

Curriculum and Instruction Workshops

DLR Group facilitated a series of curriculum and instruction workshops to build upon VIDE's guiding principles and clearly define a joint educational direction for the territory. Establishing this overall vision for what learning will look like for each child in the USVI is critical at the start of a facilities master plan. This step allows all stakeholders and future design teams to understand the end goal and the supports necessary to achieve this goal.

The workshops were held on St. Thomas, and St. Croix on February 18 and 19, 2020. Attendees included a broad cross-section of stakeholders and end users, including VIDE leadership, superintendents, principals, union representatives, teachers, facilities staff, and community members.

Through the workshops, DLR Group led stakeholders in divergent thinking exercises to allow them to think beyond their current constraints and envision future-ready learning.

Each workshop was launched with a discussion around the importance of life-long learning in contrast to the educational model of the past where schooling was a sequential process from age five to 18 and possibly to college, but not typically beyond. Employees of today are required to improve their skills and broaden their understanding through ongoing learning to stay relevant in a global marketplace.

Relevant research linking space, human emotional needs, and educational practice were reviewed with David Thornburg's Archetypes of Space—cave, campfire, mountain top, and watering hole. These archetypes spurred conversation around serving the whole child through the different types of space.

Campfires in Cyberspace

Primordial Metaphors for Learning in the 21st Century

David Thornburg

*The sandbox archetype is not original to David Thornburg's Archetypes of Space. It was added by DLR Group to represent places that are designed for discovery and hands-on application.



Following this discussion, the group transitioned to an exercise exploring a day-in-the-life of a Virgin Island Public Schools student. Groups were asked to outline a current day for students and then to forecast a day in the life of a 2030 student.

Activity cards guided the group's thinking. Activities included creating, presenting, experiencing, inquiring, small group, large group, collaborating, active, and evaluating.

Small groups developed a comparison between the current day-in-the-life of a Virgin Island student and the future, preferred day in the year 2030. The majority of teams had a stark contrast in the current students' experience that is dominated by direct instruction or lecture-style learning to a future experience with a fluid variety of learning activities.

Participants described this future version to respond to different types of learners and their diverse needs.



Top St. Croix participants working through a day-in-the-life exercise.

Bottom St. Croix participants working through a day-in-the-life exercise.



Image Day-in-the-life activity cards



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As the day-in-the-life activity concluded, Dr. Marilyn Denison, educational planner with DLR Group, reviewed a brief history of the stagnant architectural form of the classroom juxtaposed to rapid changes in technology and 21st century learning.

Educational Purpose of the 20th Century

Teachers design lessons and provide information from a set of curricula.

Students learn the information from the teachers' lessons.

Accountability: Scores on assessments and grades

Educational Purpose of the 21st Century

Teachers facilitate learning and design personalized learning experiences based on interest and passion.

Students are responsible for their own learning.

Accountability: Transfer of skills and demonstration of mastery.

Canyon View High School | Waddell, Arizona

In support of Dr. Denison's review and in contrast to the familiar classroom, modern case studies with a variety of spaces were reviewed in relation to supporting different learning activities.

The first case study was Canyon View High School.

The design has made a big impact.

I chose to go to this school; I could have gone anywhere.

I am super excited and want to learn everyday. Not only does the environment make us light up, it also makes the teachers light up. And the students can see that in the teachers, and it makes us want to do more.

Jade, Freshman
Canyon View Principal's Advisory Group



Creating a Culture of Success:

The BOLD Process at Canyon View High School

Bridging Organization, Learning and Design

A School with Neither Cells nor Bells

There are no bells; everyone is treated as a young adult and expected to manage their own time. Teachers rotate learning labs, allowing for a variety of learning opportunities. Furniture is all on wheels to easily create the space needed for learning. Spaces can be used for more than one purpose and there is cross-collaboration between classes, large presentations, and small presentations.

A School that is Centered Around the Learner

Students can seek to work together in multiple spaces, but there are also quiet areas to work alone.

Teacher Faculty spaces are used to discuss learning, teachers no longer live in silos and can focus on students in teams.

Classrooms are open, light and airy with all learning on display and teachers are able to adapt and adjust for student needs.

A Place that is Safe for Failure and Fosters Success

Strong culture, climate, and sense of community.

The Jaguar Way: Innovation, diversity, character, community and pride

A Community of Engaged Teachers

Teachers are honored as professionals by being provided dedicated workspace for individual focus, group collaboration, and wellness regeneration.

The master schedule was developed intentionally to support cross-disciplinary professional learning communities that support risk-taking and a culture of continuous improvement.

Through visual transparency, shared ownership of spaces, and clear cultural and academic expectations, teachers are more connected and emotionally invested in Union High School District Agua Fria Canyon View High School.



