



FUTURE READY FRAMEWORK:
**Learning Space Design
Making and Building**

IT ALL BEGAN WITH AN EMPOWERED LIBRARIAN:

ONE SCHOOL'S JOURNEY TO A
21ST-CENTURY LIBRARY SPACE AND
INSPIRED STUDENT LEARNING

"I love the new updated library. Mrs. Drenka worked hard to make decisions with what to put in the new library that would benefit us. One of the reasons that I love it so much is because I see how the students appreciate it. We all look forward to going to the library and thoroughly enjoy sitting in the new modern furniture to read. The library is a cool place to spend our time!"

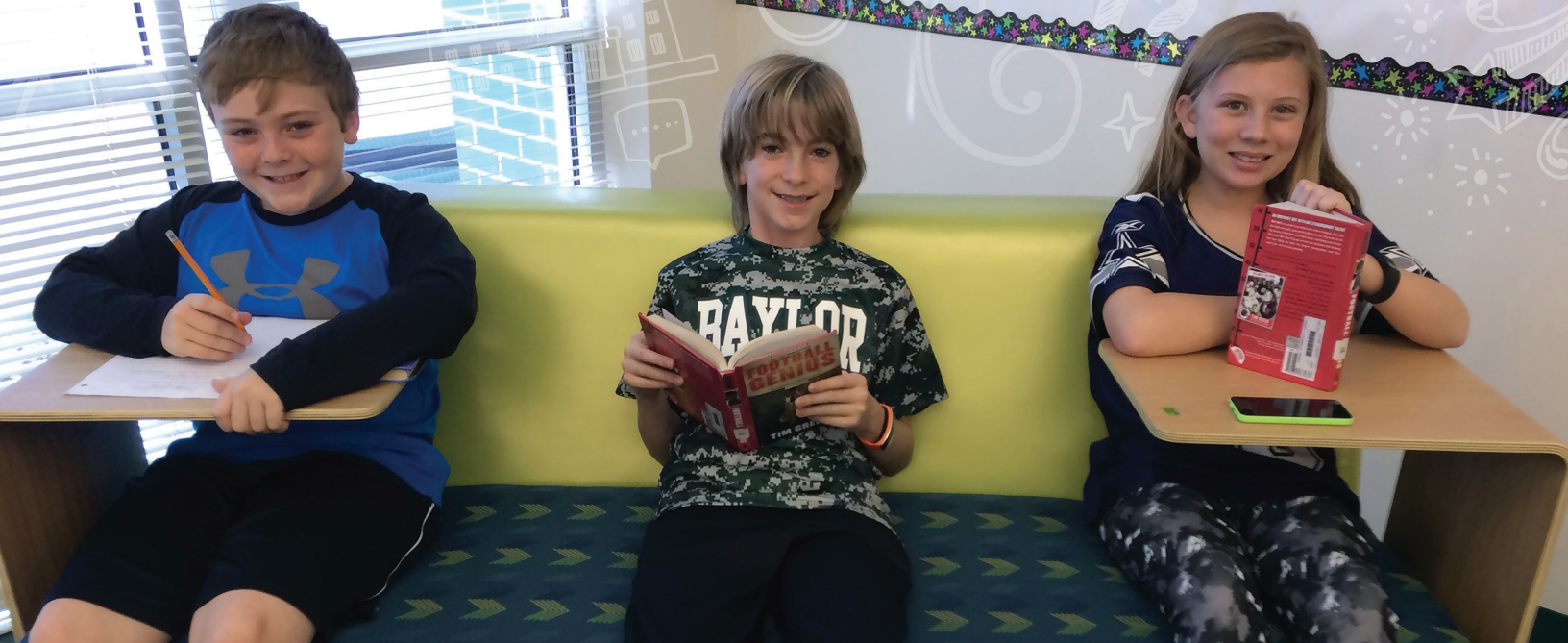
- SIXTH-GRADE TEACHER

Eubanks Intermediate School
Carroll Independent School District



CARROLL INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
SOUTHLAKE, TEXAS

Fifteen years ago, Lucy Drenka was tasked with opening a new library for the Carroll Independent School District near the Dallas–Fort Worth metroplex, where the schools are consistently rated “exemplary” by the Texas Education Agency. Mrs. Drenka, the librarian at Eubanks Intermediate School, knew two things. First, a dynamic, empowered librarian can accomplish just about anything with the support of administration. And second, all kids can quickly become disengaged without the stimulation that creativity and problem solving bring.



With the backing of her administration, Mrs. Drenka set out to open a library designed to grow and progress with her patrons and with the times – one that would allow her to illustrate her expertise, experience, knowledge and ability to truly influence learning. Today, a look back at Mrs. Drenka's journey illustrates the simple, yet multi-faceted process she used to create a learning space to encourage making, building, creativity and collaboration. All the while, she embedded herself and everything the library does into the very fabric of Carroll ISD. Her story is an inspiring one full of best practices.

HOW IT BEGAN

"Opening the Eubanks Intermediate School library in 2001 that helped shape what our current library would become," Mrs. Drenka said. "I had the support of administration, the PTO and of Follett, who helped me refine our opening collection to meet our students' needs."

Since that day, Mrs. Drenka explains the library has been

in perpetual transformation, adjusting to the changing needs of staff and pre-teen learning, thanks to an administration that values her expertise and foresight. Able to articulate the importance of the library, Mrs. Drenka and her colleagues built a space that would evolve into the vibrant hub of activity it is today.

WHY A MAKERSPACE?


By definition, a Makerspace is a community: a group of students eager to create and build in a social context, to share space, to inspire one another and to learn from the experiences of others. Mrs. Drenka agrees, but also believes it is more than that. "A Makerspace is also a mindset that values critical thinking," Mrs. Drenka said. "As a librarian, I realize the importance of providing students the opportunity to develop the important skills that a Makerspace encourages. I believe our library culture incorporates the mindset and values of a Makerspace, and the kids love it." Mrs. Drenka continues to change, improve

and transform the library in both content and space design. "The journey to our library transformation has been an exciting one, and we have only just begun!"

Just this year, Eubanks Library, with the generous support of the PTO, has begun a curated collection of Makerspace materials to offer students hands-on experiences with littleBits™, Makey Makey® and BrushBot. Perhaps the most visible sign of the library's transformation has been the addition of collaborative-style furniture to allow students to work together with flexible instructional space. There are spaces within the library where students can share ideas for project-based learning with multiple seating configurations.

WHAT DOES EMPOWERMENT MEAN?

Mrs. Drenka credits the success of her library to her administration's strong support. "They value my experience in libraries and education," Mrs. Drenka said. "I feel appreciated



“Advocacy for librarians will be achieved through assuming school leadership roles on their campus. When librarians demonstrate their positive impact on student learning, their role will become increasingly important.”

- Lucy Drenka, Librarian
Eubanks Intermediate School
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and I know that my skills help improve this school. I serve as the team leader for the Encore department, in which I supervise 10 teachers. In addition, I am a member of Eubank’s site-based team and also serve on the Teacher Leadership Team. As members of those committees, I am aware of the ever-changing demands and increased rigor of our curriculum, and I am able to influence future curriculum decisions.”

Mrs. Drenka also outlined how teachers use her expertise to create lessons to support and enrich their curriculum. “This year I designed a lesson to promote eBooks and increase usage by our students. I began by studying the tutorials included on the Follett site and choosing one that would be best for my students. After viewing the tutorial, each student was given an iPad, logged into the eBook platform, and searched for an eBook that they were interested in reading. They were able to

use the many features during the lesson.”

Mrs. Drenka is proud of the library she’s helped build, and knows she’s helping point her students toward success in high school and beyond. “Our library is a dynamic and energetic place where students are actively engaged in reading, creating, exploring and discovering. The transformation to innovative surroundings support literacy and learning for the 21st century. As a space, it encourages creativity, a passion for books and reading across different formats and it’s a collaborative environment that is right for today’s world,” she said.

ALL LIBRARIANS CAN USE THEIR EXPERTISE TO INFLUENCE GREATER LEARNING

Mrs. Drenka knows she’s been fortunate to land in a district that routinely gets high marks, and she knows not all librarians have the support she enjoys. She points

out, however, there is so much every librarian can do to become more embedded in curriculum and, therefore, more empowered.

“I attend department meeting, which provides me with insight to the teachers’ lesson plans. I am able to offer suggestions to enrich the curriculum with literature and technology integration. When teachers meet to develop curriculum, I request that the librarian be included in order to supplement lesson plans with library resources,” Mrs. Drenka shared. “As leaders, school librarians – with the support of their principals – should actively promote their programs by making educators in their building aware of the potential contribution of library services and resources to the educational program of the school. We need to be our own best advocates.”

