

The Teaching and Learning Environment in our Primary Years Programme Information for Teachers




Welcome to our Learning Communities

What is a **Learning Community**?

A learning community is more than just the space in which learning occurs. It is the connection between students, teachers, parents and community members that allows for students to learn in different ways, from different people, and in spaces that allow for different opportunities.

Teaching and learning in our new facility will be highly collaborative. Students and teachers work together in **Learning Communities**.

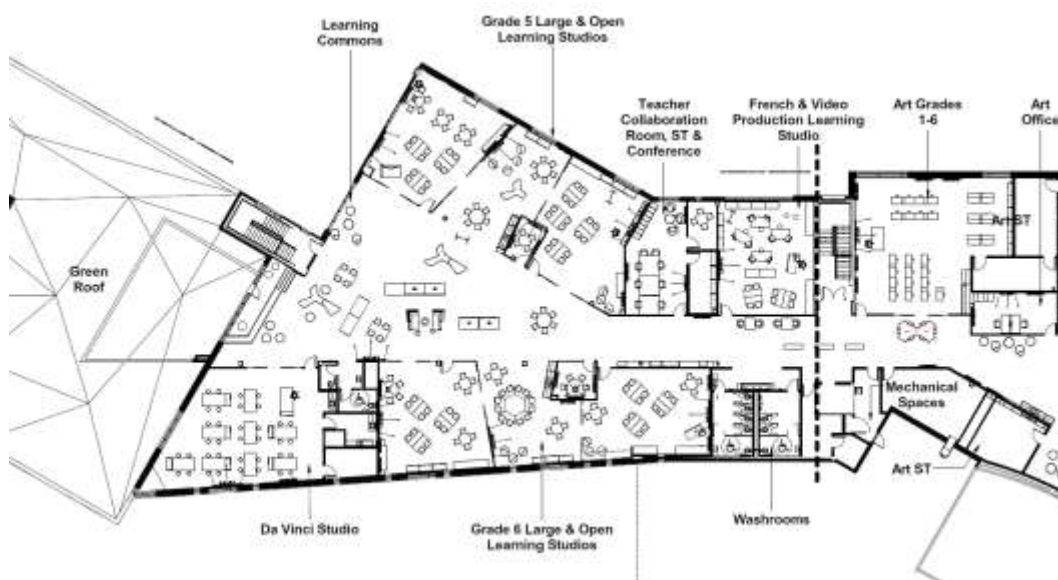
Our learning communities are:

-  Kindergarten to Grade 2
-  Grades 3 & 4
-  Grades 5 & 6

Learning Studios connect to form a **Learning Suite** which opens to the **Learning Commons**. These spaces are shared to create

diverse opportunities and experiences for students.

Teachers will work together to plan, design and deliver engaging experiences to best suit the needs of students for the curricular outcomes. Specific areas are available for large group experiences, small-group collaboration, and individual quiet work and reflection.



The image above depicts an example of how the learning studios are combined with the commons and Da Vinci studios to provide more opportunities for students.

Why move to a Learning Community Model?

Benefits for Students

1. More transdisciplinary and authentic learning experiences
2. Increased engagement with more choice and differentiated approaches
3. Enhanced opportunities to meet individual targets, goals and choices
4. More frequent opportunities to work dynamically with others in flexible groups that change with the activity or concept
5. Further support with targeted interventions and response to learning needs
6. Comfort and connection to the learning environment



Benefits for Teachers

1. Enhanced opportunity for collaboration to innovate and design learning experiences
2. Further professional growth and development of expertise in areas of curriculum, student support and pedagogy
3. More opportunity for leadership
4. Better learning environment to support student needs through differentiated approaches and flexible programming

Modes of Learning

The learning communities are made up of a variety of well-designed environments that facilitate essential modes of learning that are important aspects of a 21st Century education. In order to best support the learning needs of students, programming includes a balanced approach to three essential modes of learning: **Collaborative, Active & Individual.**



Learning Spaces

Learning environments are purposefully designed to facilitate comfortable, developmentally-appropriate and engaging experiences that allow students to be successful in each of the learning modes.

Each **Learning Studio** opens onto the learning commons, and can operate as a single studio or can be combined with an adjacent studio to form a **Learning Suite**.

The **Learning Commons** provides the physical connection between Learning Suites and can provide an environment for quiet or reflective individual work, paired collaborations or larger group gatherings which require more space.

Makerspaces/da Vinci Studios are available for project work and wet or messy curriculum integration.



Hillel Day School of Metro Detroit, an FNI da Vinci Studio

Break-out spaces are for collaborative or individual work. These spaces may be closed break-out rooms, or simply spaces in the commons used for the purpose of small group or individual work.

Enhanced Outdoor Learning

In addition to Aspen Lodge and our current country campus, outdoor learning will be enhanced by the introduction of our Rooftop Garden and Outdoor Learning Gardens.

Purposely Designed Spaces

Some of our learning spaces are purposely designed for a particular experience. Examples include our French language studios located on each floor, our Kindergarten Studio and the Elementary Art and Music Studios located within our Fine Arts wing of the school.

Movement within the Learning Community

Movement between spaces is determined by the faculty in their design of the learning experiences for students. The spaces are shared by the grade levels in the learning community, offering further possibilities for purposeful engagement. The selection of a learning environment is determined by the activity as well as the needs of the students to accomplish the desired result. The choice of space is done collaboratively, to ensure decisions are mindful of the needs of other groups to ensure each experience is best placed in a suitable learning environment. Students will have more choice within the spaces to develop autonomy and better meet their own needs where possible.

Care for Students

Grade level teachers will be responsible for a class of students, and will act as the primary contact and facilitator for students' daily experiences and assessment processes. Connection with other teachers adds to the student experience and learning opportunities, offering further insights and observations into the strengths and areas for growth of each individual.



Teacher Collaboration: ***We are Better Together!***

In order to facilitate teaching and learning within shared spaces, a **Teacher Collaboration Room** is available for the faculty members of each learning community. The collaboration rooms have been designed to value both group and individual needs of our faculty. In this space, grade level teachers and specialists have the opportunity to work together to design the learning for the students.

Teacher resources will be stored in the collaboration rooms and storage rooms, to ensure that learning studios are optimally functional and available for students. A few private office spaces are available within the learning community for all faculty to use during meetings or phone conversations with parents and members of the community.

Additional Notes for Teachers:

The teacher collaboration rooms will be equipped with a large work table, an LED screen and a white board for collaboration. Each faculty member will have a designated locker and small workspace for personal items. Additional individual work spaces throughout the school to facilitate the times when quiet work is required by our faculty. Essential agreements will determine and monitor effective and collaborative use of the space, modeling for students how to balance the personal and collective needs of the group.