

**Guidelines:  
The Role and Responsibilities of  
Teacher-Librarians  
Vancouver School District**

**Prepared by the VTLA  
in consultation with VSTA, VESTA, and SLRCCC**

**Revised and approved, January 2008**

**Introduction**

This collaboratively developed document has been prepared in response to the recommendation presented in Dr. K. Haycock's *A Review of the Role of the Teacher-Librarian and School Library Resource Centre in School District #39* : [that the district] "clarify the role and responsibilities of the Teacher-Librarian ". The intention of this document is to do just that. The extent to which the following role description can actually be met is linked directly to adequate budgets, facilities and staffing.

The *Role and Responsibilities* document is not intended as written policy; rather, it is a working document, a set of guidelines to help new Teacher-Librarians, those considering Teacher-Librarianship, and those who work with and support the work of Teacher-Librarians in schools. As a reflection of what constitutes *best practice* for Vancouver's Teacher-Librarians, it can be used as a tool for assessing professional development needs and a framework for discussions of school library programs where it is important to have common understandings about the work of Teacher-Librarians.

This statement of the role of the Teacher-Librarian has been endorsed by:

Vancouver Teacher-Librarians' Association  
Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association  
Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association  
Vancouver Elementary Principals' & Vice Principals' Association  
Vancouver Association of Secondary School Administrators

## **The Role and Responsibilities of Teacher-Librarians Vancouver School District**

**Teacher** A Teacher-Librarian is a teacher, as defined in the School Act and the Collective Agreement, including terms and conditions agreed to by the Board and the Vancouver Teachers' Federation (VTF).

A Teacher-Librarian is defined in the Collective Agreement as [a teacher] *who selects, manages, and promotes the effective use of resources* (Article 1.K.2.(i)).

**Library Resource Centre** The following role description for a Teacher-Librarian depends upon there being adequate budgets, facilities, and staffing.

In order to provide meaningful and equitable access to resources, school libraries and school library programs are built on:

- adequate staffing
- adequate budgets
- organized facilities
- physical and intellectual access to resources
- administrative support
- school-wide goals and programs that enable students to reach their diverse potentials

**NOTE: The following description of the *instructional role* of a Teacher-Librarian depends upon there being adequate budgets, facilities, and staffing.**

**T/L  
Promotes  
Effective  
Use of  
Resources**

**Teacher-Librarians work collaboratively with colleagues to plan, teach, and evaluate resource-based inquiry units that promote student achievement; they:**

- Incorporate information literacy skills, including instruction for effective, efficient and ethical use of print and electronic resources
- Integrate technology with curriculum and instruction
- Assess and compile print and electronic resources, including websites and online databases, that are appropriate to specific curricula and inquiry projects,

In addition, they may:

- Adapt and create strategies for accessing, using, and presenting information
- Provide support for teachers integrating technology with teaching and learning
- Create customized resource lists
- Promote technology literacy
- Provide orientation to library services for staff and student teachers

**Teacher-Librarians promote student achievement through reading, literacy and information literacy; they will:**

- Provide advice to readers
- Provide reference services to individual students

In addition, they may:

- Participate in school-based, district or provincial initiatives

**Teacher-Librarians promote reading for enjoyment.**

In addition, they may:

- Design and implement strategies such as booktalks, booklists, book clubs, independent reading programs, reading contests, reading conferences, online discussion groups, author visits, and displays.

**Teacher-Librarians advocate for strong, well-supported school library programs; they may:**

- Prepare and deliver reports
- Participate in school or district committees
- Share ideas and strategies

**NOTE: The following description of the *instructional* role of a Teacher-Librarian depends upon there being adequate budgets, facilities, and staffing.**

**T/L Selects Resources      Teacher-Librarians select resources in a variety of formats to meet varied learner needs, they will:**

- follow the VSB Acquisition Policy as it pertains to selection for library resources; see VSB Policy, File IIA, Section 1: Instruction, “Instructional Materials (Selection of Learning Resources);

In fulfilling this responsibility, they may:

- Use selection tools such as professional literature and reviewing journals, publishers’ catalogues and multi-vendor displays
- Use a variety of acquisition strategies, such as online ordering, visitations to jobber warehouses, specialty and other bookstores, book sales and other promotions
- Identify annually collection development needs based on particular knowledge of the collection, the curriculum, and school learning community and monitor the acquisitions to ensure needs are met.
- Maintain a record of resources under consideration for acquisition
- Identify and implement procedures for weeding, or rebinding and/or re-purchase of materials
- Participate in discussion of school, District and bulk resource purchases, product trials and evaluation,
- Participate in technology planning and selection
- Select appropriate furnishings, supplies, materials, tools, and equipment

**Teacher-Librarians also support teachers and students in the selection of materials; they may:**

- Select appropriate websites, electronic and print resources for collaboratively developed units
- Work with staff to select resources appropriate for their classroom needs
- Involve students in the selection process

**NOTE:** The following description of the *management role* for a Teacher-Librarian depends upon there being adequate budgets, facilities, and staffing.

Further, the effective *management of a secondary school library resource centre* requires the co-ordination and performance of many clerical and technical tasks. Some of these tasks were previously done by the Teacher-Librarian and/or by a staff assistant under the direction and supervision of the Teacher-Librarian, in order to allow the Teacher-Librarian to become more involved in the teaching/learning program.

**T/L  
Manages  
Resources**

**Teacher-Librarians are proficient in the applications of the automated library management system for the purposes of managing collections, including:**

- Circulation; they:
  - Create clerical and technical procedures for circulation, accurate shelving, repair, and organization of materials
  - Create clerical and technical procedures for tracking and retrieving overdue materials
  - Manage patron records
  - May arrange interlibrary loans, reserves
- Cataloguing; they:
  - Receive materials and reconcile packing slips
  - Process resources new to the collection, including adding existing records, creating new records, sending materials to Media and Library Services and Technology (MLST), physically identifying resources
  - Re-catalogue resources as required
- Annual Inventory; they:
  - Assess and schedule timing
  - Scan all barcodes in one or more collections to identify missing, or misshelved items
  - Produce, reconcile, and assess inventory reports

**Teacher-Librarians manage library technology; they manage:**

- Hardware; they:
  - Check that all technology is operative, including replenishing supplies, giving instructions, troubleshooting, contacting technician, and notifying HELP desk
  - Advise on technology acquisitions

**T/L  
Manages  
Resources  
(cont'd)**

- Software; they may:
  - Work with school technology committee to purchase appropriate application programs and ensure licensing agreements are met
  - Make recommendations for the purchase of appropriate tools
- Internet access; they may:
  - Provide information on library services for the school or library website
  - Provide information about remote access to online resources
  - Evaluate websites appropriate for school use

**Teacher-Librarians may teach and assess students who take a course under their supervision; they may organize, train and supervise student volunteers.**

**Teacher-Librarians manage the library resource centre facility; they:**

- Create a functional and inviting working and learning environment
- Manage bookings by creating and implementing policies and procedures for using the facility
- Arrange the collection
- Supervise the library's computers
- Participate in planning and design for optimal use of existing facility and for refurbishment or design of a new facility

**When Teacher-Librarians manage a budget, they:**

- Are familiar with VSB accounting procedures
- Liaise with VSB and various vendor accounting and purchasing personnel
- Develop procedures for library accounts, including maintenance of accurate financial records
- Provide accountability for expenditures and revenue flow
- Ensure expenditures are consistent with selection goals