

EDspaces

Designing the Future of Education

Charlotte, NC | November 7-9, 2023



Meaningful Integration of Students and Teachers into the School Furniture Selection Process

- 9:00 AM Thursday, Nov 9th

Presenters

DRAFT



Emily Czarnecki, NCDIQ

- Associate Principal, JCJ Architecture
- 25 years of experience, specializing in design for education
- Senior Interior Designer for the new New Fairfield High School

Sharing insight on

- Integration of student involvement in the furniture selection process
- Involving teachers and staff in workshops to become fully engaged in classroom setting possibilities

Presenters

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- Principal, New Fairfield High School
- 23 Years as a Teacher and Administrator

Sharing insight on:

- Visioning for Teaching and Learning influencing school design
- Reimagining School Culture

James D'Amico

Presenters

DRAFT



- **Director of Education, VS America**
- **XX years experience in xx and xx**
- **Leading producer of educational furniture**
- **Corporate HQ in Germany with US production based in North Carolina**
- **Focus on ergonomic and inclusive design concepts that support universal access and 21st century learning**

Jill Ackers

Sharing insight on:

X

X

Session Learning Objectives

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From the perspective of an educator/administrator, design professional and furniture supplier/manufacturer:

- How the team designed an immersive experience that engaged stakeholders and produced relevant feedback that influenced decision making
- How the process was applied to refining decisions about FF&E and how it is expected to address educational and experiential priorities
- How the process is supporting integration of students and teachers into a new educational environment
- How this methodology can be applied to a broader range of projects

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Project Background and Context



New Fairfield High School – project background

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- Conjoined High School and Middle School
- Existing 180,000 sf. High School constructed in the 1970s
- Cited by NEASC for ADA non-compliance and code violations, significant infrastructure deficiencies and insufficient support for educational program
- Facility assessment study found the building at the end of its useful life
- State and local approvals for construction of new school on the existing site

NFHS – existing educational environment

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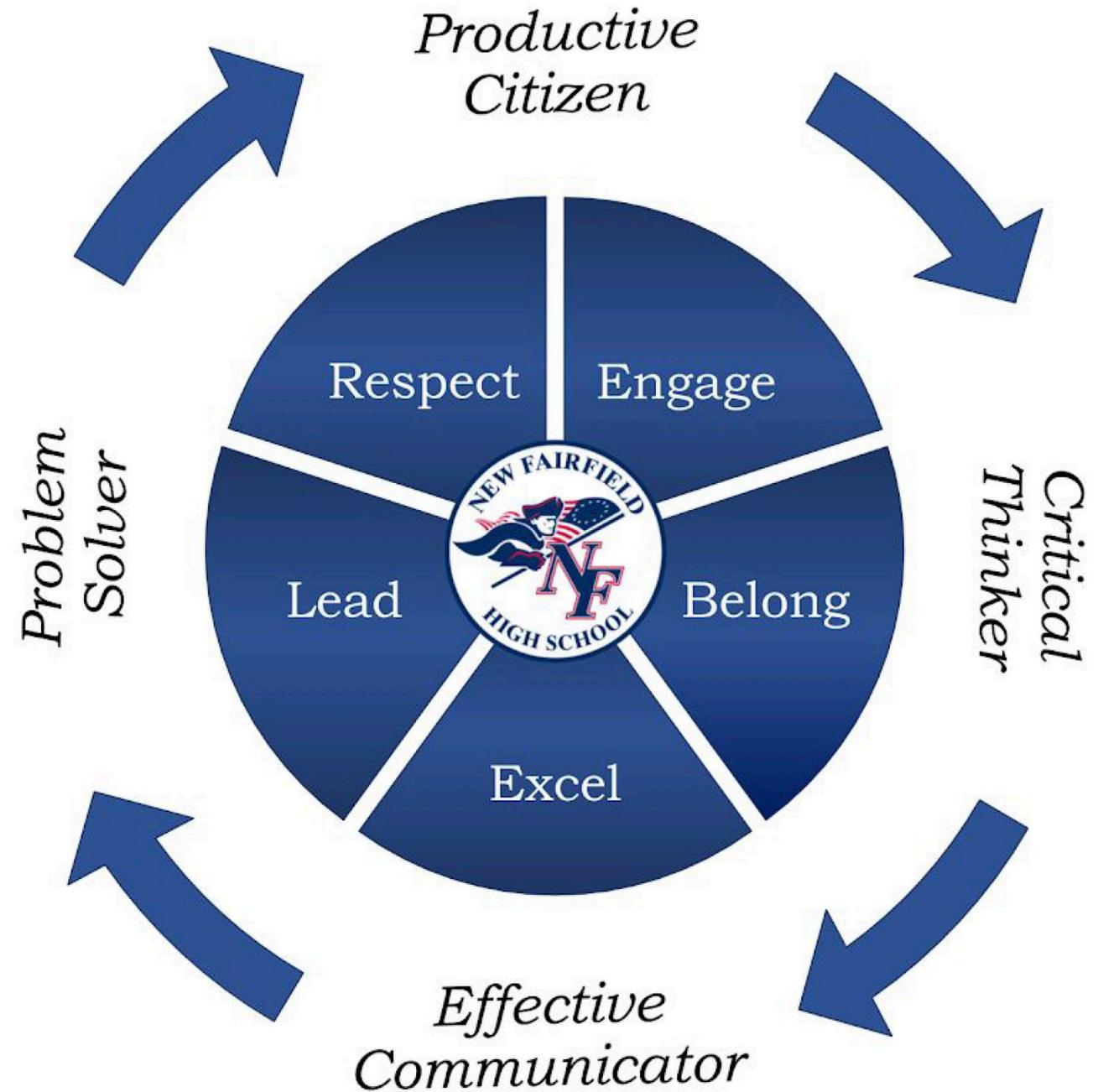
New Fairfield High School

