

Walnut Springs Middle School—Center for Inspiration Westerville, OH

The Center for Inspiration at Walnut Springs Middle School was designed to inspire students in their own creative endeavors. The Client Team was insistent that the space should inspire the creativity of their students and, more importantly, be a place of destination: "a place where their students want to be".

The Design Team took their inspiration from things that inspire them: music, art and literature. Utilizing inspiration from each of these areas, a three sided fireplace was created as the central core of the space with each side paying homage to a source of inspiration both literally and figuratively. The idea of the fireplace itself came from one of the designer's favorite music: Bob Dylan's Bringing It All Back Home. Shapes within and colors throughout the space came from another designer's favorite work of Art: an early work of Cubism from Amedee Czerfant. There is a "Golden Door" entry into the space that came from one of the designer's favorite books: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. These specific inspirational works are featured prominently above the mantles of each of the fireplaces. The idea was to demonstrate to the students how one form of art can influence and inspire another.

Innovation comes at the intersection of ideas, so the space was designed to facilitate spontaneous opportunities for discovery and creation. The Center includes a variety of seating options including a custom circular bookcase/reading nook, a flexible classroom with glass overhead doors that open into the main space and a spatial speaker system that allows students to listen to and perform music without disturbing others nearby.

The renovation turned a passive, single-use room into an active and flexible space filled

with the energy that sparks creativity. It has proven wildly popular as use and circulation of materials have increased nearly 100%. The renovation has caused one problem for the school: getting the students to leave the CFI to go back to class.

Remodel/Adaptive Reuse/ Restoration

Library/media center

TRIAD Architects

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DESIGN TEAM

Design Team: TRIAD Architects: Elise Bluell, Dyani Robarge, Kevin Kindy, Paul Miller, Nathan Gammella and Bob Gibson

Westerville City School District Team: Jean Trimble, Becca Yanni, Mike Pierce, Kenny Nichols, Stephanie Donofe, Jennifer Knapp, Scott Reeves, Jeff LeRose, Richard Bird, John Kellogg and Tracy Davidson

OWNER/CLIENT

Westerville City School District
 Westerville, OH
 John R. Kellogg, EdD
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KEY STATS

Grades Served: 6-8
 Capacity: 948 total/125 in project area
 Size of Site: 16.961 acres
 Building Area: 99,068 sq. ft. total/7,000 sq. ft. project area
 Space per Student: 56 sq. ft.
 Square Foot Cost: \$65
 Project Cost: \$455,000
 Completion Date: August 2015

PHOTOGRAPHY: KATE HORGAN (GREYBIRD GALLERIES)

