Library Spaces:
Reimagine with Any Budget

mdek12.org

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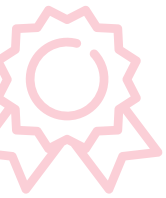
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1 **ALL** Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas

2 **EVERY** Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career

3 **EVERY** Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program

4 **EVERY** School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders

5 **EVERY** Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes

6 **EVERY** School and District is Rated "C" or Higher

VISION

To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens

MISSION

To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community

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To create collaborative relationships between school librarians and classroom teachers which transforms the school library program into a support system that strengthens the curriculum by bridging the informational literacy gap.

The AASL National School Library Standards encourage learners to:

INQUIRE
- Build new knowledge by inquiring, thinking critically, identifying problems, and developing strategies for solving problems.

INCLUDE
- Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to inclusiveness and respect for diversity in the learning community.

COLLABORATE
- Work effectively with others to broaden perspectives and work toward common goals.

CURATE
- Make meaning for oneself and others by collecting, organizing, and sharing resources of personal relevance.

EXPLORE
- Discover and innovate in a growth mindset developed through experience and reflection.

ENGAGE
- Demonstrate safe, legal, and ethical creating and sharing of knowledge products independently while engaging in a community of practice and an interconnected world.

Children without basic literacy skills when they enter school are **3-4 times** more likely to drop out later.

Reading to a child in an interactive style raises his or her IQ by over **6 points**.

15 minutes per day of independent reading can equals **1 million+** words in a year.

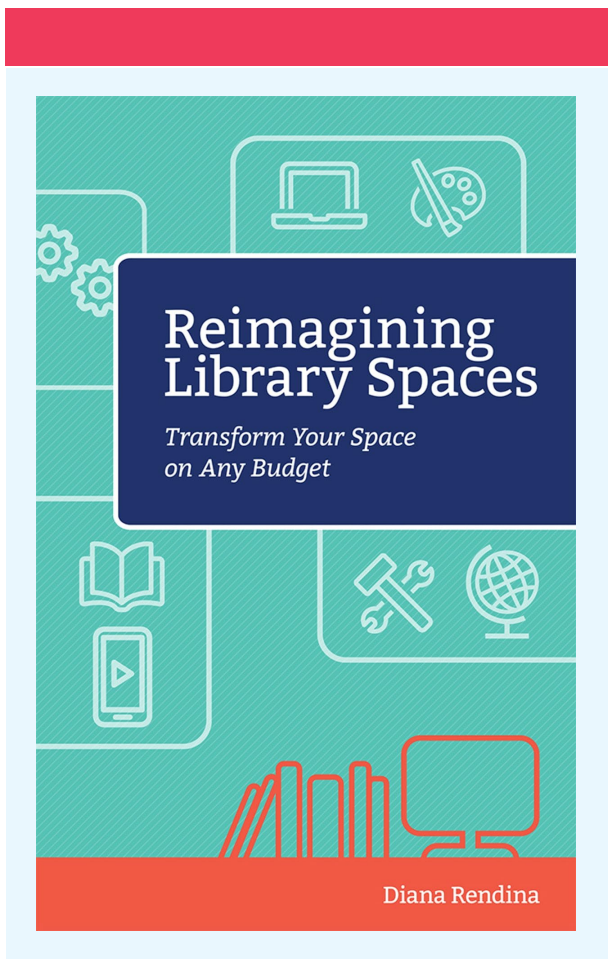Daily reading to children puts them almost **1 year** ahead of those who are not being read to.

Children who read 3,000 words per day will be in the **top 2%** of standardized tests.

Overview

Reimagining Library Spaces

Transform Your Space on Any Budget

Diana Rendina

This book…

- Gives tips and strategies for transforming school libraries
- Provides practical suggestions for finding ideas to improve your space
- Includes how-to's for addressing challenges

SCHOOL LIBRARIAN EVALUATION

Domain III: *Library Culture and Learning Environment*
Standard 6: Organizes the library resources and ensures equitable physical access to facilities while demonstrating high expectations and maintaining an environment that is inviting, safe, flexible and conducive to teaching and learning.

SCHOOL LIBRARY AUDIT

Domain III: Library Facilities
The school library shall be arranged to: (1) accommodate flexible access by classes and individual students; (2) perform basic functions of a curriculum integrated school library program; (3) provide a climate conducive to learning and student achievement; and (4) provide equitable access to information and resources within the school, community, and global networks.