MISSION STATEMENT

New Fairfield High School strives to provide a safe educational environment in which students *respect* the right for all to become *engaged* learners and responsible citizens who *belong, excel* and *lead* within a diverse society and changing world.

CORE VALUES & BELIEFS STATEMENT

New Fairfield High School is committed to all students achieving high academic standards and personal wellness, enabling continuous growth through authentic, flexible pathways. By prioritizing connectedness and compassion, we empower all members of our learning community to take ownership of our individual and collective development as we foster the *Attributes of the Graduate*.



NFHS – existing educational environment

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Starts with the Vision of a Graduate

KNOWLEDGEABLE SCHOLARS



Pursue their interests and curiosities while developing a depth of background knowledge in all of the core academic domains as well as in life skills such as financial literacy, that they can use to solve problems and succeed in life.

ENGAGED GLOBAL CITIZENS

Learn about the history of their local community, our country and other countries around the world to understand the value and unique principles of our American democracy. They learn what other cultures are like, so that they can understand, respect and embrace diversity, be socially aware, be kind, compassionate, empathetic and respectful. They obtain information from multiple, reliable sources and use it to be active, civic-minded participants within and beyond their community.



TALENTED COMMUNICATORS

Read, write, listen, speak, create and view skillfully, critically and confidently. They can adapt their style and message for a variety of purposes, situations and audiences. As a result, they have strong relationship skills and can collaborate well. They can manage conflict confidently and respectfully.



SELF-DETERMINED & SELF-RELIANT INDIVIDUALS

Set goals, persevere, and reflect as they learn to understand and regulate their emotions and reactions, which will foster their overall health, wellness and mindfulness. Through this they will become intentional, resilient, independent and most importantly, self-reliant.



CRITICAL & CREATIVE THINKERS

Access, evaluate and apply information to solve problems, pursue their curiosities and make decisions. They grow their creativity through experiences within the fine and performing arts which will further support their ability to think critically and creatively.



The new NFHS – project goals & priorities

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- Remedy Failure of Facility to support program delivery
- Create:
 - A safe site and accessible Building
 - An environment in which students can have greater agency
 - Classroom spaces that are flexible, adaptable to current and future needs
 - Inclusive and differentiated spaces to appeal to different modalities of learning, student well-being
- Guiding principles for the project:
 - build community
 - foster collaboration
 - put learning on display



