillars in the middle of the space
- Four doors to access the space from three different hallways and one attached classroom (formerly a computer lab, then a makerspace, now our ISSP support room)
- Absolutely no natural light

The slideshow below documents the transformation from that initial visit in June 2022 to the changes in place by the spring of 2023.

[A Journey in Redesigning the Library Learning Commons Space - Jenn Brown](#)

During this time I also did an interview with Dr David Loertscher about the work of intentional transformation of an existing library space (Fleming, 2022).

The key highlights of the changes we made to the space include but are not limited to the following:

- Significant weeding of outdated, damaged and “bug-filled” books (approximately 4000 in total)
- Rethinking of shelving, book organization and labeling to create easily accessible book access throughout the space including off wall mobile shelving
- Repurposing the former teacher librarian office as a calming guidance hub space to support student well-being
- Creating a variety of smaller areas for student learning and collaboration throughout the space rather than all seating and tables centred at one side
- Adding alternative seating, accent and decorative lighting to reduce the use of overhead fluorescents, welcome decor including artificial plants and hands on tabletop invitations, ensure that learning materials are easily visible and accessible to all learners
- Replacing the carpet with light grey laminate flooring and painting out the dark burgundy walls
- Utilizing existing and adding a variety of play and maker education materials throughout the space
- Use large blank wall spaces to display photographs of students learning in action throughout the school community
- Increase the amount of internet drops in order to shift the circulation area and increase desktop computer access
- Add a phone to the larger library space for safety purposes and improved communication (the only phone drop was in the former TL office which made it challenging to hear and access easily)

The space continues to evolve since the initial revamping began during the 2022 - 2023 school year. To see more of the changes and the space action feel free to visit our LLC Instagram account (Brown, 2025).

Scheduling and Multipurpose

Our long term goal for the library learning commons was for all students and staff to see the space, materials and programming as extensions of the regular classroom and all

specialized teaching within the school. This mindset and relationship-building takes a great deal of time to create. It relies heavily on designing a schedule that supports equitable access and multipurpose usage. In an ideal staffing scenario both the teacher librarian and guidance educator roles would be full time so that 2 of us could work in collaboration with additional support team members to create a school-wide community of care. Since that is not the reality of our allotment, it was important that the LLC space and subsequent schedule balanced our long term goals with the limitations of balancing both schoolwide roles. The table below reflects the overall schedule that we currently follow:

Times	Period	LLC/Guidance Schedule
9:25 - 10:25	Period 1 *Cal Central TV 9:35 to 9:45	Free flow book exchange and collaboration bookings
10:25 - 11 :25	Period 2	Free flow book exchange and collaboration bookings
11:25 - 12:05	1st Nutrition Break	
12:05 - 1:05	Period 3	Guidance support and collaboration
1:05 - 2:05	Period 4	Guidance support and collaboration
2:05 - 2:45	2nd Nutrition Break	
2:45 - 3:45	Period 5	Planning Time and/or LLC/Guidance related tasks

Since I arrived at the school in September 2022, the overall school timetable underwent a timetable revamp that is reflected in our current LLC/Guidance programming. We have shifted to 1 hour periods for a total of 5 periods per day. We have 2 forty minute nutrition breaks which include 20 minutes for eating and 20 minutes for outdoor play. Our school sits on approximately 10 acres of land, so our entire school is able to be outside for recess at the same time.

To allow for transparency, flexibility and staff collaboration bookings I set up a year long daily schedule each summer using Google Sheets. All staff have edit access to this document so they can enter their own bookings. This also provides a valuable documentation tool of the types of programming, events, collaboration and disruptions

in service for the entire school year. This data is important in monthly and year-end reporting. The image below is a screenshot of the November 2024 schedule:

2024-2025 LLC Collaboration Schedule										
Date	Cycle Day	Cal Central TV	Period 1	Period 2	NB 1	Period 3	Period 4	NB 2	Period 5	
Friday Nov. 1	5	Cal Central TV	9:25-9:45	*9:45-10:25	10:25-11:25	11:25-12:05	12:05-1:05	1:05-2:05	2:05-2:45	2:45-3:45
Monday Nov. 4	1	Cal Central TV			Heir Storytime	Library Leaders	Guidance	PT	Quiet Work Zone	COVERAGE
Tuesday Nov. 5	2	Cal Central TV	6TR (7a)	Daws Storytime	Games Club	Guidance	Guidance	PALS	PT	
Wednesday Nov. 6	3	Cal Central TV	Mayfield Pres	Grade 7/8 May	Reading Club	TJ DANCE	Janos in Person	To Advocate	Janos in Person	
Thursday Nov. 7	4	Absent	Absent	Absent	BSA	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	
Friday Nov. 8	5	Cal Central TV	Activity Day	Activity Day	Library Leaders	Activity Day	Activity Day	Quiet Work Zone	Activity Day	
Monday Nov. 11	1	Cal Central TV	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	
Tuesday Nov. 12	2	Cal Central TV		1/2MO Storytime	Games Club	Heir Movie	Heir Movie	PALS	COVERAGE	
Wednesday Nov. 13	3	Cal Central TV	Student Librarian	Student Librarian	Reading Club	TJ DANCE	Guidance	To Advocate	PT	
Thursday Nov. 14	4	Cal Central TV	GUIDANCE PD	GUIDANCE PD	BSA	GUIDANCE PD	GUIDANCE PD	GUIDANCE PD	GUIDANCE PD	
Friday Nov. 15	5	Cal Central TV	Grade 8 Meetings	Stairton	Library Leaders	Guidance	Guidance	Quiet Work Zone	COVERAGE	
Monday Nov. 18	1	Cal Central TV	Grade 8 Meetings	Grade 8 Meetings	Reading Club	Grade 8 Meetings	Grade 8 Meetings	Rest Zone	PT	
Tuesday Nov. 19	2	Cal Central TV	Student Survey	Student Survey	Games Club	Student Survey	Student Survey	PALS	PT	
Wednesday Nov. 20	3	Cal Central TV	TIC	TIC	TIC	TJ DANCE/TIC	TIC	To Advocate	TIC	
Thursday Nov. 21	4	Cal Central TV	SRM	SRM	BSA	VENDOR SALE	VENDOR SALE	VENDOR SALE	VENDOR SALE	Reporting to Families
Friday Nov. 22	PL DAY	PL DAY	PL DAY	PL DAY	PL DAY	PL DAY	PL DAY	PL DAY	PL DAY	
Monday Nov. 25	5	Cal Central TV	Lyons/Normore	Heir Storytime	Reading Club	Grade 8 Meetings	ABSENT	ABSENT	ABSENT	
Tuesday Nov. 26	1	Cal Central TV	Trades Confer	Trades Confer	Trades Confer	Trades Confer	Trades Confer	Trades Confer	Trades Conference	
Wednesday Nov. 27	2	Cal Central TV	COVERAGE IN LLC	Daws Storytime	Reading Club	Grade 8 Meetings	COVERAGE IN LLC	In Person To A	In Person To Advocate	
Thursday Nov. 28	3	Cal Central TV	Grade 8 Meeting	Grade 8 Meeting	BSA	TJ DANCE	Selection Meet	Selection Meet	Meet With AC	
Friday Nov. 29	4	Cal Central TV	1st Chapter Friday	1st Chapter Friday	Library Leaders	1st Chapter Friday	1st Chapter Friday	1st Chapter Friday	1st Chapter Friday	

No schedule is perfect and I am highly aware of the barriers that the current model creates. The limitation of free flow book exchange to half the day is not ideal. Because we made the decision that the space would serve both as an LLC and a guidance hub, we are sensitive to the fact that students accessing the space for guidance support need to know there is a time each day when we can limit disruptions. Privacy and dignity for students in crisis or seeking support needs to be built into the scheduling plans. As well, our guidance instructional programming (whole class or otherwise), is centred around the needs and interests of students in grades 5 to 8. This means that younger students accessing the space for free flow book exchange during these lessons or workshops may encounter content that is not developmentally appropriate or that results in older students feeling less comfortable engaging in the learning.

Consistently having the library portion of the schedule at the same time each day also presents advantages and disadvantages. To foster a culture of daily library access through free flow book exchange, having the space open at the same time each day reduces confusion and assists in establishing routines. This does, however, place the

burden on period 1 and 2 educators (usually homeroom) to embrace this approach and view it as an extension of their classroom practice. For our Kindergarten educators, for example, run an extremely effective outdoor land-based education program which means they are outside almost the entire morning. They have worked together to develop routines that honour the importance of their programming and find ways their students can participate in free flow access.

In many ways my work as a teacher librarian and elementary guidance educator overlap and much of the programming extends throughout the instructional day. Now that we are in year 3 of this approach, the multipurpose participatory use of the space has grown and the barriers have become less of a concern. During this time, I have been able to deepen my own understanding of the school community, establish trusting staff relationships and observe and gather student perspectives and ideas for the LLC. With a significant increase in book circulation and digital library usage and a wide variety of learning opportunities occurring during instructional time, we see that the shift to a thriving library learning commons is happening. For the purposes of this paper, however, it is our participatory learning that occurs outside of instructional time that I will highlight.

Beyond the Timetable

Before diving into this section of our LLC programming, I feel compelled to address the fact that extracurriculars are voluntary and not a requirement of the teacher librarian role. While I choose to centre them as part of my daily practice and as an extension of the participatory learning culture we are working to foster through the LLC programming, I do not want to make other school library professionals feel as if this is the only way to create these opportunities. As per our Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario policy statement 37.1, there is a "fundamental belief" that "extra-curricular activities by members are strictly voluntary" (Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, 2025). A structure of support from administration, colleagues, students and the broader school community is essential to creating and maintaining a sustainable schedule outside of instructional time. The examples highlighted below are those currently running through our LLC each week.



The above graphic is posted on our LLC social media account (Brown, 2025), at our library doors, our “This Month in the LLC” hallway bulletin board and throughout the school to support students and staff in knowing the extracurricular schedule.

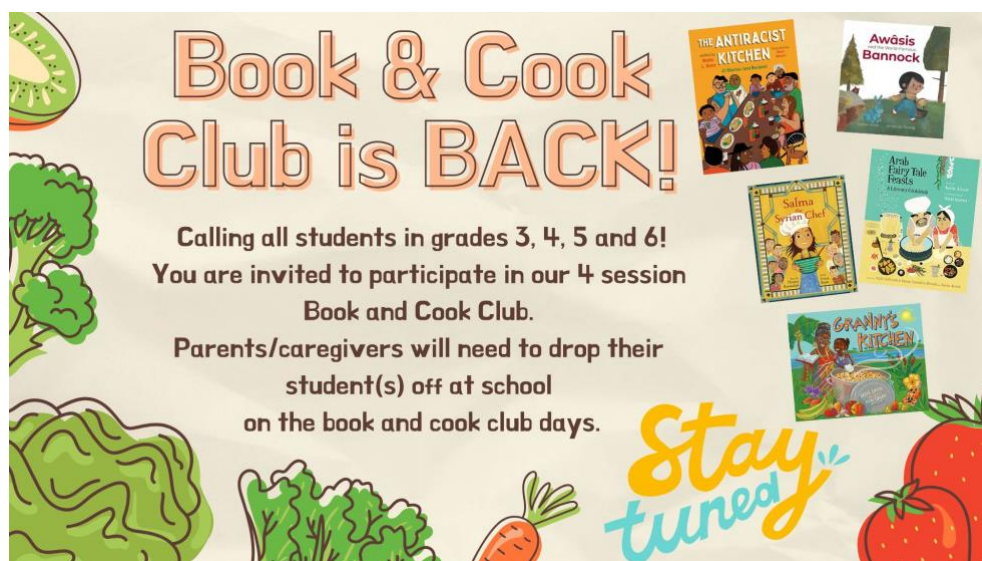
Cal Central TV



Each day we host a live video meeting using Google Meet where student announcers lead our morning announcements. Students share daily slides that are created for the entire school year in advance. All staff have the ability to access and edit these slides at any time. The Google Meet link is only shared with staff to ensure online safety and guest educators receive a static bit.ly link upon arrival so that they can login as well. Students and families can access a daily view only version to stay on top of any important information at <https://bit.ly/CaledonCentralAnnouncements> We currently have **over 40 students** from grades 4 to 8 who take turns each week in teams of 4 leading the daily “tv broadcast”. All students in these grades are welcome to sign up throughout the year. While this role does involve a great deal of “cold” reading, students of all levels

of literacy confidence can participate in this opportunity. For any students who do not feel comfortable being on camera or reading out loud, we have a “sound engineer” role. This student ensures that all audio is working throughout the broadcast.