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I.C.1-3: The school library provides learners opportunities to maintain focus throughout the inquiry process by: Creating and maintaining a teaching and learning environment that is inviting, safe, adaptable, and conducive learning; Enabling equitable physical and intellectual access by providing barrier-free, universally designed environments; Engaging with measurable learner outcomes and with data sources to improve resources, instruction, and services.

IV.B.3-5: The school library promotes selection of appropriate resources and tools for information use by: Employing a dynamic collection policy that includes selection and retention criteria for all materials within the collection; Implementing an administratively approved and endorsed policy that clearly addresses procedures for handling materials challenges; Designing and providing adequate space for library resources, services, and activities.

Even the most out-of-date, poorly designed school library has elements that work for students.

Design Theory

Learning Space Theory	Summary
Active Learning Theory	Focuses on creating a variety of learning spaces that allow students to engage in learning actively. Furnishings will include flexible, ergonomic, and mobile options. The area should include the following spaces: large group, small group, quiet study, community, technology, and makerspaces.
Thornburg's Learning Metaphors	Learning spaces should include four different zones that reflect how humans live and interact.
The Learning Common Model	A library space transformed in a way that includes collaboration, access to digital resources, and a flexible, user-centered learning space.

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The most important elements in an active learning space are supporting student choice, flexibility, and bringing the outside world in the classroom.

Flexible learning spaces help students to learn the four Cs: communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking.

Flexible Furnishings and Spaces	
Comfort	Aim for a variety of seating options to help with focus
Ergonomics	Provide multiple height options and adjustability to accommodate for student growth
Flexibility	Allow for students to be able to change the space to suit needs
Mobility	Needs to be light enough for students to move easily
Durability	Surfaces need to be easily cleaned and hold up for constant use

Small Group

Provide materials for brainstorming sessions or meetings

Large Group

An entire class should be able to comfortably work, move, and converse

Community

Could be the same as the large group area, but has the ability for presentations, meetings, or special events

Technology

Provides students space to utilize either their own devices or school-provided technology

Quiet Area

Students do need a quiet area for independent work or reading

Makerspace

Provides students access to hands-on materials to help them explore new ideas

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Thornburg applies four primordial learning metaphors (campfire, watering hole, cave, and life) to school libraries.

Campfire

Whole class instruction

The space should be able to transition between large group area and small group spaces

Watering hole

Small group area

Provide collaborative furniture to allow for small group meetings

Cave

Quiet working areas

Small spaces for one or two students will allow for independent learning

Life

Space for exploration

Makerspaces are a great way for students to tinker

A learning commons includes mindset changes, physical changes, and a virtual learning dimension.

Learning Commons Mindset

- Not so different from modern school library spaces
- Space should include the ability for collaborative learning, innovation, and creativity

Physical Changes

- Furnishings and layouts are designed to support and encourage collaboration
- Space should include the ability for students to work, relax, learn, create or do

Virtual Learning Commons

- Create a virtual learning commons that allows for 24/7 access to digital library resources
- Resources include database access, Web 2.0 technologies, discussion boards for book reviews

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1

Identify the different types of active learning spaces present in your library.

Does your library have all six types of active learning spaces? If not, what are some actions you can take to create those missing spaces?

2

Where are the four primordial learning metaphors present in your space?

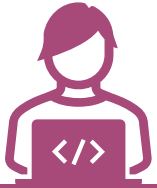Do students have opportunities to engage in multiple metaphors during your lessons?

3

What does your library space have in common with the learning commons model?

Are there aspects of this theory that could be woven into your space?

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Technology
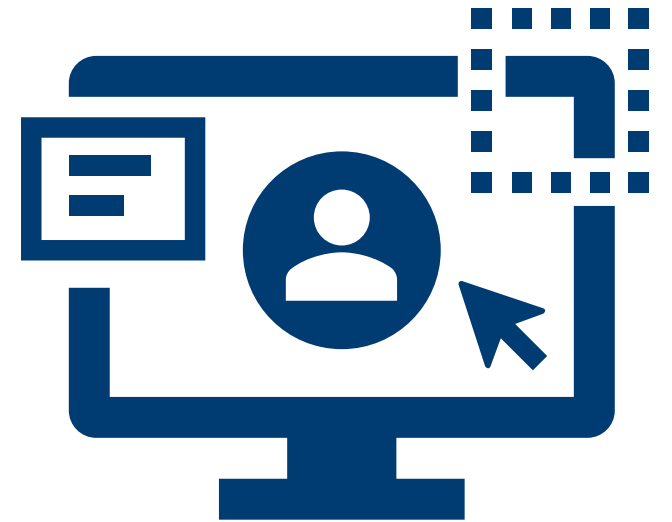
Traditional

