introduces TOUCH

A SCHOOL SPACE UTILIZATION RESOURCE GUIDE
The Imaginarium believes that space, time, technology, and community contribute directly to creating successful learners. The mission of the Imaginarium, Denver Public Schools’ Innovation Lab, is to stimulate and support innovation across Denver to transform learning and education systems.

To complement our innovative work in personalized learning, the Imaginarium is helping schools and teachers think about space and its impact on learners. Re-imagining physical spaces makes the intangible tangible - helping educators, students, and leaders represent, touch, and connect to their visions for learning.

Space Redesign is not easy, and Denver Public Schools’ processes are not easy to navigate. We have created this document as a resource for DPS teachers and principals hoping to enter the world of space redesign.
Why does space matter?

9 Ways that the Environment Affects Learning

- Blending physical and digital infrastructure to seamlessly support learning increases student engagement.
- Good air quality is directly related to fewer absences.
- Colors boost creativity and attention to detail.
- High quality facilities can increase teacher retention.
- Daylight boosts student learning progress.
- Seeing the outside world helps focus.
- High ceilings are associated with higher creativity.
- Operable windows promote student progress.
- Carpeted flooring = noise-free concentration spaces.

Student attitudes become more positive after a move to a new school building. Students feel significantly safer, more proud of their space, and excited about school.

Light Touch: If you are only planning on buying a few pieces of new furniture for a classroom or other school space. Light touch consists of multiple categories of resources ranging from articles on why to redesign your space, to programs for floor designs, and websites to purchase furniture. **We recommend that you explore all the resources provided before beginning any level of design.**
Light Touch: We recommend this level of design if you want to make small changes to your classroom and school space to impact learners. The hallmark of this design level is “do it yourself.” You implement the changes you have been inspired to make, with the use of the below resources.

Step #1 Start with Empathy
Data Empathy data is collecting information about what your end user thinks and feels about a specific topic. Before you began a redesign, you should begin why you are doing it, and what users of the space think.

- Self-Assess- Think about the instruction style that happens in the room, and how in your design you can help that instruction.
- Consider asking your students what they want their classroom to look like by giving them a quick survey.
- Consider asking parents what they think their students would benefit from in a classroom space in a quick electronic survey.

Once you gather this information, use it to influence how you design your space, potential layout, or the furniture you purchase.
Step #2 Get organized and inspired Now that you have your empathy data done and have an idea of what you and your users would like to see, check out these resources to organize your ideas and get inspiration.

Explore:  
Pinterest - Pinterest is a creative website to share ideas and get inspiration. Create a Pinterest account. We recommend searching: classroom organization, classroom design, and classroom decor.

Stockholm’s School without Classrooms - A photo blog example of radical school redesign. Consider what you might borrow from this model.

Read: Check out Edutopia, a great resource of education professionals sharing their resources and real life classroom experiences. The below blog posts are helpful in understanding and getting inspiration space design.

- Visualizing 21st-Century Classroom Design
- 8 Tips and Tricks to Redesign Your Classroom
- Classroom Redesign: Students Take On the Challenge

Every Space Tells a Story - A blog post describing the ways in which physical space can be leveraged to support innovation and student-centered learning.
How to get your students involved - An article describing 16 ways to get students involved in your classroom redesign.

Make Space - a book based on the work of the Stanford University d.school, it is a tool for helping people intentionally manipulate space to ignite creativity.

Watch:
* Take a video tour of the Imaginarium’s Classroom Redesign at High Tech Elementary Flexible Learning Environments* A video highlighting the ways Eanes ISD has explored the connection between an active, flexible learning environment and student learning.

How would you design a school? A TED Talk asking how the greatest innovators of our time would approach the task of designing a school - would they design a stand-alone classroom?

Extreme Classroom Makeover (click “sign in” in the top right corner to watch on YouTube).

Step #3 Prototype your space
You have tons of ideas, now it’s time to put them on paper! Use the below resources to get your great ideas laid out so you can share and gain input from your school community.
Design: Sweet Home 3D - program for designing floor plans and 3D models

Scholastic Class Set-Up Tool - Virtual layout tool

Edtech Designing Your Classroom - Classroom Design Application

Sketch Up - Free 3D modeling software

Step #4 Go shopping
Now that you have an idea of how and what you want to add to your space use the resources below to source low to medium cost school furniture.