Book and Cook Club



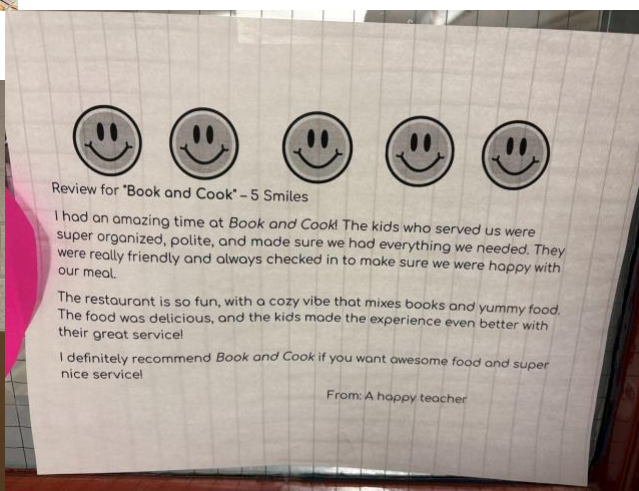
During the 2022 - 2023 as part of Junior/Intermediate book club we cooked some recipes from one of the books on the booklist from the Ontario Library Association's Forest of Reading program (Ontario Library Association, 2025). The book featured the retelling of traditional Arab fairy tales and accompanying recipes. These experiences in our book club were incredibly popular and created a strong sense of community while also celebrating individual identity. The creation and sharing of food and stories brought students together beautifully! With that experience in mind and with the fall 2023 release of *The AntiRacist Kitchen* (Hohn, 2023), we offered this community gathering experience to more students each year. Many of the featured authors are Canadian and all are children's authors whose work celebrates diversity and the importance of student identity.

The goals of this club are to:

- Encourage love of reading as we introduce students to new authors and diverse perspectives.
- Support the development of life skills connected to food preparation, nutrition and cooking.
- Build community and foster teamwork across grades/classes.
- Provide nutritious food for students.

Students come to school an hour and a half before the instructional day begins once a week for a 4 week session. This allows us to have full access to the staff room kitchen

and provides time for food prep, sharing of snacks, related read alouds, tasting of our chosen recipes and kitchen clean up. Students help to select the recipes and share their own stories about various foods and family traditions. This year they were so inspired by the sharing of food and recipes that they hosted a full luncheon for our entire staff and they are in the process of creating a community cookbook. We are hosting 3 cycles of the club (fall, winter, spring) this year to expand the number of students who are able to participate. We have space for approximately 25 students each cycle.



Students and families have shared incredible feedback about these experiences. Recently, some of the older students shared their thoughts in a statement to be

presented to our superintendent. Read their reflections [here](#).

Reading Club

Inspired by the Silent Book Club movement (Silent Book Club, n.d.), this year we have shifted our approach to non-instructional time for reading clubs. We are embracing the social aspect of sharing food and conversation about what we are reading, the importance of self-selected reading materials and the need for the calm quiet of independent reading. While we do not require readers to be silent as many are still developing their literacy skills by reading out loud to themselves, we make sure that no other loud or hands on play is happening in the space during this time. We have set aside 2 nutrition breaks a week for this new approach. Students come with their lunches/snacks, eat together and then for the last 20 minutes find a quiet spot to cozy up with a book of their choosing. They can bring books from home, sign out new books from the LLC or just explore some of the books available in the collection. This new approach is still building momentum but interest is steadily increasing as students help spread the word about the purpose of this dedicated reading time in the LLC.



Rest Zone

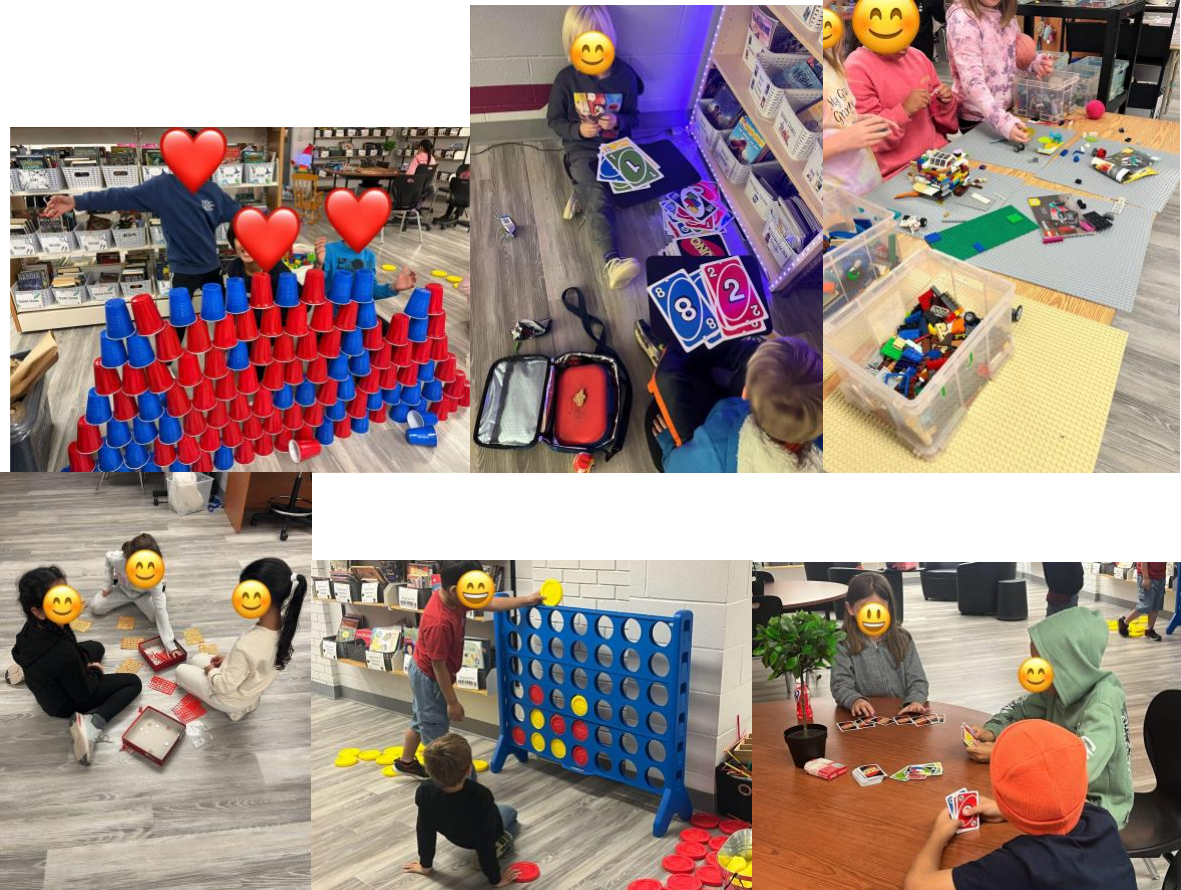


Inspired by the work of Tricia Hersey and “The Nap Ministry” (Hersey, 2024), our weekly Rest Zone came about after listening to feedback from students of all ages who told us that they were tired. Many students expressed a desire for a moment in their day when they could just rest, even nap, for a short period. They identified pressures at school, friendships, sports and arts extracurriculars, parent/caregiver expectations and more as causes of stress and fatigue. Of course, if a student needs a rest at any time we will make space for that to happen, but after reading Hersey’s first book, *Rest is Resistance* (Hersey, 2022), I could not help but wonder if offering a weekly rest time in the LLC during a nutrition break would appeal to a small percentage of students. As it turns out it appeals to many students! On average, we have between 40 and 60 students from grades 1 to 8 who come during the recess portion of 2nd nutrition break each Monday to rest. The majority are grades 1 to 6. We have blankets, pillows, mats and bean bags available, though sometimes we do not have enough for everyone who drops in. We turn off all the overhead lights in the LLC, project moving stars and galaxy lights on the ceiling and play calming sleep supportive music. Certainly, not all the children fall asleep, but they are engage in the “practice of rest”. I give a gentle verbal warning before turning a light back on to tidy up together in time for the students to return to class for the last period of the day. If a student does happen to fall fully asleep, I ask the other students to let them rest and I quietly wake them up myself.



