



Who wouldn't want to empower their students in program planning and see them become leaders within the space?

Think, Create, Share, and Grow in Your Library Space This Spring

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School librarians all over the country are looking around at library spaces and wondering whether some small changes could be made to improve student learning, provide easier access to resources, and create a more welcoming place for students and teachers. This issue of *KQ* is all about different ways to adapt and use physical and virtual library spaces. Spring is a wonderful time to begin thinking about how a school library can grow to meet the needs of its users. The process is about changing the way you think about the services and resources you provide. It's about being OK with getting out of your professional comfort zone to adapt to your students' needs. It's about creating a student-centered library space in any way you can.

AASL's *Library Spaces for 21st-Century Learners: A Planning Guide for Creating New School Library Concepts* focuses on employing user-based design strategies to plan school library spaces and describes the process of gathering information, planning a new space, creating a needs assessment, and adding aesthetic components. If you are considering making a major change in your library, this title is a must-have.

In this issue each author focuses on student learning and student needs but from different perspectives. Whatever kind of library you have, we encourage you to discover at least one small thing you can do to improve your space or your library program this spring. You don't need to ask permission to make this change or involve maintenance in a major renovation. These changes could revolve around improved flow, usability, who you work with, how you interact with users, which resources you purchase,

and the look and feel of the library space. What can you do to help your users more effectively think, create, share, and grow?

This issue is filled with information on makerspaces and learning commons and opens with "Teen Experts Guide Makerspace Makeover" by Colleen Graves, who shares her learning commons transformation and how her Teen Advisory Board helped her create makerspace workshops.

David Loertscher and Carol Koechlin share a preview of their online article "Climbing to Excellence—Defining Characteristics of Successful Learning Commons." The goal of the learning commons is to provide a single centralized location for all users to get help on the complex issues of teaching, researching, and being a student or teacher today. A powerful theme in the article is the authors' view of the learning commons as a bridge between school and the real world—a wonderfully descriptive and accurate representation of what is happening in successful learning commons today. The full text of this fascinating article is available as an online exclusive on the *KQ* website.

This year we've heard many whispers about creating quiet spaces in the library. Thinking about the introverts and extroverts when looking at the school library space can effectively address the needs of the entire student body. Ray Palin shares his techniques for creating quiet spaces—without structural alterations—in the middle of the collaboration, multimedia projects, and makerspace workshops in an existing school library's often noisy learning environment.

Heather Turner talks about enlisting student iStaff members as a method of increasing student ownership and investment in the school library program. Who wouldn't want to empower their students in program planning and see them become leaders within the space?

Creedence Spreder and Matthew Lighthart work together in a public library/school library shared space where the mutual benefits of this partnership extend far beyond the walls of their libraries as both programs have positive impacts on their community.

In "From Drab to Fab" Jessica Gilcreast describes her long-term efforts for changing an old, unfriendly library into a new space for learning and discovery as she watches, listens to, and learns from her teachers and students. She also shares several clever ideas that could be introduced immediately.

Lindsay Cesari fills her library with happy, healthy students primed for academic success by "Arranging a Library to Support Adolescent Development."

Beth Ebenstein Mulch shares how she turned library orientation into an audio and visual walking tour through the use of iPads and augmented reality. Find out how she and her student collaborators did it and what her new students think of the orientation process now.

Sara Kelley-Mudie describes ways that a school librarian can impact learners by embedding herself into classrooms for teaching, making "library skills" part of everyday learning and, at the same time, enhancing the usefulness of quiet traditional library space valued by many students.

Sue Kowalski writes about her plans to support teachers and learners during a year-long major renovation of the entire school and to plan effectively for the new library space. She also envisions ways that her iStaff student volunteers can build on their successes and help with the transition as they further develop their leadership skills. This article is available as an online exclusive on the *KQ* website.

Leslie Cartier discusses her successful efforts to create a flexible learning commons for elementary students and change students' and teachers' perceptions and use of the school library. She shares how improving the physical space led to transforming learning.

Ellen Lawrence encourages school librarians to "break out of the library" as she describes how to strengthen library programs by developing innovative and collaborative partnerships and working with teachers and classes in creative new ways that won't strain the library budget.

Lucy Santos Green and Stephanie Jones guide school librarians through the process of developing and delivering online courses, an ideal delivery method for instruction in digital literacy and information literacy. This article is available as an online exclusive on the *KQ* website.

If creation of virtual spaces intimidates you, Rebecca Buerkett offers several easy-to-implement ideas for creating a virtual library space to extend library services outside of the school library walls. This article is available as an online exclusive on the *KQ* website.

April is National Poetry Month, and in "Make Space for Poetry" Wendy DeGroat teaches us to create a poetry collection filled with varied voices that our students will read and make connections with through their own lives. This article is available as an online exclusive on the *KQ* website.

Finally, Caitlin Ahearn melds the virtual and physical spaces as she explains how to create instant access to virtual resources through QR codes strategically placed around the school library. She shares what she learned from the experience and provides easy-to-follow instructions for creating signs and shelf labels that include QR codes.

School libraries are changing and growing this spring. We imagine our students finding new information, working together on DIY projects, and finding their own comfortable spaces within their school library. Creating library spaces where our students can think, create, share, and grow is a realistic goal for all school librarians.

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Recommended Resource:

Harland, Pam. 2011. *The Learning Commons: Seven Simple Steps to Transform Your Library*. Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited.