

School Library Makerspace Resources

Q: Any suggestions for beginning a Makerspace in a school library?

A: I think the key thing is to designate an area for this function and identify students who are interested in tech, etc. to begin programming. You could partner with school robotics (FIRST robotics and FIRST Lego league: <http://www.usfirst.org/>), or anything low-cost and high-tech. In a school setting, you might be able to tap parent resources. Again, I recommend starting small, cultivating it with a target group of enthusiastic kids, and just schedule the heck out of it in order to make it busy and visible to really build momentum. Here are some websites that offer ideas, resources, and other resources to help schools get started in making:

- Make Magazine's guide for schools: <http://makezine.com/2013/08/21/stocking-up-schoolmakerspaces/>
- Makerspace.com's publication on creating a fully-stocked High School Makerspace: <http://makerspace.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/hsmakerspacetoolsmaterials-201204.pdf>
- Makerspace.com's publication "Makerspace Playbook—School Edition:" <http://makerspace.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/MakerspacePlaybook-Feb2013.pdf>
- Edutopia article: <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/designing-a-school-makerspace-jennifer-cooper>
- School factory: a non-profit dedicated to helping schools start maker and hacker spaces: <http://schoolfactory.org/about>

Q: So there are some great examples of public Makerspaces. School libraries tend to have less space, fewer resources (\$). Have you heard of any K-12 institutions with notable Makerspaces?

A: Here are a couple:

- Verrado Middle School's Ignite: <https://sites.google.com/a/lesd.k12.az.us/ignite/Space>
- Castilleja School: <http://www.castilleja.org/page.cfm?p=940386>
- Kaechele Elementary Library Learning Commons in Glen Allen, VA: <https://sites.google.com/site/kaechelelibrary/literacy/makerspaces>
- Mason Elementary School, Cedar Park, TX <http://elemliibguides.leanderisd.org/mason/makerspace>
- Stewart Middle Magnet School in Tampa, FL <http://renovatedlearning.com/our-makerspace-journey/>

Q: Are Makerspaces more for public rather than school libraries?

A: Quite to the contrary. In School Library Journal's recent School Library Technology Survey, participants indicated that 23% already had makerspaces and another 9% are planning to add them. In many cases, schools are conducting these types of activities on a daily basis and sometimes already have access to the appropriate equipment in other areas of the school.

Q: In a world of Common Core standards, how does a Makerspace fit into the elementary school library?

A: The Common Core Standards were designed to foster critical thinking skills and prepare students for the evolving 21st Century landscape of technology and innovation. The Standards challenge students to analyze, inquire, conceptualize, problem solve, create, and more. They also place an emphasis on communication and collaboration, as well as understanding and making strategic use of digital media. Makerspaces provide tools, resources, and opportunities to extend learning and cultivate these higher order thinking skills. Follow the link below to read about how Shannon McClintock Miller, Van Meter District Teacher Librarian and Technology Integrationist, used crafting to create a research project that evolved into a project with global impact. Start here and follow her archive posts through January to read the whole story: <http://vanmeterlibraryvoice.blogspot.com/2014/01/and-just-how-does-rainbow-loom-fit-into.html>