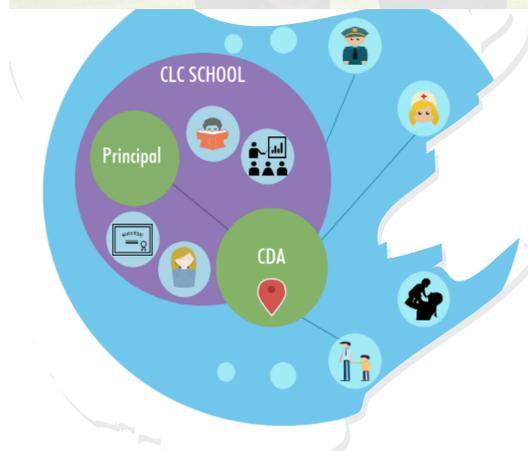


# A PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE TO CLC EXTENSION

This guide is for Community Development Agents, School Principals, School Board personnel and other practitioners interested in developing a Community Learning Centre that can serve multiple schools in a coordinated and collaborative manner.

# Community Learning Centres Models at a Glance

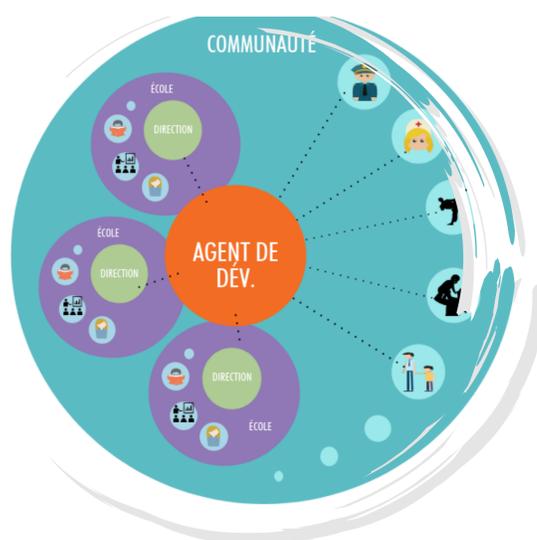
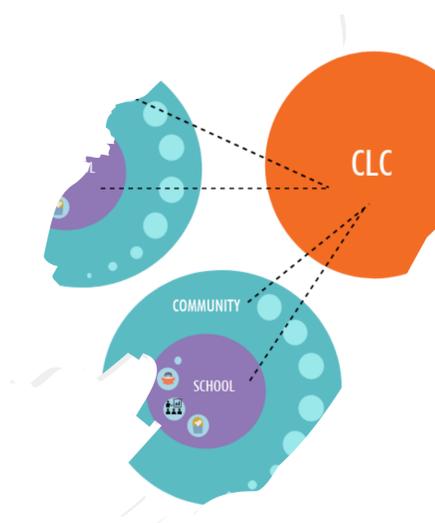


- One school and community
- One vision and plan
- Small number of leaders
- One CDA resource
- CDA task boundaries can be flexible without threatening the achievement of goals

## SINGLE SITE CLC

- Multiple schools and communities (can span multiple MRCs)
- Multiple and distinct plans
- Multiple leaders that work independently from one another
- Shared CDA resource
- Higher need for CDA task boundaries

## MULTI-SITE CLC



- Multiple schools in same geographic area
- One vision and unified plan
- Multiple leaders working in collaboration with one another
- One or more CDA resource

## EXTENDED CLC

This infographic was prepared by LEARN's Provincial Resource Team in March 2019.

## What is an Extended Model?

---

Community Learning Centres (CLC) have traditionally served a single English language school and community. An extended model refers to a CLC that serves multiple schools located in the same geographical area; school leaders are expected to work together to develop a singular vision and plan for the CLC.

## What are the benefits of an Extended Model?

---

### **1. More schools, students and community members can access resources and programming made available through community based organizations**

- When CDAs support multiple schools, partnering organizations impact two or more schools on average;
- Extended models within the CLC network have commonly reported doubling student participation rates; participation in some programs increased by seven-fold.

