

May 15, 2018

Dear Friends of the Powell River Public Library

Since the Library opened in its beautiful, new Crossroads Village location, we have seen amazing interest in the space, particularly from teens and middle age children. When we were in our new location, we did often see children and teens in the space on weekends, Pro-D Days, and school breaks, but we are now seeing dozens of kids in this age range using our public computers, and the library space.

We are happy to provide a safe and welcoming place to children of all ages, and have identified that the middle years children in particular, often need a place like the library to spend time in. But we feel like there is an opportunity to engage with these children on another level, which could help them learn new skills, interact with their peers, and create important connections with library staff and the library as an organization.

One tool we think would be valuable in providing a new engagement opportunity are Bloxels. Bloxels are a tool that focused on children in Grades K-8. There are a lot of tech tools available, but Bloxels, which are being used at libraries in Canada like Vancouver Public Library, are a tech tool which encourages hands-on learning and creativity. With Bloxels, kids with the blocks to create video games that they can actually play. The video games can incorporate history, social studies, puzzles, science and more.

Bloxels can also be used to inspire storytelling, which mean video games could also include opportunities to teach about plot, characters, story boarding and more.

Attached is a program focused on Bloxels was created and offered by the Vancouver Public Library. It would serve as a template for what I'd like to offer at the Powell River Public Library.

One of the great thing about Bloxels is because it is focused on being a tool for self-guided, interest-driven learning, it can be used as a drop-in program where students can discover and learn on their own, or as part of a designed program like the one from Vancouver Public Library.

The library is already seeing those interested in gaming spending a lot of time in the library, and using the Bloxels on a drop-in basis, or as a resource that could be easily taken out and set-up as needed, could allow the video game enthusiasts to build, create and play their own games, while also building new connections with the library

Because the library already has iPads, we would only need funding to buy the Bloxel sets. Bloxels can also be used with Androids, and other smart phones and tablets. I'd like to start off with 5 sets which could be purchased for \$449.95.

Bloxels would be a really amazing addition to the resources we offer at the Library and really target an age group that we feel are in need of more programming and engagement.