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Planning & Design



NFHS plan / organization

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- COMMUNITY
- COMMONS
- CLASSROOM
- SPECIALTY
- FACULTY & STAFF



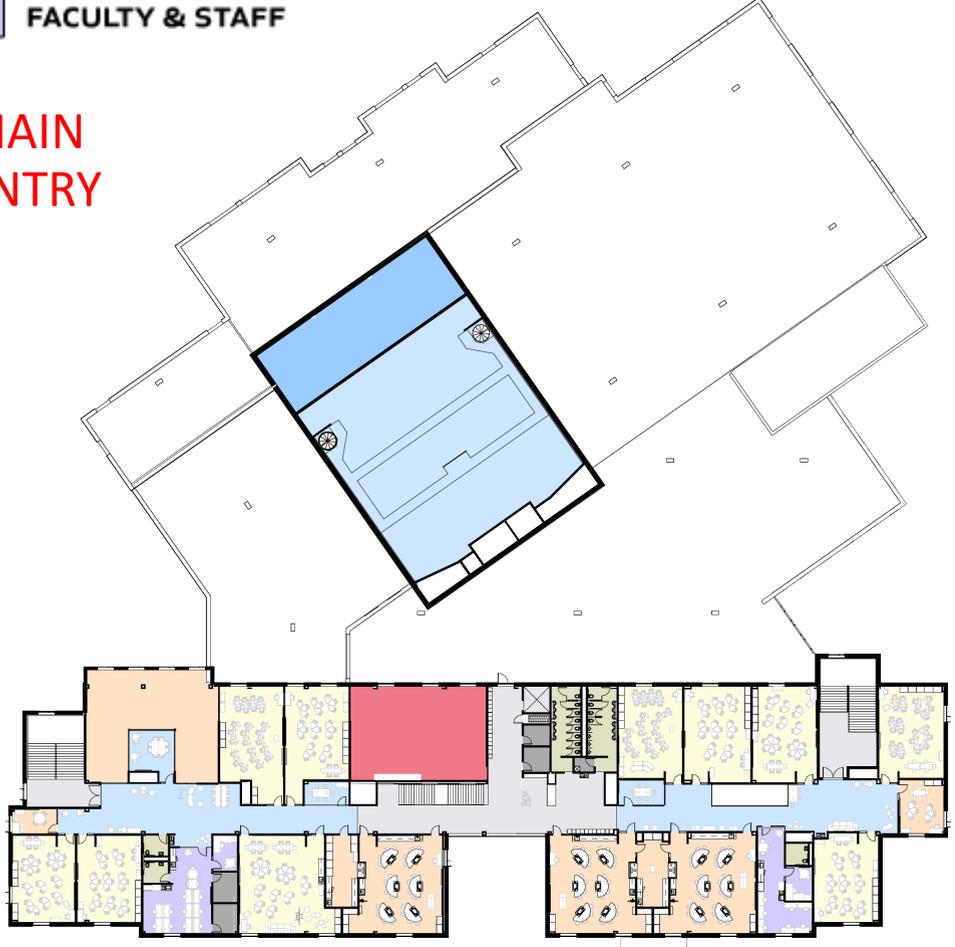
FIRST FLOOR

SECONDARY ENTRY



SECOND FLOOR

MAIN ENTRY



THIRD FLOOR

JCJ Architecture's Interiors/FF&E process

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- Design completed in house
- Spatial characteristics, adjacencies, highly efficient organization
- Incorporated early in the planning and Visioning design discussions
- Visioning plan for furniture and equipment
 - Visit EDspaces early in the process!
 - Staff discussions and feedback
 - Include students in the design making

Attendance @ EDSpaces 2021

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Plan for attendance

- Process looks different for every client
 - **set parameters**
- Opportunity to kick off furniture selection process
- Helps team to clarify/finalize nuances of space programming
- ~~Look at the range of options,~~ guide the conversation, expose client to the wide variety of options



Attendance @ EdSpaces 2021

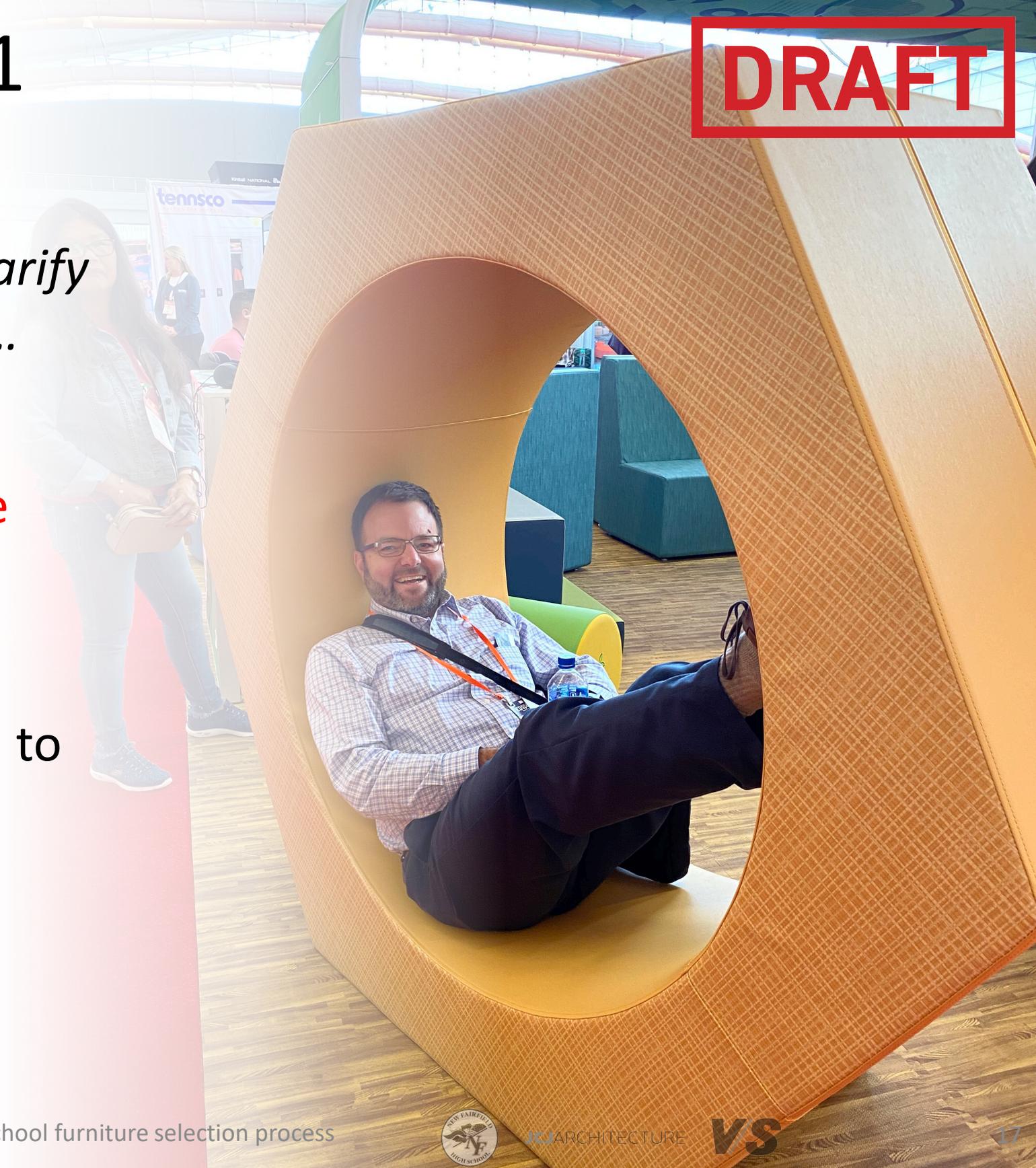
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Attendance @ EDSpaces 2021

