

DRAFT

The Common Curriculum Framework

For

Digital Citizenship in Schools

National Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Basic Education

2011

Table of Contents

Contents	2
NOTE	3
Background	4
Introduction	5
Importance of Teaching Digital Citizenship	
New Literacies for the 21 st Century	
The Nine Elements of Digital Citizenship	
Organization of the Digital Citizenship in Schools Framework	
An Organizational Model	
Focus on Learning	10
The Student as Digital Learner and Digital Facilitator	
The Teacher as Digital Facilitator and Digital Learner	
The Technology Integration Team	
Links to Existing Curriculum Frameworks, Continuums and Standards Documents	11
Strengths of Existing Frameworks, Continuum and Standards	
Gaps in Existing Frameworks, Continuum and Standards	
General & Specific Learning Outcomes	12
Suggestions for Instruction and Assessment	42
Appendix	102
Sample Course Outlines for Grades 5-8 Digital Citizenship Core Curricular Area	
Glossary	
Websites of Interest	
Instructional Sites	
Web 2.0 Tools	
Professional Edu-Bloggers	
Curricular Sites	
Reference Sites	
References	110

NOTE:

This is a fictionalized document.

No funds have, as yet, been provided by the Canadian Federal Government, or by any of the Provinces or Territories. Also, none of these governing bodies have suggested that a common framework of Digital Citizenship outcomes would be beneficial to our country, to our education system and to our students and citizens.

For some sections I write as if I am the creator of this fictionalized document and for other sections I provide my opinions and ideas about how the section could be developed if this process were in fact real. Thus parts of this fictionalized DRAFT document are incomplete, as I am only one person and some sections would require a team of teachers, teacher-librarians and other interested parties to complete.

This fictionalized DRAFT document borrows heavily from the documents listed in the References section.

Background

The Common Curriculum Framework for Digital Citizenship in Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12, hereafter called the Digital Citizenship Curriculum, was developed by the ministries of Education in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, the Northwest Territories, the Yukon Territory and Nunavut. In April of 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper mandated the creation of this Common Curriculum Framework, and a committee made up of classroom teachers, teacher-librarians, instructional technology facilitators and other educators from all provinces and territories was given the task of beginning this process. Community advisory councils comprised of teachers, parents, administrators, post-secondary educators, business representatives and other community members had significant input into this curriculum framework.

Relevant and concise outcomes in Digital Citizenship are designed to prepare students for the new literacies of the 21st century. It is imperative for today's students to become high-functioning successful leaders in information and communication technologies so that they can meet the demands of the future. "The ability to use [technology] effectively enhances students' opportunities to experience personal satisfaction and to become responsible, contributing citizens and lifelong learners"

(The Western Provinces and Territories of Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan and Yukon Territory. (1998). *The Common Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts, Kindergarten to Grade 12*. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education and Training. p. vii).

Introduction

The Importance of Teaching Digital Citizenship

Ribble and Bailey point out that “because students have grown up in a society surrounded by digital technology, many teachers see their students as digital natives who already know everything there is to know about technology. . . . But the truth is, not all students are as technologically savvy as teachers might assume.”

“Over the years, users of technology have come together to interact with one another, creating, in effect, a digital society . . . [But] what are the appropriate behaviours in a digital society? How can an individual learn what is appropriate and what isn’t? These are big questions, and this [document] is an attempt to address them through a “teaching solution” called Digital Citizenship.”

Students “need to understand the digital technology we currently use and will likely be using in the future . . . [They] should [be able to] explore the frontiers and respect the limits of these technologies, . . . recognize [the technologies’] possible effects on [themselves] as well as others, . . . [and] evaluate how [they] have used them. . . . The focus of technology education should not just be on the programs or on the technology itself, but also on the appropriate use of technology: [it] should promote digital citizenship.”

(Ribble, M. & Bailey, G. (2007). *Digital Citizenship in Schools*. Eugene, Oregon: International Society for Technology in Education. Introduction, pp. 1-2.)

New Literacies for the 21st Century

According to Will Richardson, “the age of the Read/Write Web, [and] the explosion of information and online technologies demands a more complex definition of what it means to be literate. . . . We have [previously] defined being literate as being able to read and write. And although those core abilities are still central to learning, they are no longer enough to ensure understanding.”