Have enough computers for a full class with projector, screen, and presentation area

Collaborative

Computers are arranged in clusters with additional table space

Includes presentation area

TEAL Lab

Tables with monitors only to allow students to use laptops, tablets or other devices

Whiteboard tabletops for brainstorming and collaboration

Desktops vs Laptops

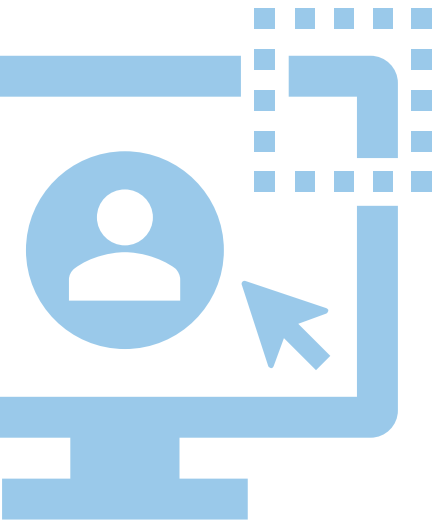How important is mobility and portability

How frequently will the computers be used

What about WIFI and outlets

Hybrid

Combines clusters of desktops with other technology stations

Can be used by individuals, small groups, and whole classes

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We need to design our libraries that they support both student-owned and school-owned mobile devices.

Charging Stations
- DIY charging stations can include a power strip with USB ports that is secured either in a container or to the wall
- Readymade stations can be wall mounted or free standing

Teaming Tables
- Table with a large-screen monitor and technology hub for device hookups
- Increases collaboration between students and teachers

Blended Library
- Various apps and tools can help blend mobile devices into the current library program
- Adding QR Codes to physical objects is a simple and effective way to communication to your students
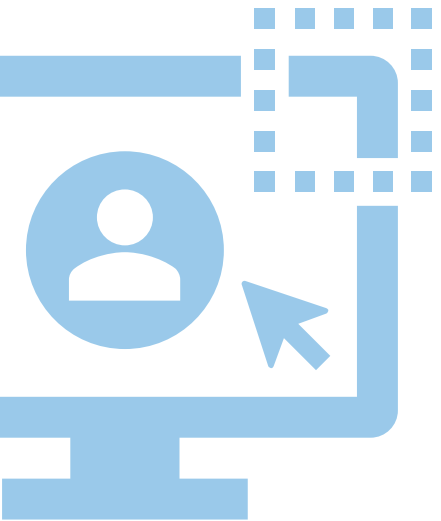
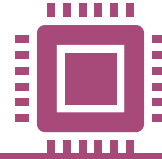**One common misconception about makerspaces is that they solely focus on technology.**
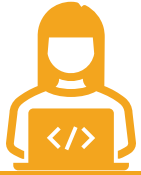
Coding

Code.org is a great place to start when introducing coding
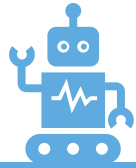
Robotics

Supports math, science, and computer science MS-CCR standards

Circuits

Ranges from snap circuits to sewable or paper circuits

3-D Modeling

Don't have to have a 3D printer

Tinkercad and Blokify allow students to create 3-D models

1

Which model computer lab fits in your space – traditional, collaborative, TEAL Lab, or hybrid

Could you make change to allow for more collaboration

2

Explore earning certification in platform or system your school/district uses

3

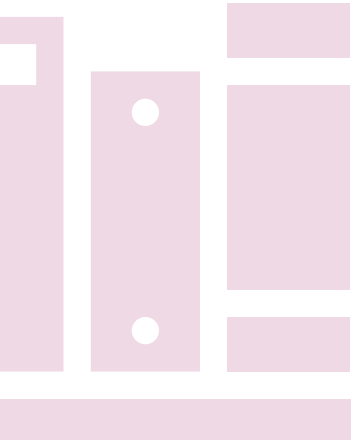Create a DIY charging station to support BYOD and 1:1 programs.

4

Create a book display using QR codes and encourage students to try it out with their devices
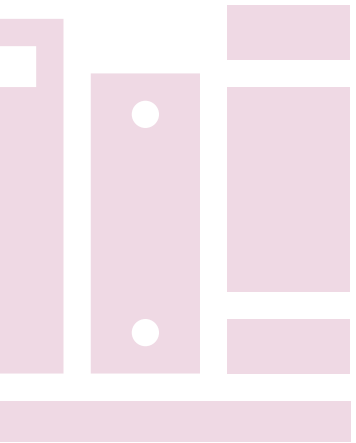
Taking Stock

There are easy changes that librarians can implement after observing how the current library space works and evaluating the available resources.