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- *What we learned, how the show helped clarify ideas or shaped thinking moving forward ...*
- **Mobility is important for furnishings**
- **Durability and cleanability of finishes to be considered**
- **Dining should include a variety of options**
- Decision to bring in test environments and to gather input from students and teachers



Furniture **Trials**: Test and Build Consensus

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- Multiple Manufacturer designs
- Set up in central Media Center location for greater visibility
- Faculty and students to test
- Surveys to gather feedback
- Lessons learned
- How the process informed design



Plans for the test environment

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- What we **hoped** would happen
 - Daily activities utilizing the furniture
 - Students to use during study hall, before and after school
 - Teachers to move regular classes to the test furniture area

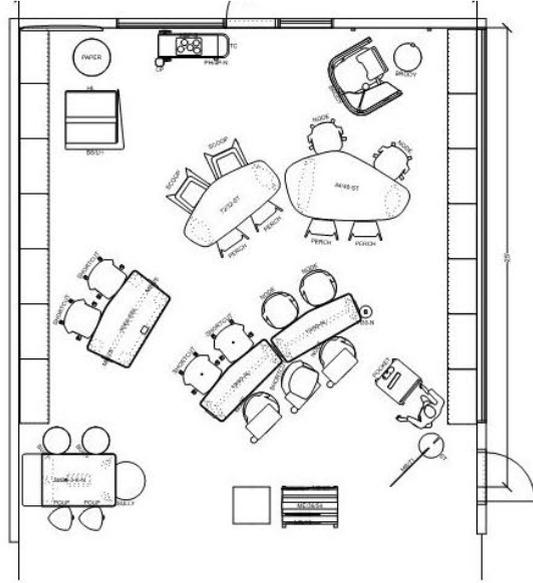
Test environment – KI Experience

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Test environment – Steelcase Experience

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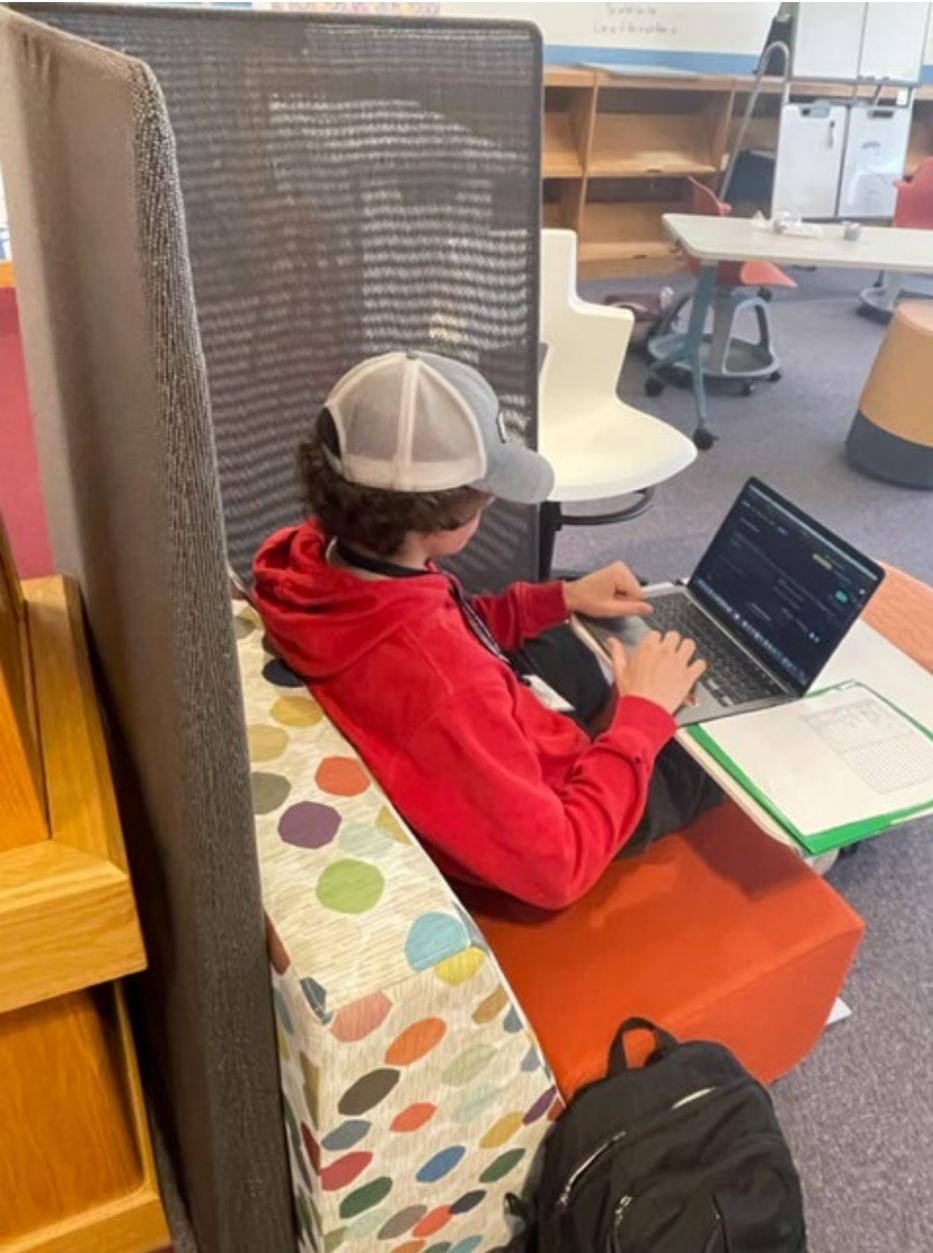
Test environment - VS Experience