Richardson refers to the “New Literacies” as the following:

- ✓ Students “need to be editors as well as readers. . . . editing means being a critical reader and viewer, not simply accepting what is printed.” (p. 126)
- ✓ Students “must be literate in the ways of publishing [and] we must then teach and model the ways in which ideas and products can be brought online.” (p. 127)
- ✓ Students “need to have the ability to work closely with others in virtual environments. [This] collaborative model [includes] literacies regarding communication skills and process.” (p. 127)
- ✓ Students “need to know how to manage the information that [they] consume. . . . Students will be required to collect, store and retrieve relevant information throughout their lives, and [they] need . . . the skills to do so effectively and efficiently.” (p. 127)

(Richardson, Will. (2006). *Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts, and Other Powerful Tools for Classrooms*. Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin Press A Sage Publications Company. Chapter 9, pp.126-133)

Asselin, Branch and Oberg list the qualities of “an information literate citizen” as someone who:

- ✓ “works independently and collaboratively to solve problems”
- ✓ “analyses information critically in all its formats and in all media contexts”
- ✓ “applies information strategically to solve personal and social problems”
- ✓ “makes decisions based on accurate and current information”
- ✓ “uses information and communication technologies”
- ✓ “respects information sources and diverse perspectives”
- ✓ honours intellectual property and privacy rights”
- ✓ appreciates the aesthetic qualities of various creative and scientific expressions” and
- ✓ “communicates effectively and expressively using a variety of information and media formats.”

(Asselin, M., Branch, J. & Oberg, D. (Eds). (2003). *Achieving Information Literacy: Standards for School Library Programs in Canada*. Ottawa, Ontario: The Canadian Association for School Libraries.)

These new literacies discussed by Richardson, the qualities of an information literate citizen discussed by Asselin, Branch and Oberg and the nine core elements of Digital Citizenship as discussed by Ribble and Bailey were all considered in the creation of this National Common Curriculum Framework for Digital Citizenship in Schools.

The Nine Elements of Digital Citizenship

Digital Citizenship as described by Mike Ribble and Gerald Bailey in *Digital Citizenship in Schools*, “can be described as the norms of appropriate, responsible behaviour with regards to technology use. As a way of understanding the complexity of digital citizenship and the issues of technology use, abuse and misuse, [they] have identified nine elements that together make up digital citizenship. Those nine elements are as follows:”

Digital Access:



“full electronic participation in society”

Digital Commerce:



“the buying and selling of goods online”

Digital Communication:



“the electronic exchange of information”

Digital Literacy:



“the capability to use digital technology and knowing when and how to use it”

Digital Etiquette:



“the standards of conduct expected by other digital technology users”

Digital Law:



“the legal rights and restrictions governing technology use”

Digital Rights and Responsibilities:



“the privileges and freedoms extended to all digital technology users, and the behavioural expectations that come with them”

Digital Health and Wellness:



“the elements of physical and psychological well-being related to digital technology use”

Digital Security:



“the precautions that all technology users must take to guarantee their personal safety and the security of their network”

(Ribble, M. & Bailey, G. (2007). *Digital Citizenship in Schools*. Eugene, Oregon: International Society for Technology in Education. Chapter 1, p. 10.)

Organization of the Digital Citizenship in Schools Framework

There are nine elements of Digital Citizenship (as described by Mike Ribble and Gerald Bailey in *Digital Citizenship in Schools*, 2007. See The Nine Elements of Digital Citizenship section for detailed descriptions). These nine Elements make up the components of the Common Curriculum Framework for Digital Citizenship as set by the National Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Basic Education, and are located in the outer circle of this organizational model.

The middle circle is composed of the seven Core Curricular Areas, namely English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Languages Other Than English, Health and Physical Education and Creative and Applied Arts. The innermost circle is made up of the Environments for Learning that Digital Citizenship has the most direct influence on, namely Home, School and Work.

It is important to point out that the three Environments for Learning overlap purposefully as it is the determination of the creators of this framework that in the future it will become difficult to distinguish learning done at home from learning done at school and learning done at work. If it were visually possible for the two dimensional model to appear three dimensional we would also have had the Nine Elements of Digital Citizenship overlapping one another as they are interrelated and interdependent. It is also important to note that the seven Core Curricular Areas should overlap as well because the infusion of any Digital Citizenship curriculum is best done when core curricular subjects are integrated to provide the greatest real world context for students.

