

## **2-11-15 Planning for the Future of K-12 Libraries: Multi-functional Learning Spaces Q&A Log** **Questions from Live Demco Webinar as answered by Janet Nelson**

### **Funding**

#### **Q: How do people find the funding for these projects?**

A: In some cases, they are lucky enough to have a project that is supported by the school budget or a referendum. When that is not possible, we have seen a number of different funding sources for these projects ranging from fund raising undertaken by parent organizations to support from local businesses to the acquisition of grant funds and more. The best thing to do is to start with a plan that helps to define your needs and discuss what the outcomes of the change will be. It is much easier to get buy-in from others when they understand what the funds will be used for.

#### **Q: Are there grants and funding sources available to make these changes?**

A: There certainly are grants available though it may take a little work to find them. Take a look at the Funding Resource page to find some ideas that might work for you.

#### **Q: Any grants for overseas schools with Dept. of State affiliation?**

A: I am not sure what specific grants are currently available, but you can check our Grant Database to see if there is currently anything that meets your needs. <http://ideas.demco.com/free-library-education-grants-search/> Check back often as new opportunities come up all of the time. See our funding resources page for additional ideas.

### **Planning/Phasing**

#### **Q: Like a lot of schools, we have budgetary concerns in how to implement this transition. Thus, the transition will take several school years. What would you consider to be the 1 or 2 most important things to do first?**

A: The most important thing to do first is to develop a list of priorities and then create a plan. Demco Interiors has professionals who can help you through the process and work to develop a plan that can be implemented in phases. Address your greatest needs first as once you start to show success, you may find that the project accelerates.

#### **Q: I have to do a presentation to my superintendent on my vision for the library in the next few years. May I adapt aspects of your PowerPoint (terminology and images) in my presentation?**

A: You may certainly feel free to adapt these ideas and images for your presentation. Be sure to continue to research new ideas since technology and space concepts are constantly changing and you want to be sure to create the most updated space that you can. Demco's Ideas + Inspiration site [www.ideas.demco.com](http://www.ideas.demco.com) is continually updated with fresh, new ideas that you might find helpful.

#### **Q: Which stakeholders do you recommend inviting to the planning committee?**

A: You should identify your stakeholder groups and invite representatives from each group to be a part of the planning committee. It will be important to define how the input will be used and who will have the ultimate say, but a collaborative process will most likely yield a better space.

#### **Q: Do you suggest surveying the community, on what they would like to see the library evolve into?**

A: It is always a good idea to survey your community to see what their needs and desires are because your goal should be to create the most usable, inviting environment for your users. If you are able to utilize this input in your plans, you will probably find that you have higher use of your new space. Be careful in how you define your community though. In a school, you are probably talking about students, staff and administration. Occasionally you may need to address the

broader community if funding is at stake but I would start with your most immediate users and try to build your plans around their needs.

## **Technology/Makerspaces**

### **Q: Are makerspaces popular in elementary schools? What are some examples?**

A: This is a relatively new concept so there are not a tremendous number of examples, but just in the past year they have been rapidly implemented. The momentum in makerspaces was initially the strongest in middle schools but is now being adopted by all types of schools. Remember that a makerspace doesn't need to be elaborate. Many elementary schools have had activities for years, such as Lego Robotics Clubs which are definitely maker activities, it's all about hands on learning and shared experiences.

One of the examples that I showed in my presentation was from the Kaechele Elementary Library Learning Commons in Glen Allen, VA <https://sites.google.com/site/kaechelelibrary/literacy/makerspaces>. They referred to their space as a Tinkerspace. Another example is Mason Elementary School, Cedar Park, TX which has a very active makerspace and a lot of detail about developing makerspaces on their website <http://elemlibguides.leanderisd.org/mason/makerspace>.

### **Q: When the space is relatively small, 32'x64' can you still do segmenting?**

A: You do still have an opportunity to create different zones even in a small space. Obviously you will have to think on a smaller scale, but prioritize the spaces which will be of greatest use to your students and you don't necessarily need to include all of the spaces. Make them as flexible as possible so that you can adjust the use of the space throughout the day.

### **Q: Any ideas for spaces where students/classes can record audio without picking up each other's voices?**

A: I have seen closet or storage spaces used for this purpose. Putting in a door with a window is helpful for supervision. Acoustic foam can be attached to the walls to improve sound quality. While these spaces are not completely soundproof, they are a good, economical start.

### **Q: What technology do you suggest for grades K-5?**

A: I think that this is dependent upon what the greatest needs are in your school and what technology is already available for your students. From an extended technology standpoint I have seen elementary schools encourage extended reading and learning with e-readers, Lego robotics and even Minecraft clubs.