### **2. Increased access to grants and financial services**

- More funding opportunities (in the form of grants, and program-based revenue) become available when more schools become involved).

### **3. Greater visibility and presence in local forums and tables (e.g., les tables de concertation)**

- CDAs can speak to the realities of multiple schools, articulating a broader picture of English school board realities;
- CDAs are stronger advocates for the needs of their constituents, as they represent a greater population; and,
- They are able to speak with greater authority on behalf of the English-speaking populations in their regions, promoting a deeper understanding of these communities within the larger cultural context.

### **4. Increased support for transition & retention from elementary to high school (in feeder school groupings)**

- Increase of programs that connect younger students to the high school in advance;
- Increase in programs where younger students get to interact with high school students acting as mentors.

## 5. Increased ability to work at a systems level (inter and intra sector collaboration)

- Schools begin to work collaboratively and identify endemic themes across region;
- More schools collaborate and coordinate services across sectors (e.g., with health and social service providers).

## Minimum Specifications

---

For a CLC to serve multiple schools successfully, the following conditions must be in place:

### 1. Adequate resourcing of Community Development Agent (CDA)

- Hire a CDA with professional qualifications (or invest in training) – some management skills are required;
- Scale appropriately - one CDA with full-time hours can effectively serve a maximum of three schools;
- Designate space and time(s) for CDA to work at each school site.

### 2. Participating schools are located within the same geographical area or regional county municipality (MRC)

- A shared geographic area allows the CLC to leverage existing partnerships and programs across sites;
- Feeder schools are a particularly good fit for extension.

### 3. School principals and school staff are given the choice to participate

- School principals and school staff are responsible for driving extension at the local level. Without their commitment, extension is unlikely to be successful or sustainable;
  - In the face of turnover, orientation sessions should be provided to new principals and staff members by school board personnel.

## Quick-Steps to CLC Extension

---

Some CLCs start off as extended models whereas others evolve to become one. Special steps/considerations for CLCs that began by serving a single school site are denoted below with an asterisk.

### Pre-step: Form a Leadership Team

Leadership teams are responsible for the development and oversight of the CLC. They are most commonly comprised of school principals (or vice principals), school board personnel and a community development agent(s). Each team can be additionally accompanied/supported by a member of LEARN's Provincial Resource Team.

### Step 1: EXPLORE

As a leadership team, explore the potential benefits of implementing an extended CLC model in your context. Consider the structural supports needed to succeed.

#### Core Tasks: Determine your shared purpose; develop a structure to support ongoing collaboration & accountability

- Develop a shared understanding of the CLC approach
- Get to know what is already happening in all schools – where are you beginning?
- Create a vision of the extended model in your context – what are the greatest shared or complementary needs/aspirations of your schools and community? How do you know this?
- Reflect on what it will take to maintain a collaborative approach across school sites – how often will the leadership team come together to assess and support the CLC's development?
- Establish supervisory mechanisms for CDA(s) – who will the CDA(s) report to? Who can the CDA(s) turn to for support on a day-to-day basis? How will the CDA's schedule be shared and monitored? How will CDA performance be assessed over time?
- \*Make room for development by reducing the CDAs workload at the originating site – what programs/activities can be maintained by others? What can be dropped?

#### Support Offered by Provincial Resource Team:

- Orientation to CLC Initiative
- Facilitation of priority-setting meeting with leadership team
- Mapping School-Community Connections

- Assessment of CDA's Professional Development needs and proposal to respond
- \*Assistance scaling CDA's existing workload

## Step 2: INITIATE

Schools are now ready to lay the foundation for an extended model – time to identify and engage internal and external stakeholders.