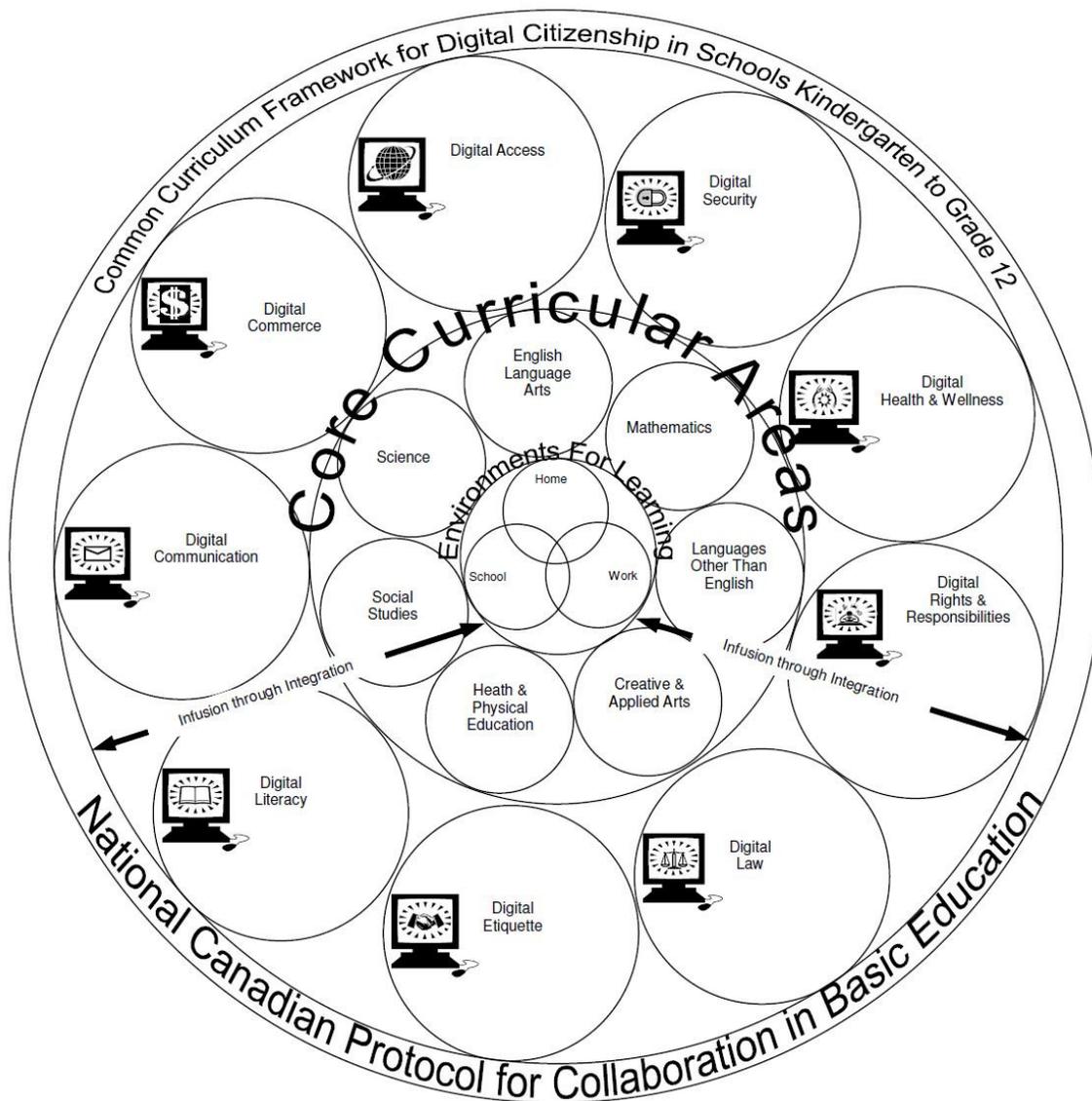
The intent of the creators of this framework is that the nine Elements of Digital Citizenship be infused into the Environments for Learning, through both effective integration in Core Curricular Areas as well as a newly developed core subject area known as Digital Citizenship and Literacy with ICT. Due to the fact that “the instructional program in the school library focuses on skills to support learning the curriculum and developing independent learning habits, [and because] the major learning outcome for the school library program is to develop students who are information literate,” we believe the new Core Curricular Area of Digital Citizenship and Literacy with ICT should be delivered by qualified teacher-librarians as part of their school library program (Asselin, M., Branch, J. & Oberg, D. (Eds). (2003). *Achieving Information Literacy: Standards for School Library Programs in Canada*. Ottawa, Ontario: The Canadian Association for School Libraries. p. 4).