### **Q: How do I give my students access to i-pads in the media center?**

A: I am not exactly sure of the "question behind the question" on this one, but this will probably depend upon how the technology budget is allocated in your school and what equipment your school district is providing for students. Some school media centers have had the opportunity to purchase tablets specifically for use in the library and have carts that can be used to efficiently maintain and secure the devices.

## **Other Libraries**

### **Q: How do you see learning spaces applying to public libraries?**

A: Public libraries are the ultimate learning environment for all ages and have a more diverse clientele to serve. Having a variety of spaces available to meet the needs of different groups and the different learning modes is as important or more important in the public library. Many of the principles presented in this presentation could easily be adapted to the public library.

### **Q: Do you have a webinar on the topic for colleges and universities?**

A: At this time we don't have a specific webinar for colleges and universities but I find that many of the concepts cross over. You may also be interested in some of the other Spaces webinars that can be found at [ideas.demco.com](http://ideas.demco.com).

## Collection Guidelines

**Q: My library is currently grades 6-12 but will be adding 4th and 5th grades next year. Any suggestions about how to incorporate resources/books for younger grades in my existing small space?**

A: I am certainly not versed in collection development principles, but you probably need to take a hard look at what resources are being used and remove those that aren't being well utilized to make space. See if there is any resource sharing with organizations such as the state library or public library to gain access to additional databases and free up additional space if that is possible.

**Q: My state is working on a new ed specs for schools to use when planning new buildings. Any suggestions for how to handle giving guidelines for collection size (shelving space)?**

A: I cannot claim any expertise in collection development but the following link from the School Library Directory compiles a number of articles that might be helpful <http://www.sldirectory.com/libsf/resf/coldev2.html>. Be aware that guidelines may vary by state.

**Q: How could we choose what books we could get rid of?**

A: The link shown in the question above includes a number of resources on weeding policies. Weeding is a natural part of collection development and routinely evaluating your collection can ensure that your collection does not have outdated materials that can mislead students. This simple brochure has some basic guidelines that you might find helpful <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/lb/documents/weedingbrochure.pdf>.

**Q: Now that I've eliminated my reference section, what comes next?**

A: The next thing, if you haven't done it already, is to evaluate what you want to accomplish in your library, what are space needs to accomplish that and how it will meet the needs of your customers. You just freed up space and you want to use it to the fullest. If you aren't sure what you should do with the space you can try some experiments with the space using existing or inexpensive furniture to better understand the opportunities. Reach out to groups like Demco Interiors if you need additional help.

**Q: Should I "genrify" my library or keep with the Dewy Decimal System?**

A: There are many considerations and it may not necessarily be an either/or. If you aren't sure, you may be able to experiment a little with small parts of the collection before making a full commitment. In the school environment, you should also be looking at what the philosophy is across the district. As students move from one school to another in their educational journey there should be some continuity in the library system so that the students understand how to use the library and can build on their information literacy skills. Check with other libraries who have converted their collections to see how it is working for them.

**Q: With the move away from utilizing print resources in the school library, how do we promote the importance of books and how do we continue to be a viable source of support for staff and students?**

A: The real focus should be on connecting your students and staff to information that they need, in whatever form it may take. Depending upon your audience, books may vary in their level of importance, but by working with staff and students to understand their needs and create these connections, you will continue to be a relevant and important source of support within your school. Providing expanded hands-on activities and continuing to encourage good research skills you are proving a great value for your community.

## Furniture/Design Services

**Q: Is there inexpensive, flexible furniture that can be used to wall-off small sections in a large room?**

A: One of the best, most flexible pieces of furniture that can be used to wall-off small sections of a room is a mobile whiteboard or mobile tack panel. They tend to be pretty flexible and have improved greatly in appearance.

**Q: Can all the furniture presented here be found @ Demco?**

A: Most of the furniture shown in the presentation is from projects that Demco Interiors has participated in and some are examples from our UK division. Demco Interiors offers an extended product offering and some custom items so you will not find all of the products on the demco.com site. Some of the examples, particularly in the technology/makerspace portion of the presentation are not necessarily our products, but often we have very similar products available. Please contact our Demco Interiors staff by phone at 800.747.7561 or email [design@demcointeriors.com](mailto:design@demcointeriors.com) if you need assistance with these expanded offerings.

**Q: Does Demco do a site visit to give ideas and help estimate a cost?**

A: The Demco Interiors team starts by talking with you to gather information and better understand your needs. Through that interaction the representative will be able to determine that best way to meet the needs of your library. If it is necessary to send a representative to your site, that can be arranged. Once a plan is developed, budget pricing can be done and once all of the specifics are finalized, a final detailed quote can be generated.