



The School-Wide Learning Commons

The School-Wide Learning Commons Physical Space

[Whole School Learning Commons Basics](#)

Retool the traditional library space and computer lab into the foundational physical element of the school-wide learning commons. It is not only a hub where the main focus is the consumption of knowledge but also the center of the creation of knowledge. In other words, it still is a central place for resources and information to be used in student inquiry and literacy, but it expands to foster the creation of knowledge for the students who are doing design thinking experiences, making videos, creating all types of multimedia, making, doing projects as individuals / small groups / large groups, and where this type of space connects to classroom space and community resources. This environment merges with changes in classroom space and asks all the specialists in the school to participate in co-taught learning experiences. It extends like an umbrella from the hub across the school.

This might happen in three phases:

- Phase 1: The traditional library
- Phase 2: The transformation of the library into a learning commons
- Phase 3: Transforming and extending the learning commons environment to all parts of the school.

For schools that have not had a phase 2 learning commons, they might just jump directly from phase one to three.

Here are a few examples of phase 2 learning commons as examples. The challenge is for others to now demonstrate how phase three would emerge from these examples:

For a quick introduction, you might want to view the following video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o7nX2cj7Dqo>

Here is an earlier example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LglFI1BYfFs>

In the central hub of the school-wide learning commons, We recommend the following types of spaces or zones that are available before and after the school day and where learners and

adults can work simultaneously. Note that each characteristic merges wherever possible with classroom space in the school.

- Flexibility (furniture and schedule where the space adjusts to learner needs at various times of day rather than the other way around)
- If something there does not move around to fit the patron's needs, does it really belong?
- Robust Wireless access
- Networking places and spaces
- Productivity spaces and tools
- Comfortable and stimulating
- Books and resources kids want and need
- Where books and computers don't get in the way
- Equitable access to the space both by appointment and walk-in
- Celebration an exhibition of learning
- The center of exemplary learning experiences – relevant and real world
- Individual, small groups, large groups working simultaneously in a busy but not chaotic environment
- A Cultural center – Listening Lunches or other programs attract students, parents, and the community
- Centre for Professional Learning Teams and professional development
- The experimental learning laboratory
- Home of the physical and virtual makerspace
- Home base for the Learning Commons Specialists Cadre
- Home of the Techsherpas student club and genius bar
- Equitable access to a variety of technologies both at school and extending into the home

Take a look at this quickmooc short course: <https://tinyurl.com/tyw3oyk>

PHYSICAL LEARNING COMMONS


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Our Umbrella Question:

How can we transform a traditional school library and computer lab into a physical learning commons?

Is your school library a storage space, or, a vibrant learning space?



During this experience you will be able to:

- Chart your own path through this learning experience.
- Get a quick overview of what a physical learning commons is and its changed function from a traditional school library and computer lab.

More Examples

Assessment of the impact of the physical learning commons as it spread out across the entire school.

Resources