This Framework describes the continuum of outcomes that the Digital Citizenship and Literacy with ICT Core Curricular Area will address from Kindergarten to Grade 12, and lists the skills, knowledge and values all students must have upon graduation from a secondary institution in Canada.

The many possible combinations of the nine Elements, the seven Core Curricular Areas and the three Environments for Learning can be examined and understood in less complex ways for earlier grades and in more complicated ways for higher grades,

thus by the time a student exits secondary school they will have a full understanding of how the nine Elements work in the many disciplines of the Curriculum and the various learning environments. This allows early grades to focus on combinations that are more applicable and contextual to early school children, such as internet safety at home, how to be polite when drafting an email and how their parents may use digital communications for work. Whereas high school students can examine more intricate combinations of the three levels such as issues regarding digital law and essay citation at school, digital rights and responsibilities with regards to charity work in World Issues class or how Digital Commerce affects job opportunities in the fields of Science and Mathematics.

An Organizational Model



Focus on Learning

The Student as Digital Learner and Digital Facilitator

Mark Prensky states that “Our students have changed radically. Today’s students are no longer the people our educational system was designed to teach. Today’s students – K through college – represent the first generations to grow up with [“the arrival and rapid dissemination of digital technology in the last decades of the 20th century”]. They have spent their entire lives surrounded by and using computers, videogames, digital music players, video cams, cell phones, and all the other toys and tools of the digital age. . . Today’s students *think and process information fundamentally differently* from their predecessors. . . Digital Natives are used to receiving information really fast. They like to parallel process and multi-task. They prefer their graphics *before* their text rather than the opposite. They prefer random access (like hypertext). They function best when networked. They thrive on instant gratification and frequent rewards. They prefer games to “serious” work.”

This is the reality of how our students come to us and how they learn. Students come to us with a wealth of knowledge and can often be our biggest sources for new and innovative ideas regarding technology. Teachers need not only recognize the new ways in which students learn and work, but also that they can become facilitators of learning for other students as well as for the teacher. Providing opportunities for today’s students to both present their knowledge in a collaborative setting and also facilitate the learning of their peers is imperative to individual and group success with ICT skills.

(Prensky, M. (Oct. 2001). Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants. *On the Horizon: MCB University Press*, 9 (5). Retrieved April 4, 2009, from <http://www.marcprensky.com/writing/Prensky%20-%20Digital%20Natives,%20Digital%20Immigrants%20-%20Part1.pdf>)

The Teacher as Digital Facilitator and Digital Learner

Technology as A Foundation Skill Area suggests that “in an [ICT]-enhanced classroom, the teacher’s role is that of a facilitator, rather than an expert. As facilitators, teachers

- ✓ assist students as they navigate through the information made available by [ICT] and other sources
- ✓ direct students as they gather, organize, analyze and present their findings and
- ✓ help students develop, focus, refine, consolidate and extend their abilities.”

Teachers need not fear ICTs or their own students’ knowledge of these technologies, but build upon, extend and refine their students’ knowledge and when appropriate provide opportunities for their students to facilitate the learning of others as well as use students’ knowledge as a means of learning about ICTs themselves. In this way the classroom becomes a learning community in which

all members have a stake in the learning process and all members contribute and benefit from the knowledge and skills of the other members.

(Manitoba Education Citizenship and Youth. (1998). *Technology as a Foundation Skill Area: A Journey Toward Information Technology Literacy: A Resource for Curriculum Developers, Teachers, and Administrators*. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education and Training. Available online at <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/tfs/index.html>.)

