

School Library Design in British Columbia

By Joseph Jeffery

and British Columbia Teacher-Librarians' Association (BCTLA) Committee

Design is, by its nature, a trade-off between aesthetics and practicality. Neither spaces that are aesthetically beautiful with no practical way of using them, nor spaces that are practical but unpalatably drab are useful as modern school library learning commons. This paper has been adapted from the work that the British Columbia Teacher-Librarians' Association (BCTLA) did as a professional specialist association of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation to examine recent builds of school libraries, and build out recommendations and pitfalls. While the original document focused on creating recommendations for staff to use in conversation, this paper focuses on the research that informed those recommendations.

As we move towards a school library learning commons model, as outlined in *Leading Learning: Standards of Practice for School Library Learning Commons in Canada* (Canadian School Libraries, 2023b), and *Foundations for School Library Learning Commons in Canada: A Framework for Success* (Canadian School Libraries, 2023a), there is a need to ensure that this vision is communicated as schools are designed or redesigned.

Older models of design may fit with a resource-centric approach that past school libraries utilized, but not with the learner-centric model of the school library learning commons. It is important that the space is designed with participatory instruction in mind.

Furthermore, we must be careful to differentiate what works in libraries in general and what works in the modern school library learning commons. While there is overlap between public and academic libraries, there are also many diverging points, particularly around the need to have dedicated instructional space.

All of this is not to say that physical resources have no place in the school library learning commons. This is not a purely instructional space, such as a classroom; more of a hybrid space where learning takes many forms. Adequate space for resources remains important.

In this paper, we will be examining what current Canadian literature says on the needs of a school library learning commons and examining the results of the BCTLA survey around recent school builds in British Columbia.

Literature Review

The documents chosen to be analysed were *From School Library to Library Learning Commons* (Daly et al., 2017), Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association (VESTA) *School Design and Seismic Upgrade Committee Recommendations for Policy on Elementary School Design* (2022), *IFLA School Library Guidelines* (Schultz-Jones & Oberg, 2015), Canadian School Libraries' (CSL) *Leading Learning: Standards of Practice for School Library Learning Commons in Canada* (2023b) and *Foundations for School Library Learning Commons in Canada: A Framework for Success* (Canadian School Libraries, 2023a). While other, more academic sources exist, it was decided to focus on documents that were freely available online and based on the work of practicing teacher-librarians, with a strong bias toward Canadian literature.

Setting out understandings by which British Columbia teacher-librarians can begin to transition from a school library to school library learning commons, Daly et al. describes the interconnectedness of the school library learning commons space and the program. "The program is not severable from the space; form follows function, such that the LLC program is designed for new ways of teaching and learning" (Daly et al, p. 13). The document describes a program and space together that is open and accessible; dynamic, innovative, and creative; and welcoming and safe. It is suggested this can be best achieved through a multi-use space that utilizes both technology and flexibility to allow for concurrent use. Such usage might be simultaneously collaborative, instructional, recreational, community-driven, or professional learning.

Discussions of the school library are part of a wider whole in VESTA's *School Design* document (2022). The focus here is on setting strict minimums and floor plan size minimums, with a few extra pieces to ensure the school library functions as a school library, including the presence of a circulation desk and library office. Physical resource shelving minimums are well outlined for both monolingual and bilingual schools, adjusting based on student populations. Further consideration is given to shelf heights including minimum and maximums, but not shelf depth. Overall, that section of the document focuses on a traditional school library format and does not focus on instructional space or other aspects that form a school library learning commons.

Also part of a wider document, *Foundations for school library learning commons in Canada: A framework for success* (Canadian School Libraries, 2023b), is a section on "Library Learning Commons Design Factors" that eschews specific metrics for design factors that should be present. The idea here is that as each province and territory sets different rules, there is little point in putting out a number that is either unattainable by many provinces or territories or unpalatable for those whose minimums are larger.

Instead, if each of these factors is included, the school library learning commons should function as intended.

This speaks to a fundamental difference between the two documents, and their underlying approaches: VESTA wished there to be clear and comprehensible standards that acted as acceptable minimums; whereas CSL took a more aspirational approach focusing on the uses of the space. For example, where VESTA's document states that "The library in a one-language school shall have wall-mounted shelving measuring a minimum of 120 linear metres for schools with a nominal capacity up to 100 students, with an additional 0.3 linear metres provided for each student over 100" (p. 2), CSL's states that: "Library shelving should be designed to accommodate resources properly, but also to make those resources easy for students to access. Wherever possible, print resources should be housed on wall-mounted shelving, so that the floor area of the library can remain open and flexible to accommodate a variety of learning activities. Additional shelving should have a low profile to maintain sightlines, and on sturdy casters so that it can be moved and reconfigured as required" (p. 22). Both are approaching the same idea, but for different purposes.