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Test environment – Student Experience

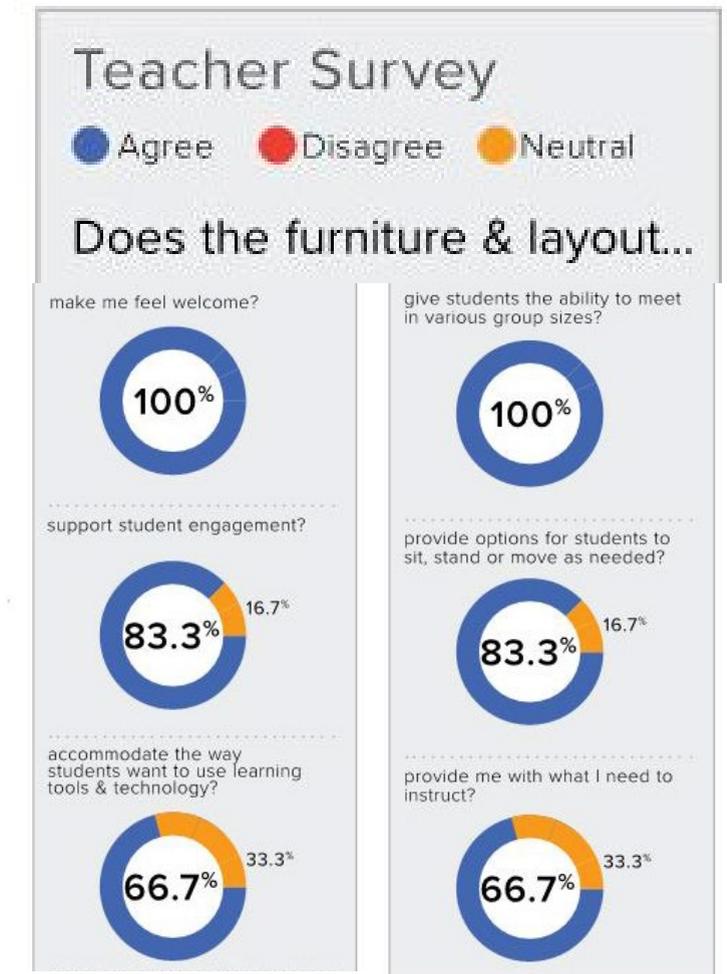
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Test environment – What we learned

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- Students loved the ability to stand at high top tables
- Looking for more workspace
- Adjustability and mobility **were high priorities**
- Whiteboard table tops were a hit
- Differentiated seating was ranked high
- Decision to visit VS America showroom



Test environment **Survey Feedback**

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Student Comments (Seating and Tables)

“I like the Wave and Ruckus Stools and the high tables.
It was a nice change.”

“I like the larger tables.
They allow enough space when
working on a group project.”

“I like the higher desks, because they are also larger
which allows more room for all of our materials during class.”

“The C-tables are too small.”

“The sizes of the chairs accommodate all different sizes of people.
I’m really glad that the furniture is open and appealing to anyone.”

“The MyPlace Lounge Seating would be a really nice addition to classrooms, especially
English class, which includes more conversation, reading and writing.”

“The Ricochet Stool really helped my focus when I was
reading. I have ADHD and moving around helps me focus.”

“It was nice being able to
sit around others on
higher tables and move
around easier.”

Test environment **Survey Feedback**

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Teacher Comments (Seating)

”Students LOVED the different ways to use the stools.”

“I like how the Ruckus Chair allowed the students to sit in different positions.”

“The variety of chair styles allowed the students to change their learning environment by selecting a different seat on different days.”

“The Ricochet Stools are very different than the seats the students are accustomed to. Students were more distracted by them than the other seating options.”

Teacher Comments (Tables)

“I would like more whiteboard surfaces for the students to work on.”

”I love the adjustable sit-to-stand Ruckus Desk; however I’m not a fan of the wheelbarrow design and would prefer all wheels.”

”I liked the different heights for sit-to-stand options. I really liked the teacher’s standing desk.”

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VS showroom visit and "Ah ha" moment

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- How VS Americas Days can help advance projects (2 day workshop in Charlotte)
- VS as a leader in student achievement research
- Ergonomics and leading edge design
- Speakers/ Workshops
- School tours
- Interactive demonstrations

- NOW what could we do?

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Attendee Workshop Demonstration

James / Jill – This would be the Thumbprint demo in pinwheel layout



Managing and interpreting feedback

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- VS visit + NFHS workshops
- Changes to the plan
- Incorporating feedback from staff and students
- How does this feed back to project goals and vision
- Building consensus around design direction and engaging w/ stakeholders
- Presenting next steps for each program area
- Checking back on budget and schedule
- Building momentum, change management

Furniture Selections **Priorities**

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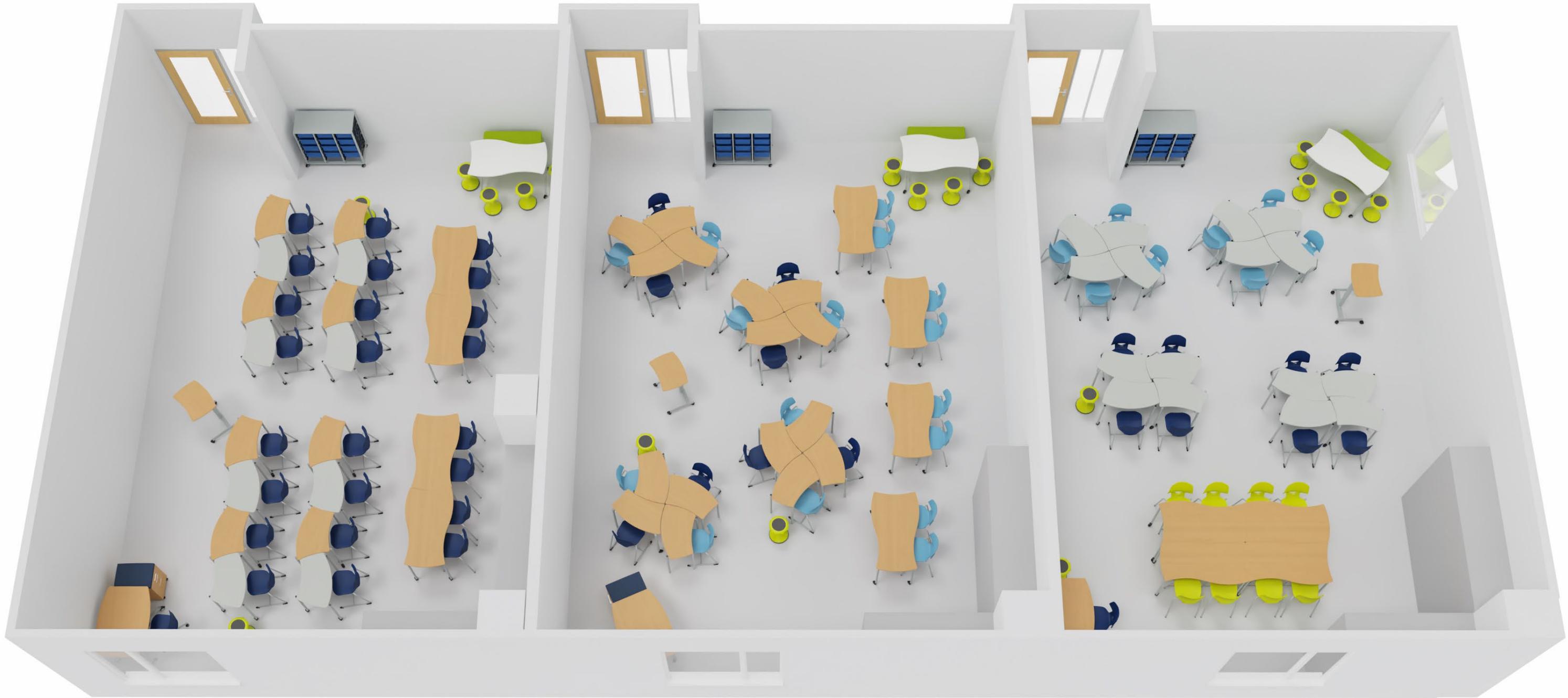
Present images on what furniture the client selected and why

- variety of furniture types to allow student choice
- Learning neighborhoods to be customized to support adjacent classrooms
- Various height workspaces
- Agile choices that allow quick changes to layout related to activities
- Comfort and ergonomics
- Integrated technology