The Technology Integration Team

The Technology Integration Team shall consist of the school's Teacher-Librarian (or Teacher Librarians if the enrolment of the school demands there be more than one staffed at the school) the Instructional Technology Facilitator (which is to be deemed a separate and distinct position in each school and not simply a role that an existing teacher fills) and the Classroom teacher with whom the Teacher-Librarian and Instructional Technology Facilitator are working with at any given time.

The Government of Canada mandates that opportunities and funding be provided for the School Teacher-Librarian, the Instructional Technology Facilitator and the Classroom Teachers to team and co-teach to provide context and application to the learning outcomes outlined in the Digital Citizenship and Literacy with ICT course.

Links to Existing Curriculum Frameworks, Continuums and Standards Documents

Strengths and Gaps of Existing Frameworks, Continuum and Standards

In my opinion, one of the greatest strengths of the existing Frameworks, Continuum and Standards is the fact that they exist at all. The existence of these documents tells me that educators and government politicians have been communicating, that politicians have been listening to a certain extent, and that they do have the best interests of our students in mind. Although Manitoba's Technology as a Foundation Skill Area document is outdated, it does provide a base for current and future curriculum and frameworks to be built upon. The Manitoba Literacy with ICT Continuum is a wonderful tool and lays the developmental continuum of ICT learning out in a clear and concise manner that can easily be understood by any teacher. They also provide student friendly versions as well as a parent handbook to explain the continuum to non-educators. The NETS created by ISTE are clear and descriptive and provide a great base for the integration of technology skills into everyday classrooms.

In the fictitious creation of a National Common Curriculum Framework I am not suggesting that these documents are flawed, nor are they poorly comprised or inaccurate in their philosophies. To the contrary in fact, they are well written and based in sound research and educational pedagogy. I am however, suggesting that they are inadequate in their scope, and that there is no single document in

existence that encompasses everything I believe to be of significance to include in a Digital Citizenship and Literacy with ICT curriculum. I also believe that to ask classroom teachers to simply add one more thing to their ever increasing daily demands in order to accommodate the implementation of these separate documents is an ineffective way to infuse Digital Citizenship Skills and New Literacies for the 21st Century into our existing school framework.

These skills and literacies are of such great importance to student learning in the 21st century, that I believe it is imperative they not only be integrated throughout the Core Curricular Areas, with assistance provided to the teachers to accomplish such a task, but they should also be taught directly in a course designed to coincide with each grade's Core Curricular Areas and be delivered by a qualified and knowledgeable educator: a teacher-librarian. Ribble and Bailey say, "We need to provide active direction to students. With technology, we cannot assume that everyone knows what is appropriate and what is not . . . Even when students are comfortable using technology, they may not be using it appropriately" (p. 11 & p. 1). I believe one of the best ways to accomplish this is to create a specific nationally mandated Common Curriculum Framework that can bring together all of the wonderful documents already in existence into one comprehensive programme of study, and provide the appropriate funding to implement that programme properly.

General Learning Outcomes & Specific Learning Outcomes

For these two sections I would suggest that the creators use, combine and expand upon the following existing documents:

Asselin, M., Branch, J. & Oberg, D. (Eds). *Achieving Information Literacy: Standards for School Library Programs in Canada*. Ottawa, Ontario: The Canadian Association for School Libraries, 2003.

The Framework for Information Literacy on pages 9-17.

Alberta Learning: Learning and Teaching Resources Branch. *Focus on Inquiry: A Teacher's Guide to Implementing Inquiry-based Learning*. Edmonton, Alberta: Alberta Learning: Learning and Teaching Resources Branch, 2004. Available online at <http://education.alberta.ca/media/313361/focusoninquiry.pdf>

ISTE's NETS for Students found here:
[http://www.iste.org/Content/NavigationMenu/NETS/ForStudents/2007Standards/NETS for Students 2007 Standards.pdf](http://www.iste.org/Content/NavigationMenu/NETS/ForStudents/2007Standards/NETS%20for%20Students%202007%20Standards.pdf)

ISTE's Essential Conditions found here:
[http://www.iste.org/Content/NavigationMenu/NETS/NETSRefreshProject/Essential Conditions.pdf](http://www.iste.org/Content/NavigationMenu/NETS/NETSRefreshProject/Essential%20Conditions.pdf)

ISTE's Profiles for Technology Literate Students found here:

http://www.iste.org/Content/NavigationMenu/NETS/ForStudents/2007Standards/NETS-S_2007_Student_Profiles.pdf

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. *A Continuum Model for Literacy with ICT Across the Curriculum: A Resource for Developing Computer Literacy*. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education Citizenship and Youth, 2006.

