

Crestview Elementary Gaming Center

Facilities Redesign

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## Part 1: Library Space Evaluation

The Crestview Elementary School library is approximately the size of two classrooms, with shelves lining 3 walls and 3 additional shelves in the middle of the space. Through informal policy and formal design choices, Crestview has created a library that welcomes every student, including the youngest learners -- only 2 years old. Informal policy of the Crestview library encourages inclusion and access for all students through flexible seating, freedom of movement, and unrestricted access to the collection for even our littlest, most sensory dysregulated learners. The school librarian encourages students to find the book that's right for them, with no limitations on the choices that they make. Design decisions have included low shelving with forward-facing books for the picture book collection, which allows for easy browsing by students. The library also has multiple displays that are at eye level for preschool and kindergarten students, highlighting collections that might be relevant to their interests, the time of year, or things being studied in their classes. Other decisions include using shelving to create physical and visual boundaries for students; without these shelves, the Crestview library would be an "open floor plan" with no walls between it and the multiple hallways it intersects. This open floor plan could be confusing or unsafe to the young children that it serves. The thoughtfulness that the library has shown for young students and students with disabilities really emphasizes the library's commitment to equity, one of the core values from the Henrico County Public Schools' mission statement (Henrico County Schools Public Libraries, n.d.). By welcoming all students, the school library also reinforces the school's goal of creating a sense of belonging for every student (J. Childress, personal communication, October 2021).

This open floor plan was created during a school remodel completed 4-5 years ago. The library was significantly downsized at the time as well. Some of the impacts of this downsizing show how important it is for architectural decisions to be tied clearly to vision and mission, which should “ground your group’s dreams” (Center for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas, 2019, main section). This downsizing has made it more difficult for the library to have stations, makerspaces, and other items. Currently, centers must be stored in the librarian’s office as there is no space on the library floor. There is minimal “extra” space outside of the collection and a single whole class gathering space. This gathering space includes floor seating, 3 small tables, and 9 stools, as well as a projection board. There is also a cushion for seating at the other end of the room. When splitting into partners and groups, students can spread out in the library but typically must sit on the floor. Additional space to tinker, explore, and be curious in small groups and partners would enhance the library’s ability to “empower students to Think, Create, Share, and Grow in the school library as they learn to harness curiosity, model responsibility, inspire exploration, promote creativity, and deepen understanding” (Henrico County Schools Public Libraries, n.d.).

Across from the library is an additional space. It is approximately 150-175 square feet. During the remodel, this space was designed to serve as a flexible addition to the library space. It currently holds one table with six stools, as well as floor seating in a modular couch format. This space has been used for short term activities, including the book fair, Christmas mother canned food drive, or 1:1 tutoring or mentor sessions. It is currently disconnected from the library. One difficulty with creating an easy path between the library and this space would be

the need to open up one wall of shelving. This would create another entrance to the library that does not have a door, which can be a safety hazard.

## **Part 2: Facilities Redesign Plan**

The proposed redesign would transform the current flexible space into a functional class or group setting that could be used by the school librarian, classroom teachers, after school groups, or other purposes. Currently, this space is not used to its potential within the school or library environment. Nonfunctional furniture would be removed from this space. It would be replaced with a combination of heavy duty shelving and flexible seating furniture. Shelving would consist of different types of shelf spaces to accommodate the variety of realia that is not currently able to be housed within the library's collection due to space limitations. This would include the new game collection, as well as STEAM materials, teacher kits, and similar items. Additionally, shelving would be shifted in the current library to create a doorway that faces this flexible space, allowing for the librarian and/or librarian assistant to monitor individuals or small groups as they use that space.

First, this redesign would create an additional space for whole class gathering within the library with a wider variety of seating options for students. The library would additionally be able to use shelving and flexible seating to create mobile or permanent stations, makerspaces, etc, which would allow the introduction of the gaming and STEAM activities. This gaming center would expand options for students to “think, create, share, and grow” as they work and play in small groups (Henrico County Schools Public Libraries, n.d.). Libraries are not only about books, but about a wide variety of activities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem-solving. The addition of the gaming collection reinforces these values, but it is the redesign of this space

that makes the gaming center a possibility. It would also allow for the small group intervention and enrichment during library activities to strengthen reading, mathematics, and a sense of belonging in alignment with the school continuous improvement plan (J. Childress, personal communication, October 2021). The flexible seating would allow for the librarian and teachers to meet the sensory regulation and learning needs of individuals, rather than students finding floor seating wherever they can. Additionally, the use of dividers would ensure the library can continue to create visual and physical barriers, while maintaining flexibility for the way those needs may change with different groups. Flexible seating and flexible space design both support the Henrico value of equity in the library (Henrico County Schools Public Libraries, n.d.). The mobile teaching cart would encourage teacher check out, leading to the integration of gaming and STEAM activities into daily curriculum. As we return from COVID-19 and evaluate our next steps to achieving these goals, this redesign is surely relevant to the strategic mission and should be targeted this year (Moran & Morner, 2018, p.81).

**Action Plan**

Month	Step	Person Responsible
December	1. Order furniture from Lakeshore.	Office staff and librarian
	2. Surplus current floor couch from space.	in collaboration
	3. Shift library’s mobile shelving in the library to close doorway facing classrooms in favor of doorway closer to	Custodial staff and librarian in collaboration

	the flexible space.	
<b>January</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Lakeshore furniture arrives.</li> <li>5. Create “walls” in the flexible space with shelving. Insert trays.</li> <li>6. Place additional furniture and rugs.</li> <li>7. Place dividers as needed to create walls within the library or flexible safe to maintain visual boundaries for students.</li> </ol>	Custodial staff and librarian in collaboration

**Budget**

	#	Cost / Item	Cost	Total
<a href="#">Flex-Space Collab Floor Work Space Bundle</a> Small round table with four flex seats near floor	2	568	\$1,136	\$1,136
<a href="#">Heavy Duty Mobile Teaching Cabinet</a> Mobile cabinet for traveling games / activities	1	699	\$699	\$1,835
<a href="#">Heavy Duty Shelves &amp; Trays Storage Unit</a> Flexible shelves for different type of game storage	4	499	\$1,996	\$3,831
<a href="#">See-Inside Storage Trays - Set of 6</a> Trays to be used with the above shelves	5	64.50	\$322.50	\$4,153.50
<a href="#">Flex-Space Teardrop Beanbag Seats</a>	4	89.99	\$359.96	\$4,513.46
<a href="#">Calming Colors Easy-Clean Room Divider</a> Flexible, movable room dividers	2	159	\$477	\$4990.46
<a href="#">Flex-Space Comfy Round Classroom Carpets - 6'</a>	2	169	\$338	\$5,328.46

<a href="#">Flex Space Double Sided Teaching Easel</a> Easy to move and collapse teaching easel	1	499	499	\$5,827.46
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All listed items are from Lakeshore Learning, which offers heavy duty furniture that comes with a lifetime warranty.

### Reference List

Center for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas. (2019). *An overview of strategic planning or “VMOSA” (vision, mission, objectives, strategies, and action plans)*. Retrieved January 26, 2020, from Community Tool Box website:

<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/structure/strategic-planning/vmosa/main>

Henrico County Public School Libraries. (n.d.). *Home*. HCPS Libraries: Growing lifelong readers, transforming learning. Retrieved Saturday, February 20, 2021.

<http://blogs.henrico.k12.va.us/hcpslibraries>

Moran, B. B., & Morner, C. J. (2018). *Library and Information Center Management* (9th ed.).

ABC-CLIO.