Other relevant sections from *Foundations for school library learning commons in Canada: A framework for success* (Canadian School Libraries, 2023b), include Appendix E: Accessibility in the Library Learning Commons (p. 24). Speaking specifically to the accessibility features of the physical space, flexible furniture and space design help students by meeting their needs as necessary. Shelf height is as much an accessibility concern, as is making sure fixed furniture allows for students in wheelchairs. Universal design features should be incorporated as standard.

Leading Learning (Canadian School Libraries, 2023b) is structured to be actions the Learning Commons Leadership Team can take to transform a school library to a library learning commons. The driving force here is the movement from a traditional school library approach to a school library learning commons. A section of particular note is "Designing Learning Environments to Support Participatory Learning". This section outlines the pedagogical needs driving this movement as "working together in groups, both virtually and in person is the new norm" (para. 1). The key takeaways are the need for an area that is accessible and flexible for collaboration and innovative learning experiences. Furthermore, students and community members should feel invited to participate and see themselves reflected in the contents and design of the library space.

As a companion document to *Leading Learning: Standards of Practice for School Library Learning Commons in Canada* (Canadian School Libraries, 2023b,) *Foundations for school library learning commons in Canada: A framework for success* (Canadian

School Libraries, 2023a) draws explicit parallels between them. Both push towards a participatory model of instruction that is accessible and flexible. However, there are additional considerations within *Foundations* that move beyond *Leading Learning*, particularly around how students interact with the space such as independent spaces for study and reading, display spaces, etc. *Leading Learning* is the standards of practice, and *Foundations* is the standards of underlying design that allow one to implement the practice. Links to the fundamental ideas of learning commons can be found in both of these as well as the work of Daly et al (2017). All three are rooted in the work of Koechlin, Zwaan, and Loertscher (Koechlin et al., 2011), who pioneered the library learning commons into Canada. Furthermore, Koechlin and Loertscher were both highly involved in both *Leading Learning* and *Foundations* as a writer and reviewer respectively.

Schultz-Jones & Oberg (2015), state that “the facilities, equipment, and collections of a school library need to evolve in response to changes in the teaching and learning needs of the students and the teachers” (p. 32), and that “the educational role of a school library should be reflected in its facilities” (p. 32). When describing the shift towards a library learning commons model, Schultz-Jones et al. goes on to say that “Today, many school libraries are being designed as “learning commons” in response to users’ involvement in ‘participatory culture’, which extends the users’ roles from consumers of information to creators of information. Library learning commons provide facilities and equipment needed for creating information products as well as traditional learning and study spaces” (p. 32).

Once again, we see the move from a resource-centred to learning-centred approach to use being highlighted. The considerations listed are consistent with the participatory learning approach but also contain some notable points that should be discussed. Namely the need to have reduced external noise, consistent temperature both for working conditions and collection preservation, and an accessible design for users with special needs. Additionally, an examination of space recommends the following functional areas: study and research; information reading; instructional; media production and group project (also known as a lab or makerspace), and administrative area.

Taking all of this into account, we have, according to the literature, a library learning commons needing to have adequate space for both a flexible instructional space and adequate physical resources. Ideally, it is large enough for multiple concurrent uses: instruction, small project groups, independent study, browsing, and technology use. This is not dissimilar to either modern public libraries or academic ones: the main

difference here being the critical importance of an instructional space. Therefore, design must think about these factors and how they fit together.

A final unifying aspect of each of these documents is the duality of the learning commons model as both a physical and virtual space. While this is not the place to explore this idea in depth, it is worth noting that the physical design is only part of a larger whole for the school library learning commons. Virtual resources are an important aspect of modern school library learning commons, as are physical resources. They work in tandem, much like the physical and virtual space to provide options and flexibility that go beyond school hours. Just like physical collaboration spaces, innovative digital collaborative tools can enhance student productivity and learning. That is further enhanced by their nearly limitless potential around collaborative efforts that break out of the confines of the school building and school day, allowing students to work across schools, countries and time zones.

Method

As British Columbia has grown, so has the need for new schools. This, coupled with seismic upgrades and replacement of old buildings deemed unsafe, has resulted in an overall uptick of construction work for schools, not all of which have been successful in capturing the idea of a modern school library learning commons.

In May 2023, an ad hoc committee of the BCTLA was struck to investigate and create a document that brought together recommendations on school library learning commons design, based on new builds and renovations done in British Columbia between 2018 and 2023. A survey was constructed and sent out in November 2023 and January 2024 to teacher-librarians working at schools listed in *Current Major Capital Projects* (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2023). The following questions were asked of participants:

- Consultations
 - Were you consulted?
 - Who else was consulted?
 - Who was involved in final decisions?
- What worked and didn't work
 - What worked about the design you got? (with accompanying pictures if possible)
 - What did not work about the design you got? (with accompanying pictures if possible)
- Furniture and Advice
 - Do you have space for...
 - Do you have adequate electrical outlets?

- Did you have restrictions on what furniture you got?
- Advice for past you if you were to go through the process again
- What were things you thought would be important but turned out not to be?
- Anything else to add

Teacher-librarians representing 36 builds and renovations done in BC between 2018 and 2023 responded to the survey. Full text of the responses can be found in appendix A.