The continuum located on the poster located at

<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/tech/lict/resources/posters/index.html>.

Ribble, M. & Bailey, G. *Digital Citizenship in Schools*. Eugene, Oregon: International Society for Technology in Education, 2007.

And other provincial ICT documents from other provinces.

Suggestions for Instruction and Assessment

The Digital Citizenship and Literacy with ICT skills, knowledge and values outcomes that the creators have developed should first be grouped into "learning experiences" for each grade level (as the Manitoba Social Studies Curriculum Document is organized). This would provide an easier to follow organizational structure to the document.

I would suggest that the creators then systematically link the "learning experiences" they have created with topics in each Core Curricular Area at each grade level in a section titled "Suggestions for Integration With Assistance" where the "assistance" is provided by various levels of collaboration with the Technology Integration Team such as guided integration, co-teaching and team teaching.

The creators should also systematically create coinciding "Suggestions for Instruction" that deliver the necessary skills, knowledge and values of Digital Citizenship and Literacy with ICT that students will need for the "Suggestions for Integration" section. This is the section that would make up the new Core Curricular area of Digital Citizenship and Literacy with ICT and be delivered as a part of the school library program by the teacher-librarian.

A third and separate section should also be included providing "Suggestions for Assessment" of the activities and projects recommended by the first two sections. It is important to note that assessing digital learning may require educators to rethink their current assessment practices, or at the very least cause their current assessment practices to evolve.

The three sections mentioned above could be laid out across a single open span of the pages of the document providing "Suggestions for Integration with Assistance," "Suggestions for Instruction," and "Suggestions for Assessment" for each of the learning experiences in each Core Curricular Area in each Grade.

Obviously this is what the majority of the time, effort and work would be dedicated to, as I recognize what I am suggesting is no small task. However once the document is completed, it would provide a wide-ranging yet detailed guide for educators across our country and thus accomplish the grand task of effectively integrating technology into all classrooms in Canada, and preparing our students to be good real and virtual citizens.

Appendix

Sample Course Outlines for Grades 5-8 Digital Citizenship Core Curricular Area

This is a section I plan to complete when I get a teacher-librarian position, as a proposal for my school and division describing just one of the aspects of the school library program I would like to implement. I believe strongly in the implementation of a program such as the one I described in this fictionalized DRAFT document: one that combines the current continuum and frameworks with the work of Ribble and Bailey, Richardson, ISTE and Asselin, Branch and Oberg, and thus will go forward with it whether or not Stephan Harper gives education 6 billion dollars!

Glossary

This section should be comprised of a combination of the glossaries found in Appendix A of *Digital Citizenship in Schools*, the glossary for the Manitoba Literacy with ICT Continuum found at <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/tech/lict/resources/glossary.html>, and the glossary found in *Technology as a Foundation Skill Area: A Journey Toward Information Technology Literacy: A Resource for Curriculum Developers, Teachers, and Administrators*, From Manitoba Education Citizenship and Youth, with obvious editing to exclude outdated terms and to include new terms. An electronic version of this glossary should be available online and be updated with new terms as they are invented and become common use.

Websites of Interest

I suggest that this section direct teachers and teacher-librarians to a Wiki set up by the Committee that created this document so that teachers, teacher-librarians and other educators across the country can view the authors' suggested online resources, but also share their own finds and share in the finds of others from across our nation. I also suggest that a Canadian version of the Classroom 2.0 Ning should be set up and as part of the implementation of this National Common Curriculum Framework for Digital Citizenship in Schools, all educators (including teachers of all subjects, administrators, teacher-librarians and resource and support staff) be required to join so they can share concerns, triumphs, questions, and ideas relating to this and other curricular areas.

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