Games Club

This year we added a weekly drop in Games Club during one nutrition break a week. While our games, puzzles and play materials are always available during free flow library access and for instructional purposes, I noticed that students did not always have enough time to explore them fully. I also recognised that the opportunity to have a supervised collaborative social environment during nutrition break provides a break from eating in the classroom and navigating outdoor socialization challenges is essential for some students. The parameters of this drop in are that students come for the entire 40 minutes (they can eat their lunches and snacks while there), no devices are in use (with the exception of our piano keyboard) and, of course, the space must be tidied up before the bell rings to return to class. No sign up is required, which is the case for the majority of extracurriculars we offer. On average we have over 50 students from grades 1 to 8 who participate in this club.



P.A.L.S./Wellness

Like many schools, we partner closely with our Peel Regional Public Health nurse (Peel Region, 2025), to collaboratively implement the programming she can offer. We are very lucky to have an incredible nurse named Maggie who has been with the school since the fall of 2022. She works with our environmental club (Save the Planet Club) run by other staff in the building and with a variety of LLC/Guidance initiatives. Our most significant partnerships include Playground Activity Leaders in Schools (PALS) and a student driven Wellness Team.

PALS is “a playground leadership program for elementary schools that encourages all students to participate in activities regardless of their gender, size, or ability. Program content has been revised to include equity and inclusion, accessibility, and mental health promotion, and physical activity” (Peel Region, 2025).

Twice a week a team of dedicated junior/intermediate students come to the LLC to have lunch and plan outdoor games and activities for younger students, typically grades 1 to 4. We then go outside during the recess portion of the nutrition breaks and they lead the

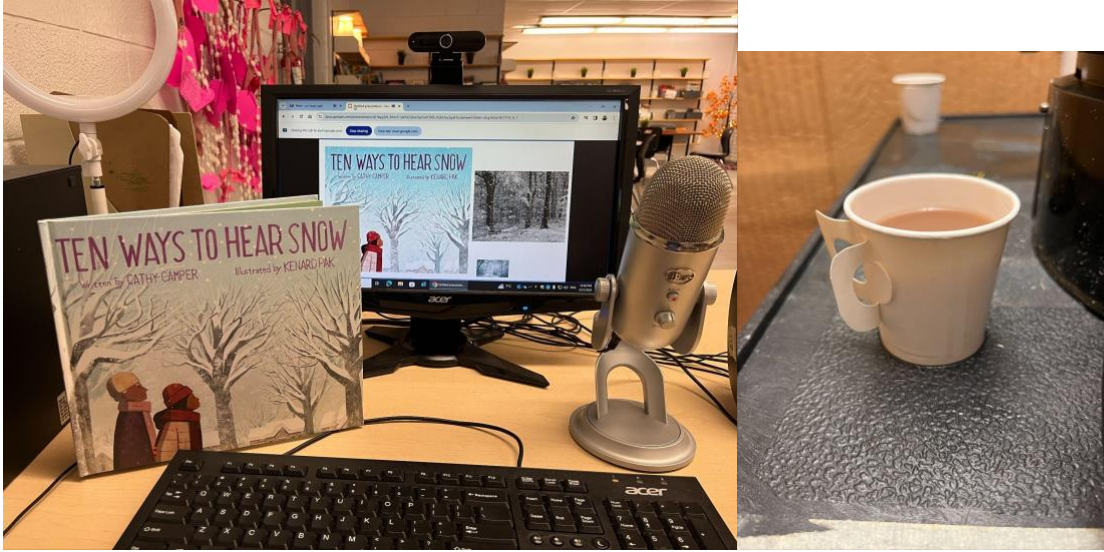
games and activities they have planned. They receive specialized training in leadership, cooperative games and conflict resolution. Their goal is to encourage physical activity and support positive socialization for younger peers. The motto of the PALS program is "There's always room for one more!".