Analysis of Survey Results

From questions 1 and 2 (see appendix A for full survey responses) it can be seen that significantly more renovations both occurred and involved consultation with a teacher-librarian than new builds. This is perhaps unsurprising, as unless the building is a replacement one, there may not yet be an assigned teacher-librarian. What is concerning is in these instances a district teacher-librarian or someone else with an understanding of a modern school library learning commons is not being consulted. There is also anecdotal evidence that not all of these consultations were as meaningful as others. From their additional comments, at least one participant answered no to consultation, despite being given the opportunity to give input as it was all ignored. Consultation that is just a box check does not represent a meaningful level of consultation that would be expected from the correct use of the word.

Outside of the teacher-librarian, consultation involved a variety of stakeholders, according to the results of question 3. This was primarily school and district administrative staff and maintenance. District staff was most often included when the build was new, whereas maintenance was consulted more often during renovations.

Final decisions were held most strongly with the school administrative staff, though many teacher-librarians who identified themselves as being part of the consultations felt they had a say in the final decisions. This lends credence to the idea that meaningful consultation was occurring, though not as universally as could be desired.

In analyzing what worked and what did not a summary was produced to assist, and has been included in appendix A, breaking down the ideas into discrete categories. This section will paraphrase further these findings and use them to inform the recommendations ahead. For full text please see appendix A.

Shelving, when it works, is designed for both the size of the books and the users. There is a need to pay close attention to both for universal design purposes. Elements of the

space such as instructional areas, circulation desks and windows should all be positioned with thought and care. For instance, instructional areas should avoid being in high traffic areas; circulation desks should be located close to entrances or exits; and windows should not be opposite audio-visual equipment or vice-versa. The space as a whole should be taken into account so that sightlines are maintained and visually appealing elements are added where possible. Technology plays an important role in the school library learning commons, but needs to be flexible and based on the needs of the task. Sometimes high performance tasks will still need desktop computers. Care should be taken to choose colours for all elements of the space that lighten it, rather than create a dark atmosphere. Finally, electrical outlets are needed to future proof the space, an aspect that will be touched on again later in this document.

The inclusion of dedicated instructional space was represented in almost all of the schools that responded. It is particularly heartening as a school library learning commons is first and foremost an instructional space. Spaces for participatory learning are less well represented, and show a significant need to educate about the importance of these spaces as a critical aspect of the school library learning commons.

On the other hand it is shocking in new builds that sufficient electrical outlets were not considered and is an area in desperate need of improvement. As school districts continue to push bring your own device policies, and students have their own devices, this seems counter intuitive. Even if it is just school owned devices, the need to charge batteries is still an ever present worry.

A follow up question was needed to understand what the results of question 9 represented. This question was based on the idea of district standard furniture and aesthetics, however this is clearly not communicated and it is hard to read into what the results show. Should future work be done using this survey as a starting point, consideration should be given to adding a question to give context to this.

The general idea behind many of the comments in questions 11 and 12 are that communication is key. Draw or sketch out what you're talking about so everyone is on the same page. Oral descriptions can be interpreted differently. The second big idea is to understand the timeline and have patience. The third big idea is that planning how to move spaces (if that is what is happening) is important - weed first, then pack, in a logical manner. Finally, and this has been said numerous times, there needs to be a trained teacher-librarian helping the district and architect understand the needs. Many of the design mistakes are ones that would make sense in a public or academic library where instruction is not the key usage of the space.

Further study

Several areas for further study present itself moving forward. Foremost is a revisiting of the study in five years' time looking at those builds done between 2023 and 2028, to see if there has been any improvement. Another area would be to delve deeper into the idea of consultation and pick apart how meaningful that consultation was. Anecdotal evidence suggests a mixed bag at this point, but it was not something that was concentrated on during this study.

The final, and perhaps most fruitful area to explore would be to examine the design of virtual learning commons in British Columbia. What kind of support is there from districts? How do participatory elements come into play? What kind of training and/or time do teacher-librarians get to build and develop their virtual spaces? As a companion to this endeavour, it would allow for a similar level of depth and analysis of the issues at play within the British Columbia school system for implementing the vision of the school library learning commons.

Recommendations

The recommendations have been divided up into two sections, critical aspects to include and possible usability issues. These have been arrived at through a combination of the literature review and the analysis of recent school library builds in British Columbia.

Section 1: Critical Aspects to Include:

These are things that research and experience have shown to be important to a modern library learning commons and should be prioritized for inclusion.

Centrally Located

A centrally located SLLC naturally becomes the dynamic hub of the school as it is visible and accessible for staff, students, and community members.

Breakout Spaces

Particularly in high schools, including small flexible breakout rooms where groups can meet and collaborate is important for inquiry based learning and developing foundational Core Competencies.

Dedicated Display Area

Including areas for book display and providing opportunities to highlight student work fosters literacy and empowers life-long learning. Flexible front facing displays with counter height spaces encourages curiosity and invites learning.

Movability

Spaces and furniture need to be intentionally designed to enhance accessibility and engage learners in participatory learning. Including flexible furniture such as flip tables on castors, stackable chairs, and double sided book shelves on castors will support the facilitation of spontaneous groupings. Note - furniture should be sturdy and durable, rated for their fully loaded weight. Chairs with castors may not be a good idea for primary students.

Clear Sightlines

School library learning commons spaces should be open and inviting with clear sightlines for library staff to effectively serve its patrons.

Connected Spaces (Makerspace / Computer Lab / Book Room)

Connecting other learning spaces and storage areas close to the library benefits patrons as it provides easy access to programs and materials. Often these materials are barcoded and so this design feature enhances the flow of circulation and usage. For instance positioning a book room next to the library will invite teacher collaboration and will help schools better manage textbooks. Makerspaces and computer labs included within the library learning commons space foster team teaching, Applied Design, Skills, and Technologies (ADST), and core competencies.

Comfortable, flexible seating

Keeping all patrons in mind, furniture needs to be flexible, comfortable, and accessible for all staff and students. For instance, both elementary and secondary spaces should include armless, wipeable and spacious chairs that can be easily moved to different areas in the room. Flip tables on casters can be set up and moved against the wall for different activities. Having sufficient seating is important in library spaces so adding ottomans, wobble stools and other small flexible seating throughout the space helps enhance engagement with text and participatory learning.

Clear Traffic Flow

Intentional space design should include adequate space between stacks, no throughways near instructional spaces such as stairs and entrances to classrooms without doors. Unique elements such as lofts and nooks should include clear sightlines and should be accessible for all students.

Ideally the circulation desk is located close to the entrance, supporting those patrons who only need to visit the desk and enhancing traffic flow.

Consultation with Indigenous Education Department

Intentional space design includes close collaboration with Indigenous partners throughout the planning process about color schemes, patterns, and furniture.

Universal Design for Learning

Universal design elements allow all people who use the space to succeed. From making sure shelves are wide enough for wheelchairs, to including automatic door openers, these small changes can help all users.

Virtual Learning Commons

While this is mainly about physical design, thought should also be given to a virtual learning commons - a web environment that supplements your physical space - providing easy access to the catalog, learning materials, and participatory elements.

Collaboration Space

Space for students and staff to collaborate, in a variety of combinations, is essential for modern school library learning commons. Particularly, this should be separate from the instructional space where possible to allow for collaborative activities while lessons are ongoing. This might take the form of breakout rooms in high schools, or additional tables or flexible activity spaces at middle and elementary school.

Section II: Possible Usability Issues:

These are things that have been observed to not function. Many are excellent ideas on paper that look aesthetically pleasing but are impractical.

No Teaching Space

School library learning commons are, fundamentally, a teaching space first and foremost. There needs to be adequate space for a class to meet with audio visual equipment in appropriate places to support the learning taking place.

Being too open (lack of doors / walls)

This has been shown to cause issues with noise. The school library learning commons is a teaching space and needs ways to shut out noise when appropriate. This is especially true if the library is centrally located in a busy area where hallway noise can easily filter in.

This can also be an issue for securing valuable audio visual equipment if there is no space for it.

Too many windows

Windows provide natural light and can make a space look welcoming and open. However, they also reduce shelf space considerably. Having a whole wall of windows can look wonderful, but reduces the practical space for physical resources.

Combining Disparate Items

Having quiet study rooms built into the school library learning commons but combining them with noisy items like HVACs or server racks makes them unusable, turning a good idea into wasted space.

Neither this Floor nor the Other

One or two school library learning commons have been built between floors on a separate floor. This makes for mandatory elevator use no matter which floor you are on for students and staff with physical disabilities, which is not ideal.

Adjacency Issues

Having the school library learning commons adjacent to the gym or shops can cause particular issues with noise. This can be mitigated, depending on the design of the other space, but care should be taken to avoid shared windows or other aspects that might reduce sound / vibration insulation.

Separating Controls and Audio- Visual (AV) Equipment

Built-in controls for AV equipment located on opposite sides of a large school library learning commons make it difficult to operate. While the logic of putting it behind the desk was sound on the surface, the practicality of not being able to adjust things from where you are presenting is an issue that should be considered.

Light Switches in the Same Room

It was noted that often the light switches are on a single bank, meaning you have to switch the office or book rooms on and off from the central bank rather than inside that room. This can be good for emergencies to be able to lower lights simultaneously, but also causes issues if there is no way to turn lights on in that room should someone accidentally turn them off.

Glare from Windows / Skylights

Skylights or windows that shine right onto built in AV should be avoided. The location of the sun all year round should be considered as it may cause unexpected problems in winter when the sun is lower or during one part of the day or the other. This also causes significant damage to the books from sun damage.

Adequate Electrical Outlets

Staff devices need places to be plugged in that are accessible and safe. Trailing cords to make projectors, speakers or other devices reach instructional areas does not meet health and safety standards.