Purchase:

Officescapes - School and office furniture procurement website

Ikea - Swedish furniture store with budget friendly solutions for furniture and storage

Worthington Direct - School and office furniture procurement website

Amazon.com - One of the largest online shopping websites in the world. We recommend you search classroom furniture, classroom seating, classroom organization

Wayfair.com - great resource for school furniture and responsive helpful online support
Roles

Get your team together! We suggest for Medium and High touch projects that you get a team together. To the right are some of the roles we’ve found useful in the design process. Some may be less time consuming in the Medium touch and therefore multiple roles can be covered by one person, but it is important for a smooth-running project that all responsibilities are covered.

- Project Manager/School Design Lead - Communication lead, ensure that project plan is being updated and deadlines are being met, communicate weekly with school contact (High touch), organize and assist in scheduling, bid out project to contractors (High touch)
- School Contact - Responsible for communicating all decisions and representing the voice of the school (typically principal)
- School Facilities Contact - Facilities manager or staff, important when scheduling school access for work
- Room Lead - Point person on specific room (typically teacher)
- Empathy Lead - Responsible for determining ways to collect empathy data and discover ways to maximize student voice in the process
- Innovation Partner - Lead Imaginarium member, ensure that space design aligns with school goals (only necessary for high touch)
- DPS Facilities Contact - At First Call, generally the project manager assigned through First Call
Medium Touch: We identify Medium touch as bringing in our Space Design Lead to assist with the design process. Medium touch can be a complete overhaul of a classroom or multiple classrooms; however, it does not include any contractor work.
Medium Touch (Imaginarium School Clients Only)
In Imaginarium Medium Touch Design our Space Design Lead assists with the design process for client space(s)*. Medium touch projects do not require contractor work.

Step #1 Initial consultation
- IP assists the school design team in space identification, principal permission, and in collecting teacher and student empathy data concerning the space needs, pain points, and desires
- School Design Lead measures and assesses current space

Step #2 Create project plan and timeline
- Identify roles for space design - Project Manager/School Design Lead, School Contact, School Facilities Contact, Room Lead, Innovation Partner

Step #3 Design team creates budget, project plan, and timeline
Invite students, parents, community members to work with the school design and IP leads to create their ideal space

Step #4 Design presentation
- School Design Lead presents floor-plan and design
- Evaluation of design with school design team

Step #5 Purchasing
- School Design Lead to source furniture and create purchasing document
- IP and school design team to procure all items
High Touch: This level of design will always include Denver Public Schools Facilities Department, and must adhere to the deadlines put in place by their department. Proper work bids, ADA and sustainability compliance are required and projects may take 1 year to complete.

Examples of High Touch Design:
Removing or replacing a wall, custom furniture, electrical, flooring, built-in furniture removal or construction.
High Touch (Imaginarium School Clients Only)
For all Imaginarium led High Touch Space Designs a Space Design Lead assists with the design process, and a contractor is required for construction.

Step #1 Initial consultation
- IP assists the school design team in space identification, principal permission, collecting teacher and student empathy data concerning the space needs, pain points, and desires
- School Design Lead measures and assesses current space

Step #2 DPS facilities meeting
- Imaginarium Space Design Lead to contact DPS First Call about construction project - First Call Construction Procedures

Step #3 Create project plan and timeline
- Identify roles for space design - Project Manager/School Design Lead, School Contact, School Facilities Contact, Room Lead, Innovation Partner, DPS Facilities Contact

Step #4 Design team creates budget, project plan, and timeline
- Invite students, parents, community members to work with a design professional to create their ideal space

Step #5 Design presentation and evaluation
- School Design Lead presents floor plan and design
- Evaluation of design with school design team
- DPS First Call and Design Team to approve a budget, floor plan and design by December 1st
- School Design Lead and DPS First Call to bid out work and secure contractor by January 1st
Step #6 Work begins
• Construction to begin no later than the week following school’s last day
• Construction updates to be sent to school contact weekly
• Construction to be completed no later than 1 week before school’s official start date

Step #7 Purchasing
• School Design Lead to source and create purchasing document for any non-construction furniture
• IP and school design team to procure all items
• Contractor to order all supplies by end of March

Step #8 Completion
• School Design Lead to source and School Design Lead to contact DPS Facilities and Contractor to complete Walk-through for space
All Medium and High Touch projects will include project plan
All funds need to be spent by June 30th (take note of yearly tech, furniture, and other deadlines)
DPS First Call/ DPS Facilities approval must be completed for all High Touch projects by December 1st
Initial contact to completion will take approximately one calendar year for all High Touch projects
School contact will be updated via email and construction project plan once a week from beginning of project until final walk-through
DPS Facilities Standards Guide
A SCHOOL SPACE UTILIZATION RESOURCE GUIDE
BY THE IMAGINARIUM