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Madison, IN: MCS announces evolution of library spaces to transform student learning experience district-wide.

Do we feel the library/media center is an integral part of student experience? **Absolutely!**

As a continuation of our commitment to provide students with relevant, innovative learning environments, District Media Specialist, Linda Brinegar, has spent the summer researching national trends in library/media center spaces. “The concept of library/media centers has expanded to include a number of resources which help students and teachers access information. Information contained in a library is no longer just books on shelves, there are so many more ways to explore learning and we have a responsibility to prepare our students and provide them with those opportunities for application”, shares Brinegar. “There is a national movement among school and public libraries towards *Learning Commons* model of instruction. The concept of Learning Commons transforms traditional library spaces to better incorporate exploratory learning through various methods including print resources, technology, innovation, creativity, and hands-on application.”

Currently, the library spaces within all of our elementary schools are very close to a fit for the Learning Commons model with collaborative work spaces and group instructional space. We have an opportunity to further transform all of our spaces, especially at MCHS, with the necessary library renovation following the flood earlier this summer. As an example, this article on [Learning Commons](#) helps move from the conceptual to the concrete in terms of what a space may look like for a student, or any library patron. Through this model we can consider the fluidity of space and the options to move book shelves and tables in order to create learning spaces where students can explore books by genre, or traditional research methods, and teachers can collaborate on lessons from two perspectives; this is one example of the flexibility the Learning Commons model provides.

In addition to the physical changes, the addition of automated circulation software will allow students to “check out” traditional library books as they always have - but teachers will have the opportunity to interact with students during this time in order to bring learning to life through flexible, hands-on, technical tools where they can further, immediately apply learning or research to the project or task at hand. Implementation of this blended media model will equate to an additional 40 minutes of instructional time for most students with their teachers. Our intention is not to remove any specialty focused curriculum, we are enhancing a traditional model with up-to-date, current teaching methods and mindsets complemented with technology.

Do we feel as though the traditional library structure can be improved upon to further support student success rate? **Absolutely!**

Our goal is to create innovative work spaces where students work together, with their teachers, to collaborate, create, think, discover, read, and learn at all levels in order to practice and master a variety of techniques in order to access information. It is a very exciting time to be a student at Madison Consolidated Schools!