Top Canyon View High School | Waddell, Arizona

Bottom Canyon View High School | Waddell, Arizona



Curriculum and Instruction Workshops

DLR Group guided a discussion around the importance of indoor environmental quality, ergonomics and movement in relation to furnishings, and the value of dynamic furniture in flexible environments.

The stakeholders participated in a dot exercise to define how they want furniture to perform along a continuum with multiple variables. The three groups identified a gap between where they are currently and the desired future state. Participants identified a desired shift in the way the classrooms perform by introducing choices and variety in furnishings. This direction is consistent with the direction of the master plan for the VIDE to promote a student-centered learning experience.

Furnishings in the classroom should encourage activity and discourage sedentary behavior. Movement, small 'squiggles' to large motor-mechanic movements are critical in supporting students' physiological as well as mental growth. Physical movement both increases well-being and encourages the physical and intellectual maturing process. Dynamic furniture is designed to foster children's natural physical movements. Furniture selections should allow for small scale movements such as leaning, rocking, turning, or swaying to encourage concentration and cognitive development. Many seating options included in the furniture specifications focus on independent movement and proper ergonomic positioning to accommodate such movement.

"Movement is the motor which drives child development. Children are born with an innate need to climb, jump, swing, balance, play ball or just to move about and not be able to sit still. The urge to move is therefore part of human nature, encouraging exercise in a natural and healthy way and ultimately promoting the development of the child."

Dr. Dieter Breithecker



Dr. Dieter Breithecker is a German Health and Kinetics Scientist, the head of the Federal Institute on the Development of Posture and Exercise in Germany, and an international expert on ergonomics for children.

Following the learning continuum exercise, and to conclude the session, Dr. Denison led the group through an activity to explore process, learning, and teaching in USVI Public Schools.

Working in small groups, individuals were asked to review a large stack of VALUES cards, each with a different value. The cards were designed and organized with relation to five different categories: teaching, learning, spaces, tools, and safety.

After reviewing the cards, groups were asked to identify their top three priorities, in each of the five categories, that they felt are the most important to successful future-ready learning in USVI Public Schools.

Left Pathfinder Kindergarten Center | Everett, Washington

Bottom A small group in St. Thomas reviewing the curriculum and instruction VALUES cards.



Bottom A pair in St. Thomas review their prioritization of the curriculum and instruction VALUES cards before sharing out with the larger group.



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Learning Connections

What do USVI Public Schools value?

Why is this exercise impactful?

What teachers do and how they do it is critically important and has a profound impact on the quality of the educational experience for children. Building a common language and consistency in systems allows for high quality teaching and learning.

Dr. Marilyn Denison, Educator, Educational Planner at DLR Group

The priorities established from this activity were as follows:

- Inquiry-based learning
- Authentic/real-world learning
- Interactive technology devices
- Flexible technology
- Outdoor learning
- Easily adapted/changed spaces
- Cyber safety
- Health and wellness/sustainability

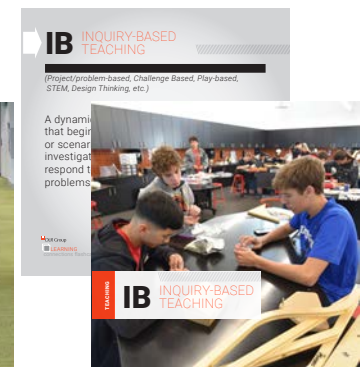
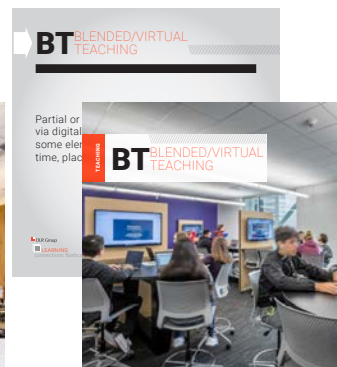
Teaching

Learning

Tools

Spaces

Safety



Teaching Priorities



TEACHING
IB INQUIRY-BASED TEACHING

IB INQUIRY-BASED TEACHING

(Project/problem-based, Challenge Based, Play-based, STEM, Design Thinking, etc.)

A dynamic form of active learning that begins with inquiry, problems, or scenarios. Students then identify, investigate, and research issues and respond to challenges or complex problems.

DLR Group
LEARNING connections flashcards



TEACHING
WM WORKSHOP MODEL/ GUIDED TEACHING

WM WORKSHOP MODEL/ GUIDED TEACHING

A pedagogy that promotes student learning, growth, and reflection through collaboration and small group instruction.

DLR Group
LEARNING connections flashcards

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Learning Priorities



AL AUTHENTIC/REAL
WORLD LEARNING

AL AUTHENTIC/REAL
WORLD LEARNING

Students explore, discuss, and meaningfully construct concepts and relationships in contexts that involve real-world problems and projects that are relevant to the student.

 DLR Group
 LEARNING
connections flashcards



SL SOCIAL EMOTIONAL
LEARNING

SL SOCIAL EMOTIONAL
LEARNING

A process through which students (and adults) acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to establish and maintain positive relationships, understand and manage emotions, feel and show empathy for others, and regulate personal behaviors through self-management.

 DLR Group
 LEARNING
connections flashcards

Tools Priorities



TOOLS **ID** INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGY DEVICES

ID INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGY DEVICES

Instructional technology that allows for greater interactivity such as interactive white boards, mobile pads, educational apps, clickers.



TOOLS **FT** FLEXIBLE TECHNOLOGY

FT FLEXIBLE TECHNOLOGY

Mobile technology that allows for use on different surfaces and in numerous ways.



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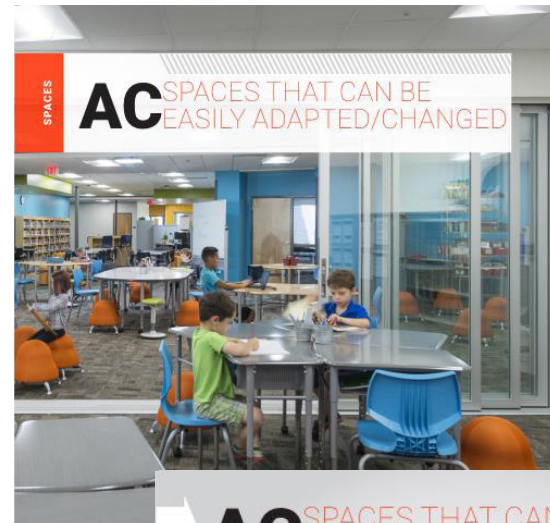
Spaces Priorities



OL OUTDOORS LEARNING

Spaces that allow for outdoor learning such as gardens, outdoor creative spaces, and play areas.

DLR Group
LEARNING connections flashcards

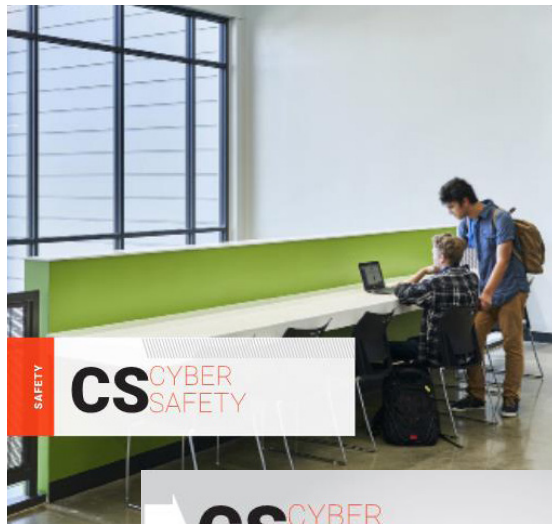


AC SPACES THAT CAN BE EASILY ADAPTED/CHANGED

Walls of classrooms that can be modified/moved to fit different sizes of learning environments.

DLR Group
LEARNING connections flashcards

Safety Priorities

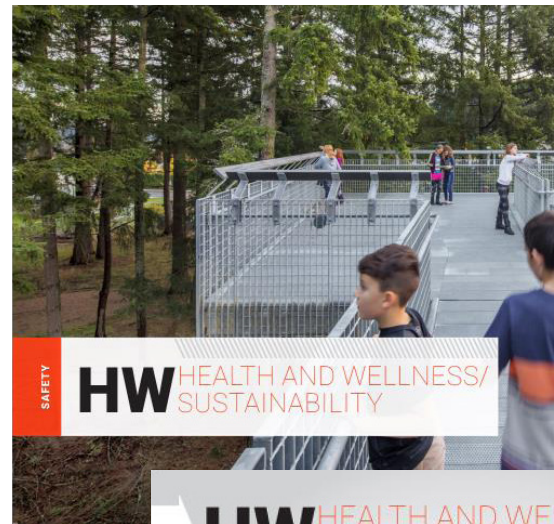


CS CYBER SAFETY

CS CYBER SAFETY

The process of keeping students and teachers safe from security risks, self-protection, and cyber bullying through technology.

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LEARNING
connections flashcards



HW HEALTH AND WELLNESS/ SUSTAINABILITY

HW HEALTH AND WELLNESS/ SUSTAINABILITY

A focus on areas that promote health and wellbeing such as gardens, access to movement/ exercise, air quality, natural lighting, and sustainable options.

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LEARNING
connections flashcards