Designing Library Spaces That Work

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Purpose

1. To give you some basics to consider in library design
2. To give you some strategies to use with architects and administrators
Eater Junior High School, Rantoul
Donna Miner, K-12 Librarian
The entire library has lighting that goes full, 50% and even lower. Kids prefer the library to be at 50% light.
Students love the quiet room (we call it a sensory room because one small wall of it has textured formations for students who calm down by touching those textures). It is a VERY quiet room, kind of like a cocoon and they love it.
Students love the nook-type areas...
Library Design
Resources

- Estimating Library Space Needs
- Some Basics of School Library Design
A great new resource!

The Practical Handbook of Library Architecture: Creating Building Spaces that Work

by Fred Schlipf & John A. Moorman
Seating

- Tables
- Chairs
- Large-group
Central Elementary Learning Commons (Wilmette, IL)

Seating
Mahomet-Seymour High School, Mahomet, IL

Librarian – Lauren Ochs:

Having a dedicated instruction space with flexible furniture and built-in cameras that zoom automatically as the mics in the ceiling pick up sound is great. I use it anytime I collaborate with teachers and teachers can check out the space for guest speakers to join their class virtually. We also utilize it for teacher PD.
Hawthorne Elementary School, WI
(Demco Interiors)

Ann Antolini School, CT
(Demco Interiors)
Floor seating

Jericho Middle School, NY

Central Elementary Learning Commons (Wilmette, IL)
Sunset Ridge School

Comfortable seating

Sunset Ridge School
...our students LOVE these booths. They are comfy, feel private with the dividers, and they can work together or alone. These were on backorder when school started, so we had to wait a few weeks for them. The kids were sitting in them before they were even all wheeled in. That's right WHEELED in. The booths, my bookshelves, lots of tables and chairs are all on wheels which is wonderful!
Shelving

- Types
- Sizes
- Colors
- Quantities
Single-sided

Double-faced

End panels & canopy

All images: The Library Store

Shelving
No canopy
(Estey Photo Gallery)

Shelving on casters
Demco (Estey)

Book bins

Black Hawk Elementary School, MO (Demco Interiors)
Circulation desks

- Modular construction
- Configuration
- Book returns
- Surface
Clark-Pleasant Middle School, IN
(Demco Interiors)

Washington Elementary School, IL
(Demco Interiors)

Circulation desks
Hawthorne Elementary School, WI
(Demco Interiors)

Circulation desks

Worn surface
Sight lines

- Best arrangement of book stacks
- Glass walls & interior windows
- Exit control
Storage

- Shared equipment on carts
- Library stuff
Brandon Middle School, Brandon, MS
http://www.rcsd.ms/Page/35726

Fort Smith Public Library, Arkansas
http://www.fortsmithlibrary.org
Wiring & Lighting

- Outlets
- Bright, low glare lighting
- Uplighting
Monroe High School, NYC
(Di Domenico + Partners LLP)

Columbus High School, NYC
(Di Domenico + Partners LLP)

Can lighting (+ soffits)
Workrooms

- Sight lines
- Running water
- Space for equipment
Strategies

- Be proactive.
- Find a librarian friend, who lived through a re-model.
- Write a library program (not a plan). Describe how your library is used on a daily/weekly basis.
- Videotape typical activities (to make a trailer) or invite them to spend a day with you (of course, on your busiest day).
Strategies

◦ Convince “them” that your library is a very special classroom with unique characteristics.
◦ Ask a LOT of questions
◦ Review the schematic design
◦ Review the electrical construction documents to be sure the lighting and power supplies meet your needs.
Central Elementary Learning Commons, (Wilmette, IL)
Seriously BAD ideas

1. Inflexible design
2. Multiple entrances
3. Skylights
4. Unshielded windows
5. Seriously noisy neighbors
A flawed architectural design decision

1. Multiple Entrances
2. Open Ceiling
3. Noisy Neighbors

Booker T. Washington STEM Academy
Champaign, IL
Seriously BAD ideas

6. Combined school and public libraries
7. Weak floors
8. Funny-shaped rooms
9. Soffits
Q & A: What questions do you have?
Contact us!

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