No locking doors

Barn doors look aesthetically pleasing; however, there may not be a way to add a lock to them. This is especially important to secure items in storage rooms and the librarian's office.

No consultation between electricians and carpentry

It is important that the two groups of workers discuss the placement of bookshelves, electrical outlets, and internet drops. Electrical outlets need to be accessible and not covered by bookshelves to be useful.

Shelves too low / too high

Shelves should be built to be optimal for the most number of patrons. If shelving is too high, elementary students (and particularly primary students) may not be able to reach the top shelves and this could be a health and safety issue. If shelving is too low, high school students may need to sit on the ground to be able to reach a book. Shelves that are too low may also be difficult for staff members who have difficulty bending down.

How Do We Do this?

Teacher-Librarians in British Columbia have, from our study, been fortunate that they are, more often than not, consulted meaningfully in the renovation of their space. However, it can be quite daunting to envision a space. This is a task that you can go your whole career without doing, and most teacher-librarians will only be asked to do once. With that said, how do we do this?

Begin With a Vision

It is important to know what the goal of the school library learning commons is within the larger school. How does it fit in? What are you trying to achieve? The “Moving Forward” section of *Leading Learning* (Canadian School Libraries, 2023c), represents a method for starting conversations by co-creating that joint vision with the rest of the school. The school library learning commons vision should align with the schools and move with it rather than against it. Once everyone at the school is on the same page you will have allies in the design process.

Measure and map

Map out the space using graph paper so you understand the dimensions being worked with. Take a copy as backup so that you can return to a blank version if necessary.

Figure out where different areas will be:

- Your instructional area
- Books
- Movement through the space

Walk the space

Try and find things to approximate items such as shelves or tables and walk the space to understand how students will flow through it. It can be helpful to take another copy of the map and draw out students and staff moving through the space.

Working Collaboratively Towards Excellence

A wise sage once said, “It’s dangerous to go alone.” Thankfully in British Columbia, and many other provinces and territories, there exist a number of supports to help you as you begin to build or rebuild a library. If you are in one of those auspicious districts who have a district teacher-librarian they will be the biggest support for you. Generally speaking, they will have done this a number of times and will be proficient in mapping out the space on graph paper. Others who can help you include your local teacher librarians, your provincial teacher-librarian group, and Canadian School Libraries (CSL).

Read all about it

The documents from which this was created are all excellent choices to help you understand how this can be done. Of particular note is *Foundations for School Library Learning Commons in Canada: A framework for success* (Canadian School Libraries, 2023a). This provides guidance on the larger work of the learning commons.

Conclusion

A pillar of both the learning commons project and teaching in British Columbia is life-long learning. Everyone is a learner when it comes to working towards building a space that meets the needs of the school community. The aim of this is not to find fault in the work of others, but to provide a bridge to collaboration in the design of modern school libraries. The lessons learned across the builds that were examined are gathered here to help the teacher-librarian community give meaningful feedback, understanding that some aesthetically pleasing elements actually hamper the learning in the space, rather than enhance it as they were meant to do

It is hoped that, by collecting together these positives and negatives, others will be empowered to spot issues during the early stages of design when things can be changed.

References

- British Columbia Ministry of Education. (2023). *Current major capital projects*. Province of British Columbia. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/capital/major-capital-projects>.
- Canadian School Libraries. (2023a). *Foundations for school library learning commons in Canada: A framework for success*. https://www.canadianschoollibraries.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/CSL_Foundations-Frameworks_FINAL_Nov2023.pdf
- Canadian School Libraries. (2023b). *Leading learning: Standards of practice for school library learning commons in Canada*. ilsop.canadianschoollibraries.ca
- Canadian School Libraries. (2020c.) *Moving forward*. Leading learning: Standards of practice for school library learning commons in Canada. <https://ilsop.canadianschoollibraries.ca/moving-forward/>
- Daly, H., Ekdal, M., & Zubke, S., eds. (2017). From school library to library learning commons: A pro-active model for educational change. <https://bctla.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/from-school-library-to-library-learning-commons.pdf>
- Koechlin, C., Loertscher, D, and Zwaan, S. (2011). *The new learning commons where learners win: Reinventing school libraries and computer labs*, 2nd ed. Hi Willow Research and Publishing.
- Schultz-Jones, B., & Oberg, D., eds. (2015). *IFLA school library guidelines*. International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. <https://www.ifla.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/assets/school-libraries-resource-centers/publications/ifla-school-library-guidelines.pdf>
- Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association. (2022). *School design and seismic upgrade committee recommendations for policy on elementary school design*. <https://veaes.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/School-Design-and-Seismic-Upgrade-Committee-Recommendations-for-Policy-on-Elementary-School-Design.pdf>

Appendix A Results of the Library Design Survey

Results have been formatted based on the type of question.

The following formatting was used:

- Single choice questions - Tabular
- Multiple choice questions - Graph
- Short form answers - Key ideas extracted and collated.

Q1. Have you had a new or renovated school library learning commons in the last 5 years?

New Build	Renovation	Total
14 (38.89%)	22 (61.11%)	36 (100%)

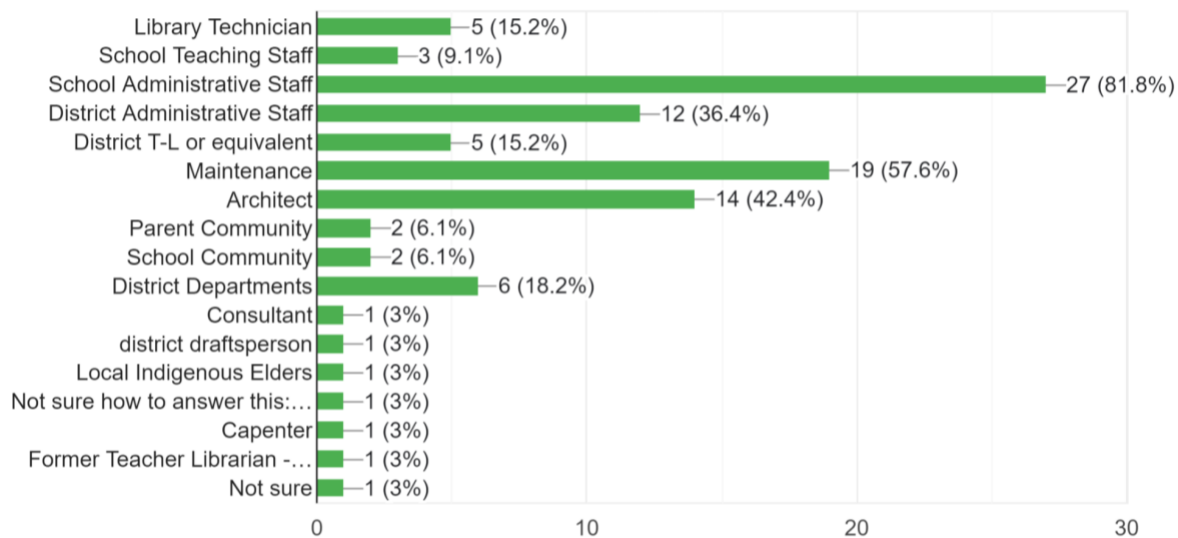
Q2. Were you consulted about the build/renovation?

Yes	No	No response	Total
24 (66.67%)	11 (30.56%)	1 (2.78%)	36 (100%)

New Build		Renovation			Total
Yes	No	Yes	No	No Response	
6 (42.86%)	8 (57.14%)	18 (81.82%)	3 (13.64%)	1 (4.54%)	
14 (38.89%)		22 (61.11%)			36 (100%)

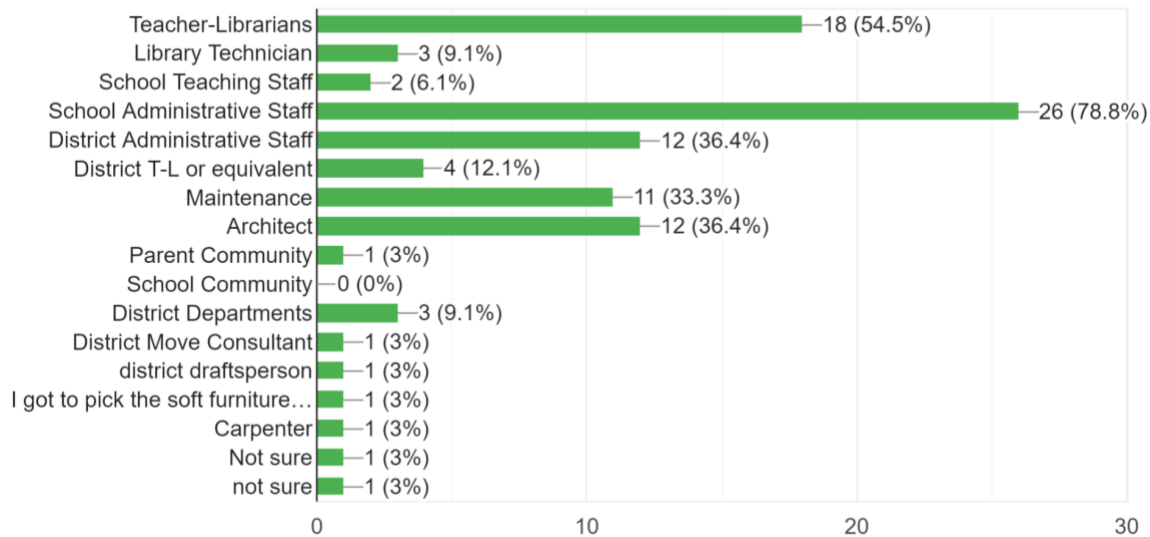
Q3. Who else was involved in the consultation around the SLLC? (Multiple selection allowed)

33 responses



Q4. Who else was involved in the final decisions around the SLLC? (Multiple selection allowed)

33 responses



Q5. & Q6. What Worked / Did not work about the design?