### Core Task: Determine who you will work with and how

- Orient local school staff to the CLC approach. Gather their input on the priorities identified by the leadership team
- Identify the community-based organizations that may be able to respond to priority areas identified in Step 1
  - Host first meetings with partners and extended model representatives to learn more about existing services and resources in your community
- Identify community forums that may be strategic/advantageous for the CDA to participate in
  - Begin participating in community forum(s) to see if they are a good fit
- Consider how resources and services will be integrated at each school site - who will be responsible for collaborating with the CDA and assisting with program supervision?
  - Host meetings with local staff members to establish complementary roles and responsibilities
    - Keep in mind that the CDA(s) cannot realistically supervise programs at all sites

### Support offered by Provincial Resource Team:

- Recommend and support custom strategies to engage internal and external and stakeholders
- Coaching/consulting support and professional development.

## Step 3: PLAN

Develop a strategic plan to address priority areas and leverage community-based resources and services.

### Core task: Develop a strategic plan

- Draft a 3 to 5-year plan for development
  - Reflect with people who can help to clarify assumptions and develop sound strategies – which internal *and* external stakeholders should be involved?
  - Research interventions that are likely to be effective in your context – what does the evidence-base suggest?
  - Consider how you will monitor change

- Consider the resources you will need to proceed - financial or otherwise

#### Support offered by Provincial Resource Team:

- Research/inquiry to develop evidence-based strategies
- Facilitation of meetings to develop a strategic plan

### Step 4: IMPLEMENT

The strategic thinking and planning phases are done, now you get to ACT.

#### Core tasks: Validate and begin implementing your plan

- Is what you have planned to do achievable given the timeframe and resources available?
- Do you have the human resources you need?
- Do you have the structures and support you need at each school site to implement well?
- Are external stakeholders committed to sustained collaborative action?
- Do you have systems for monitoring that enable you to know you are on track?
- Get started! Whenever possible, begin by duplicating desired services across school sites
- \*Some degree of implementation is likely to have taken place throughout steps 1-4. Now is the time to double-down on efforts to establish services at new school sites.
- \*Communicate regularly with CDA and originating site principal to ensure there is sufficient time for development of the extended model (CDA workload may need to be adjusted further)

#### Support offered by Provincial Resource Team:

- Monitoring tools
- Coaching/consulting

### Step 5: EVALUATE

#### Core Task: Reflect on your journey along the pathway of change.

- Capture & share results - tell the story of the difference you've made so far
- Surface what is helping you to succeed and what is holding you back
- Plan to move forward in your next phase of development

#### Support offered by Provincial Resource Team:

- Evaluation tools
- Coaching/consulting

## Top 5 Effective Practices for Practitioners

---

1. Choose what type of model fits best (single site, multi-site or extended model)
2. Set SMART goals (specificity breeds clarity)
3. Ensure *all* principals understand and support the CLC's vision
  - Establish mechanisms for program integration & supervision at local sites (that do *not* depend exclusively on CDA)
4. Enable CDA to have a physical presence at all schools supported by CLC
5. Start by bolstering connections *between* schools (especially amongst feeder schools)
  - Increase cross-school communication

**Watch out for these common pitfalls:** Extending too quickly to too many schools, mismatch between CDA hours and workload, little to no collaboration among school sites, CDA working in isolation from principals and school staff, CDA expected to maintain existing workload at the originating site while extending to other schools, no clear or active leadership, mission drift/confusion.

## More Information

---

Information provided in *The Practitioner's Guide to Extension* is based on findings from a developmental evaluation commissioned by LEARN's Provincial Resource Team in the fall of 2018.

For more information on extended CLCs, effective practices and common challenges, please consult the [complete report](#).

The report can be found on the LEARN website: Go to the *CLC page*, *How CLC's Help*, and click on *Show Key Documents*. Open the document called "CLC Extended Model Evaluation Report Fall 2018."

To discuss or request support related to extension, contact a member of the Provincial Resource Team by email at [prt@learnquebec.ca](mailto:prt@learnquebec.ca) or by phone at 450-622-2212.