Librarians cannot immediately jump into making changes without thinking things through. Making these types of decisions can waste funds and create an unwelcoming environment for students and teachers.

The inventory will help you identify strengths and weaknesses in your library space. This is still an important step even if you been in your space for a long time.

Step 1: Create a Layout Diagram
A to-scale diagram will help you get a better idea of how the room flows and what you can change

Step 2: Observe Your Space Like an Anthropologist
Take note of the traffic flow, types of activities, interactions, resources, and users

Step 3: Get a Fresh Perspective on Your Space
Have another librarian visit your space during school hours to observe how students use the library

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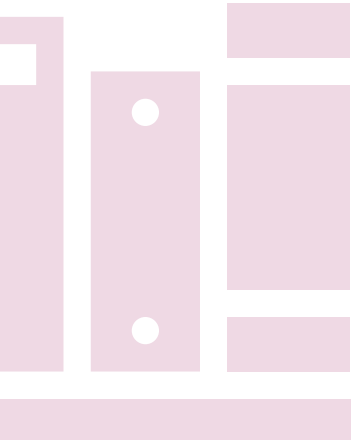
The school library exists to serve its community – the students, teachers, parents, and other people who visit and utilize the resources and physical space.

Survey

It is important to listen to the students and teachers during this process

Create a survey that includes a variety of question format as well as some open-ended questions

Focus Group

Your focus group should be your library advocacy committee plus – meaning add a few more parents, teachers, and students to the library design focus group
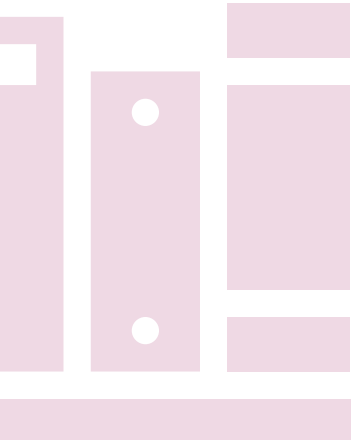
Design Team

You can turn your focus group into the design team

Designate a team member to be the reporter to help keep notes organized

Pick a design types: Active Learning Theory, Thornburg's Learning Metaphors, or The Learning Commons before moving forward

The key to design thinking is to empathize with whom you're trying to help and come up with possible solutions to their problems.
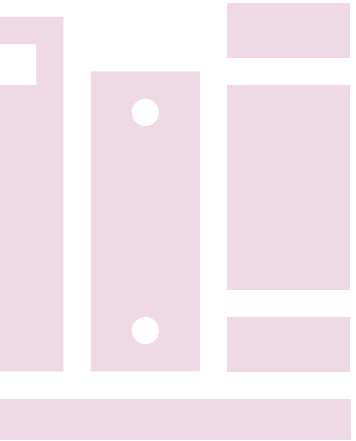
How does your new space tie into the library, school, or district's mission statements?

1

Create a layout diagram using Excel, graph paper or another tool

Spend time observing your space

2

Create and send out a survey to your students and teachers

Use a variety of formats and promote to get a broad student representation

3

Form a focus group to get more input

4

Create a library design team to help process the survey data and brainstorm how to transform ideas into actionable data

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Finding Inspiration

Visiting other locations in person is a fantastic way to gain ideas and inspiration for your library space.

Public Libraries

Signage and branding ideas

Student-friendly furnishings, story time areas, and technology labs

Academic Libraries

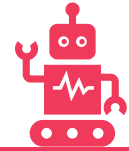Collaboration-themed areas

Charging stations

Museums

Interactive spaces and display ideas

School Spaces

Innovative spaces, creative classrooms, and lounge areas

Makerspaces

Organization

Resource access

Storage of in-process projects

Finding Inspiration :
Mood Boards

Dream Library

- Describe a typical day in your dream library
- Create a mission and vision statement for the dream library

Design Your Dream Layout

- Use the original template to create your dream layout
- Get students involved by having them use the original template the design their dream library

Write Library Wish List

- Create a wish list to have on hand
- Organize information based on the learning space with links to products