	Worked	Didn't Work
Shelving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bespoke shelves for picture books (record style, front facing) ● Shelving that matched book depth (less deep for fiction) ● Shelves on casters ● Dynamic Shelves ● Shelves of natural material rather than metal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shelves too low for most patrons ● Shelves not well built (fell on TL) ● Curved/wavy shelves look nice but don't accommodate as many books / break more easily ● Not enough shelving - tension between windows vs sufficient shelving ● Shelves built to accommodate picture books were too tall for the age group of students ● Shelves too low ● Shelves too small for picture books ● Not enough built in shelves ● Shelving too tall. Need ladder to reach the top.
Teaching Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Folding whiteboard wall ● Attached flexible classroom space for teaching ● White boards (floor to ceiling) ● Multiple teaching spaces ● Bulletin boards/cork boards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No teaching space ● Teaching space is the main school hallway ● Teaching spaces are too small for an intermediate class ● Need to use same area for primary carpet area and intermediate table teaching.
Circulation Desk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Better traffic flow (Circ desk near entrance/exit) ● Teacher Desk is close to AV 	No comments

	Worked	Didn't Work
Library Rooms (Work, Storage, Breakout)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attached textbook room ● Breakout Spaces ● Workroom - sink / cupboard ● Good amount of storage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No workspace for book repair / cataloging ● No sink/wash station ● Quiet study room had noisy HVAC installed in it ● No breakout room / flex space ● No secure space for expensive AV equipment
Furniture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Removal of immovable furniture / modular furniture ● Soft/Comfortable Seating ● Casters on chairs and tables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aesthetics were used over function. Lovely looking wooden seating. Very uncomfortable. Takes up most of space. ● Furniture is not flexible ● Chairs on casters (Elementary)
Design of Space (size, layout, shape, lighting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reggio inspired loft ● Seismic reinforcements on exterior ● Non-fluorescent lighting ● Clear Sight Lines ● Laminate Floors ● Open space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No closed ceiling - noise filters in from everywhere else ● No entrance door ● Space dimensions are weird / poor / narrow ● No locking doors ● No book drop ● No storage ● Blind spots for study nooks ● Illogical placement of built-in AV based on how staff/students would be seated ● Main school stairs/elevator empty into space ● Poor sight lines ● No desktop computers ● Book drop not logically

	Worked	Didn't Work
		<p>placed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No solid walls ● Space is too small for school size
Windows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Window nooks ● Windows / View / Natural light 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Window to gym which gets hit by equipment regularly ● Skylight glare goes straight on built-in AV ● Windows face into rising sunlight and have no covers ● No privacy with large exterior windows with no way to cover.
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Laptop Cart / iPad station ● Attached computer lab for teaching ● Ceiling mounted / built in AV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AV is mounted tiny TV instead of projector screen in new school ● No secure space for expensive AV equipment ● Skylight glare goes straight on built-in AV ● Illogical placement of built-in AV based on how staff/students would be seated
Appearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Paint colours lightening areas / removal of dark colours ● Decorative elements with Indigenous designs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aesthetics were used over function. Lovely looking wooden seating. Very uncomfortable. Takes up most of space. ● Library repainted in same dark colours
Technical / Mechanical Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More electrical outlets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No heating / cooling ● No light switch in office. Have to go to library entrance

	Worked	Didn't Work
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No accessible door opener ● No temperature control ● No new electrical upgrades / broken existing outlets not fixed / no forethought towards future proofing for device usage ● No consultation between electricians and carpenters meant all outlets built in behind bookshelves and are unusable
Other / Misc. Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No asbestos! ● Dedicated areas to display things ● Makespace connection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No communication between school and maintenance as to what priorities were

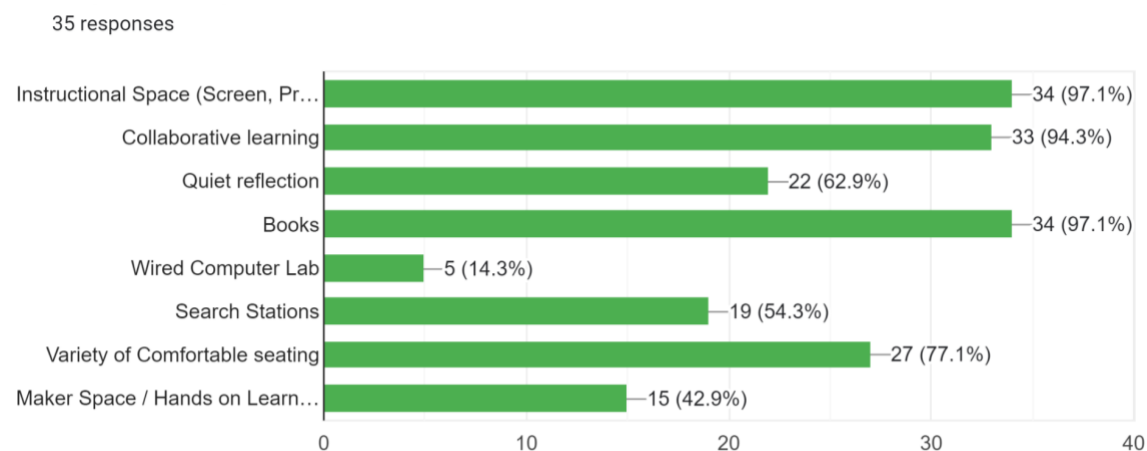
The categories that have been used for collation were applied by the writing team to group similar ideas. There is general consensus amongst what worked and what did not, which can be boiled down to the following:

	Summary of what worked	Summary of what did not work
Shelving	Shelves should be designed for the size of books, preferably from natural materials rather than metal. Additionally, having them movable is preferred.	Shelf height not matching users (too tall/small). Not having enough shelving. Shelves not being able to fit the format of books.
Teaching Spaces	Should be included and be flexible with space to show work / write.	When it was not included, too small or in a high traffic area.
Circulation Desk	Needs to be located close to the entrance / exit and somewhat close to the AV equipment.	

	Summary of what worked	Summary of what did not work
Library Rooms (Work, Storage, Breakout)	Should have a textbook room attached and, especially at middle and secondary schools, a breakout space for small group work. A workroom with a sink and sufficient storage is a must.	Not having a work room with a sink / wash station. Not having a breakout space or it has noisy items in it. Not having lockable storage for expensive items.
Furniture	Furniture should be soft, comfortable and as movable as possible.	Uncomfortable furniture or inflexible furniture. Age-appropriateness of casters should be watched out for.
Design of Space (size, layout, shape, lighting)	Open spaces with unique elements (lofts, window nooks) are preferred. Clear sightlines are a must.	Spaces where there isn't good noise absorption or have through traffic are issues. Illogical placement of items such as AV / book drops cause issues. Space being too small or having poor sight lines need to be avoided.
Windows	Having windows. Window seating.	Placement of windows not taking into account sunlight / what is on the other side: generally a lack of window covering.
Technology	Flexible options such as laptop carts or tablets should be considered. Wired computers are still needed for high performance tasks. Built in AV.	When AV is too small for the space or can't easily be read due to glare. Lack of secure space to store AV.
Appearance	Light colours and decorative elements are a plus, especially if they have Indigenous designs.	Dark colours reduce light.
Technical / Mechanical	Sufficient electrical outlets	Insufficient electrical outlets are not future proofing the space.

	Summary of what worked	Summary of what did not work
Functions		No accessibility features such as door openers or easy to access light switches. No temperature control.
Other / Misc. Comments	Seismically sound with no asbestos. Having dedicated display areas and makerspaces.	Lack of communication between groups involved in the project.

Q7. Do you have space for... (Multiple selection allowed)



Q8. Do you have adequate electrical outlets?

Yes	No	Total
16 (44.40%)	20 (55.60%)	36 (100%)

New Build		Renovation		Total
Yes	No	Yes	No	
6 (42.86%)	8 (57.14%)	10 (45.45%)	12 (54.55%)	

14 (38.89%)	22 (61.11%)	36 (100%)
-------------	-------------	-----------

Q9. Did you have restrictions on what furniture you got?

Yes	No	No Response	Total
22 (61.11%)	12 (33.33%)	2 (5.56%)	36 (100%)

Q10. Advice for past you (Key ideas)

- Patience - It will take a long time from start to finish
- Plot things out so architect can see your vision, don't rely on descriptions
- Ask more questions
- Be more insistent about the need to have sufficient space / explain how the space is used / have time for advocacy before permanent expensive mistakes are made.
- Make sure to have time to pack up / unpack yourself.
- Make sure to pack up using a logical system with clear labels
- Ask to see plans to make sure everyone is on the same page properly instead of just orally.
- Ask for a trained TL or if one exists the district TL to be involved in the discussions so everyone understands what the space is and is not
- Don't have the teaching area in the same location as the high traffic area / high traffic area crossing the teaching area. It may make sense on paper but actually walk it and think about where many humans will be at once rather than thinking about it one at a time
- Fight for the library to be a central, hub space
- Weed before packing
- Work with admin on replacement funding over time. Have a plan and prioritize
- Have a clear understanding of process and timeline
- Ask other TLs for advice

Q12. Additional Comments (Key Ideas)

- District/Ministry/Architects seem to think we don't need books and we don't need a large enough space for teaching
- Weeding before packing was a lifesaver
- District/Ministry/Architects need to listen to the users of the space rather than pretending they understand
- Library accessibility is important. Not having it on a different floor to everything else.
- Not stealing the space after construction for other things (repurposing into meeting rooms, classrooms, etc)
- Pedagogy is still important. Design of the space / environment helps but quality teaching is important