This year our PALS leaders also worked together to create a presentation and visit classes to teach them indoor active games students can plan during indoor recess or for Daily Physical Activity (DPA). With funding from a public health grant, they were able to purchase some small materials like foam dice to give to each classroom to support these games.



Our Wellness Team started last year as a predominantly grade 7 and 8 group. A small team of students who felt strongly about creating conversation and events connected to mental wellness worked closely with Maggie and myself. One school wide activity they planned was our Winter Walk and Roll where they encouraged classes to get outside during the month of February. This culminated with a school wide outdoor afternoon walk and roll, a winter virtual story time and a special delivery of hot chocolate to each student with funding provided by public health.



This year we have merged the PALS and Wellness teams for the sake of consistency and creating a larger community of support for both initiatives.

To Advocate



In the fall of 2022, with the support of our administration and other colleagues we started the school's first gender sexuality alliance (GSA). The students from that year named it To Advocate to represent that allyship and advocacy vision of the group. This group evolves into whatever the students need it to be. Each year the balance of the amount of Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ identifying students vs allies shifts. As a result, the

goals of the group can also change. An essential aspect of an affinity and allyship based student group is to remain consistent in our meeting location and time no matter how many students may or may not attend. No sign up is required and we keep no written record of group member names to support student safety and privacy.

Below are some of the activities we have engaged in since we started:

- Ongoing partnership with Canvas Arts Action Program (Canvas, n.d.)
- Day of Pink (Intl. Day of Pink, 2025), school wide programming and resources *(please note this is the April day of recognition that explicitly centres the dismantling of homophobia, transphobia and biphobia across all sectors of society)*
- PRIDE month school wide programming and resources
- School wide butterfly cookie sales to support our work in partnership with a local vendor
- Attending our boardwide middle grade GSA conference call YANA
- Hosting and attending the Canvas PDSB partnership year end symposium and celebration
- Created a human rights statement video which is shared on our daily morning announcements

Thanks to years of hard work and painful advocacy our board implemented a “Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ Action Plan” (Peel District School Board, 2023), in the fall of 2023. We use this to support and guide our GSA work.





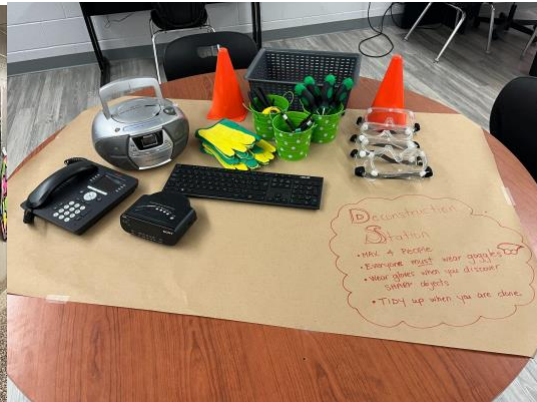
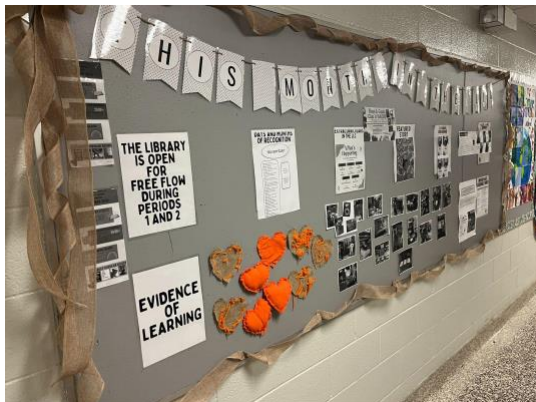
Black Student Association



In June of 2024, our school started its first Black Student Association under the leadership of a wonderful special needs educational assistant. While I am not the primary educator facilitating this group, I work closely to support this affinity space. Part of this support is making sure that the LLC space and materials are consistently available during the scheduled meeting time each week, supporting any announcement communications, planning book clubs, and connecting with board-wide BSA opportunities.