1

Visit at least one learning other than your school

Take notes on what you observe

2

Use Pinterest or Twitter to gather inspiration

Designate a location to gather and save your inspiration

3

Work with your library design team to create a mood board
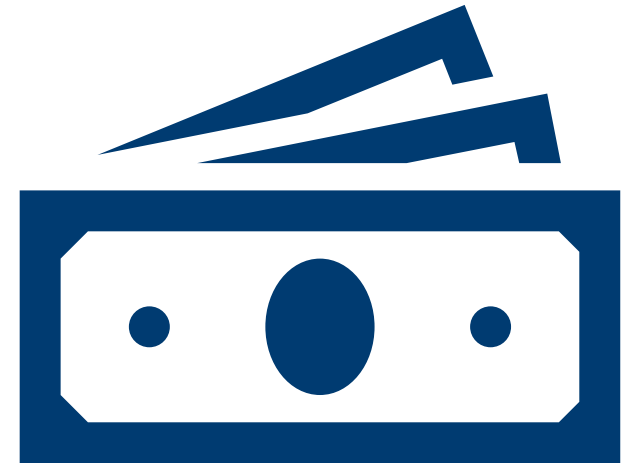
4

Spend some time brainstorming

Start creating a wish list and a list of changes

Budget-Friendly Changes

While free changes won't dramatically transform your library, they will go a long way toward creating a new mindset within your space.

Budget-Friendly Changes: *Free to Implement*

Practice Less is More

- Getting rid of the stuff you no longer need can work wonders
- Open space is important – so don't feel up all the empty spaces

Weed Your Collection

- Be systematic while weeding your print collection
- Check out the Weeding Guidelines: https://www.mdek12.org/LC

Use District Resources

- Find out if your district has a surplus warehouse where you can find things to repurpose
- Ask if maintenance staff or CTE classes can help with the transformation of the library

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Paint

Sprucing up your space with color and do wonders to boost student creativity and engagement

Writable Surfaces

Writable surfaces are great ideas for collaboration

DIY solutions are affordable and have great results

Whiteboard Paint

Whiteboard paint can transform a smooth surface into a writeable dry erase surface

Shower Board

Shower board is a white, shiny surface that can be written on with a dry-erase marker

Furniture

Retrofit traditional types of furniture with casters

Paint and fabric can update the look of furniture

Supply Drives

- A wish list (just like teachers) can go a long way in helping make budget-friendly changes
- Parents or community members can give supplies that are affordable and easy to source

Fundraisers

- Having a specific goal for your fundraiser will help build excitement
- Share the new materials that have been purchased

In-kind Donations

- Local businesses can donate materials in exchange for "free" advertisement
- This can include paint, office supplies, or surplus furniture as a tax write-off

Research and Design

Research everything about the grant organization

Design and tailor project to the organization's vision

Follow Instructions

Follow the rules set by the grantor

Focus on Student

Show what you are already doing in the library that fits with the goal

Don't Complain

Focus on the positive

A hopeful outlook will create excitement for your proposal

Proofread

Go over your proposal several times

Spell out acronyms

Explain concepts and pedagogy

1

Get rid of unnecessary furniture

Remove any broken or unneeded furniture

2

Weed your collection

Do a thorough evaluation of your collection

Condense and shift where needed

3

Prioritize what needs funding

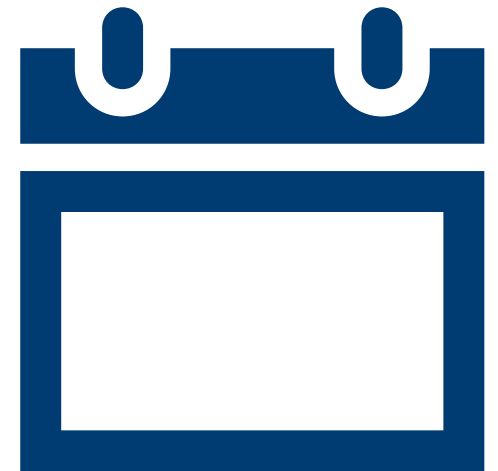Start working on items that can sourced through donations first

4

Look into grants

Find a grant that fits one of your goals

Long-term Plans

By creating a five-year plan and thinking through things like big ideas, district and school initiatives, technology, and funding, you can be more prepared for what might come your way.

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Your plan should detail where you expect your library program to go, and what you need to make that happen:

- Five-year Plan

- Vision and Mission Statements

- Needs Assessment

- Program Goals

- Measurable Objectives

- Projection of Future Needs and Growth

Big Ideas

Break down your really big ideas into achievable goals

District Initiatives

Find out how the school library fits into your school/district future initiatives

Technology

Think about the types of devices that will be used

Create a list of technology you want to add

Funding

Take into account how you will fund your transformation

Create an estimated budget

1

Make a list of really big ideas

Focus on two or three to start

Break into actionable steps

2

Start working on a five-year plan

Consider really big ideas, potential budgets, and funding sources

3

Advocate for your library as part of the district/school's initiatives

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Please include name, role, and name of school and district.

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