Furniture Selections – Classroom

Sampling of furniture items

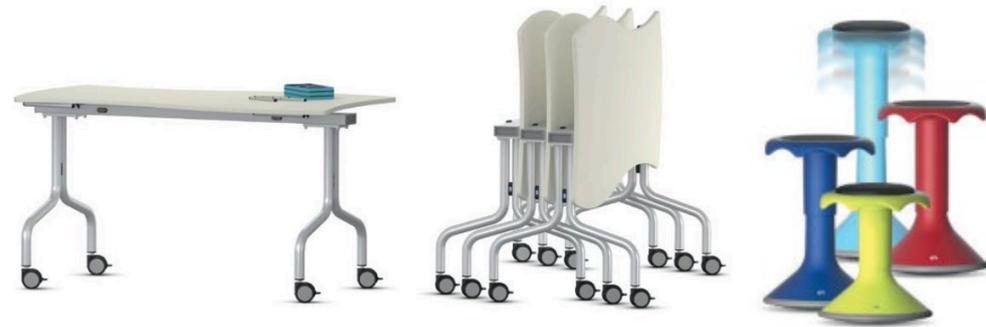
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Furniture Selections – Classroom

Sampling of furniture items

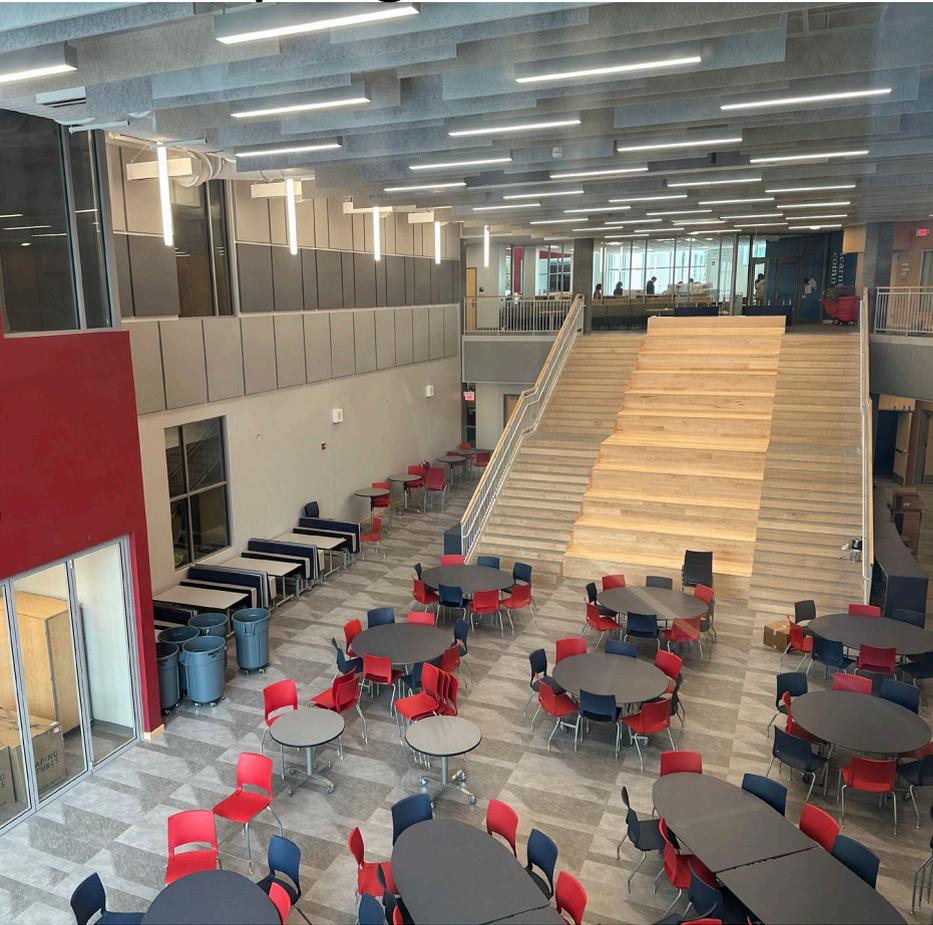
- Classrooms built for Engagement
 - Collaboration
 - Individualized
 - Classroom extension
- Student choice & freedom
 - Culture of Responsibility
- Community
 - Faculty & Students together
 - Visibility



Furniture Selections – Commons at the Center

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Sampling of furniture items



- Learning on Display
- Hub of student activity
 - Bring gatherings (food), presentations, academics, arts, athletics and more together