Library Leaders and Student Librarians

Once a week we ask interested students from grades 4 to 8 to come to the LLC during a nutrition break to help organize and maintain the space. These are our **Library Leaders**. While this certainly involves shelving, general tidying and helping to prepare new books for cataloguing, this is also an opportunity for the students and I to co-construct school wide learning opportunities and displays. Although students do sign up and join a Google Classroom for communication purposes, this is a flexible group. All are welcome and there is no concern on those weeks they cannot attend. Once any essential tasks are completed, students are free to explore the materials and relax in the space. This is also an opportunity for students to suggest and create additional displays and learning provocations such as the ones below:





This year we added a **Student Librarian** program that is open to all ages. This came about from feedback from Library Leaders about the power of the opportunity to recommend books to one another and across the school. The display in the last photo above is an example of book recommendations from some grade 1 Student Librarians. They each get a personal LLC visit where I meet with them to discuss their reading preferences and assist them in selecting 3 or 4 books they wish to display as recommendations for others to read. They have their photo taken for their “official” student librarian ID badge. After their books are done being on display or in most cases they are all checked out, each student gets to take their ID badge home to keep.

Quiet Work Zone



After ongoing conversations and feedback from students in our older grades, we started a weekly nutrition break time when students can spend up to 40 minutes in a nearly silent LLC completing independent school work. While students have embraced the multipurpose, active participatory nature of the space, it is more challenging to provide a more traditional “study hall” type environment. A handful of intermediate students shared that they often feel overwhelmed on the weekends by the amount of homework they face. Some indicated that their evenings and weekends are jam packed with adult expectations, extracurriculars and family obligations. Certainly, a staff wide reflection on workload is an important next step but while that process is occurring, the LLC can offer a way to support students feeling this stress. Based on the student discussions, we chose Friday afternoons for this quiet work opportunity to help reduce the potential pressures of weekend time management.

Conclusions

During the 2023 - 2024 school year we began sharing monthly data about the LLC usage. This includes total checkouts, total collaboration bookings, most popular books and student leadership. All of the extracurricular activities we offer are factored into the student leadership data in different ways throughout the year. Last year’s final data showed that over 210 students engaged in one or more of our LLC “beyond the timetable” extracurriculars.



Considering our population size of just under 350 students and keeping in mind that at least 50 students are in Kindergarten, which means they do not participate in nutrition break activities in the same manner, this is a significant number. The data is not an exact comparison to our total school population as I recognize that an individual student may attend multiple LLC extracurriculars. On the flipside, another individual student may not participate in any of these activities. That being said, we can see that overall the variety of programming offered both during and beyond the LLC timetable is reaching a significant portion of our student population.

As of December 2024, the estimated average participation in the current extracurricular offerings is as follows:

Activity	Approximate # of Students
Cal Central TV	40
Book and Cook Club	25 <i>(2 more cycles planned so likely total 75)</i>
Reading Club	20
Rest Zone	40 to 60
Games Club	50
P.A.L.S./Wellness	7 leaders <i>(30 younger student participants)</i>
To Advocate	12
Black Student Association	5
Library Leaders and Student Librarians	40
Quiet Work Zone	10

The more responsive we are to student feedback and suggestions the larger increase we can observe in student engagement and involvement school wide. This type of participatory learning continues to fuel both the LLC and guidance programming at our school. It is important to note that high numbers are not the sole or necessarily most effective measure of success in extracurricular offerings. The wide variety of learning opportunities, the identity-supporting affinity groups and the commitment to co-creating experiences based on student feedback tells me more than simply estimating the number of participants. While offering popular extracurriculars is important, providing a brave and welcoming space for even a few students in a smaller group setting is just as meaningful. Each year as we reflect on the LLC programming and extracurricular offerings we will inevitably make changes and adjustments. There is no doubt that we can observe a shift towards a school wide participatory learning culture through the LLC programming and beyond.

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