- Community Center
- Choice
 - Seating
 - Use of space

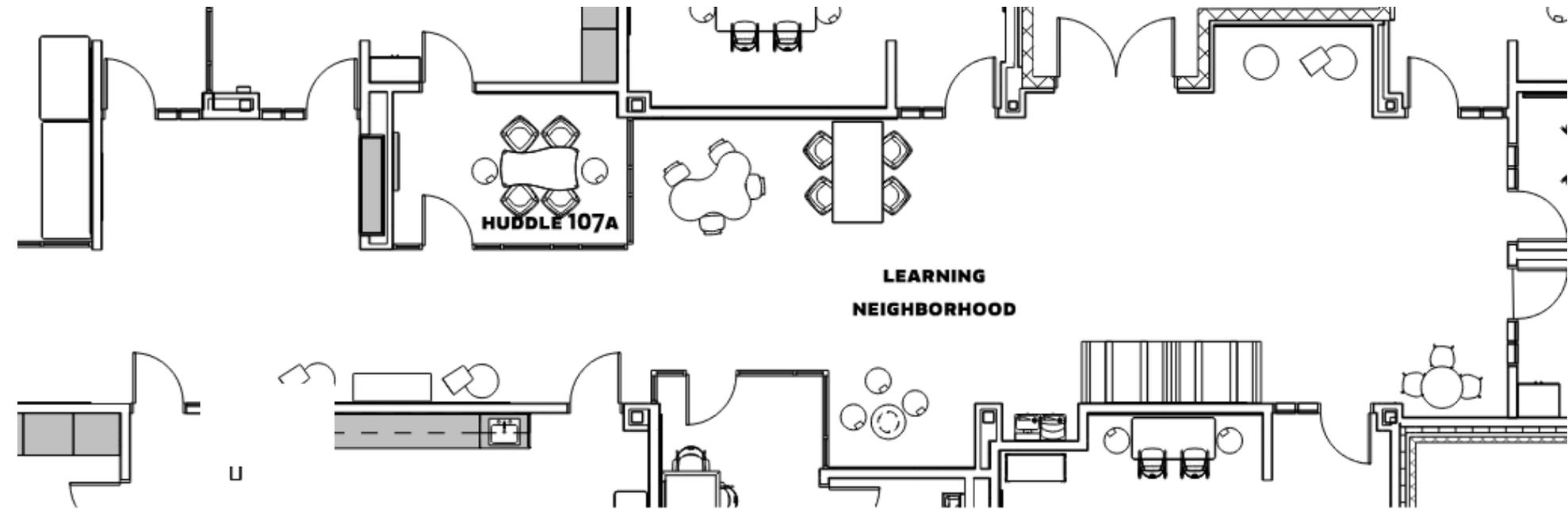
Furniture Selections – Learning Neighborhood

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Sampling of furniture items



- Diverse spaces
 - Collaboration
 - Individualized
 - Classroom extension
- Student choice & freedom
 - Culture of Responsibility
- Community
 - Faculty & Students together
 - Visibility



Furniture Selections – Learning Neighborhood

Sampling of furniture items

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Furniture Selections – Huddle Spaces

Sampling of furniture items



- Visible in the “neighborhood”
- Instruction
- Small Groups
 - Student sign-up
 - Teacher can extend classroom
- Conferences
- PL Groups
- Clubs
- Move your class!



Pre occupancy training

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- Teacher training workshops
- Documenting goals for teacher development, educational environment and student experience
- Teacher's creating a playbook
- Coalesce around culture of continuous training and development



Hoped for results, anticipated ROI

- So far:
 - Increased energy around class time
 - Unexpected excitement from teachers about learning neighborhoods
 - Fewer undesirable gatherings in hallways and bathrooms
 - More students eating in the dining area
- What's up next
 - More teacher experience with sharing/utilizing flexible spaces
 - Balancing student and teacher decision-making
- Anticipated ROI/benefits to the school and wider community

ex: relooking at scheduling of the building – maximize utilization but looking at things differently (furniture helping to support but the impact can be felt more broadly ...)

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Pre Occupancy Training - Task

James / Jill – This would be the Thumbprint demo in pinwheel layout

Thumbprint Task #2

- Get into groups of 6 and form a butterfly.
- How many close conversations (18" or less) are possible in this configuration.
- Where would you put a 7th friend?



Pre Occupancy Training

- Scenario #1: Order in the Court
 - Find 4-5 thought partners to help generate ideas for the scenario
 - You are conducting a hearing in class, in which two small groups at a time must make arguments to a panel of judges. Four other groups in the class form a gallery and must listen, take notes, and then generate written rebuttals of what they have heard.



Pre Occupancy Training

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Emily - I have a video from the training session we can include

Insert video content – teacher training, completed project

Post completion survey (VS)

- Process overall

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Jill – to talk about VS's approach and the process for NFHS
James to discuss the benefits to the school/project

Using data holistically

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- VS – maximizing function in the new building and getting the most out of it
- Research based approach and what VS is bringing back to clients
- Not just furniture solutions but advancing how the industry thinks about furniture and fixtures
- Data and researched based approach
- Compile information and understand the trends
- Respecting the student voice, taking action on their needs and preferences (comfort, function)
- Reporting out to parents, the district, the town on anticipated and actual results

How the NFHS process can apply to any project

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- Reimagining school library/media center
- Upgrading classrooms
- Addition/renovation projects

- Ask the attendees about their projects, brainstorm possibilities

How has this shaped what's next

- Emily, as a design professional: how has this informed or shifted her thinking. How has it changed her interactions with clients and stakeholders, what does she hope to accomplish
- James, as an educational leader and facilitator: how does he see this affecting teaching and learning or what kinds of conversations and development can be an outgrowth of (professional development, implementation of the playbook, embracing continuous training, increased opportunities for creativity)
- Jill, as a product developer:

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Thank You!

- Please scan the QR code to provide session feedback.

