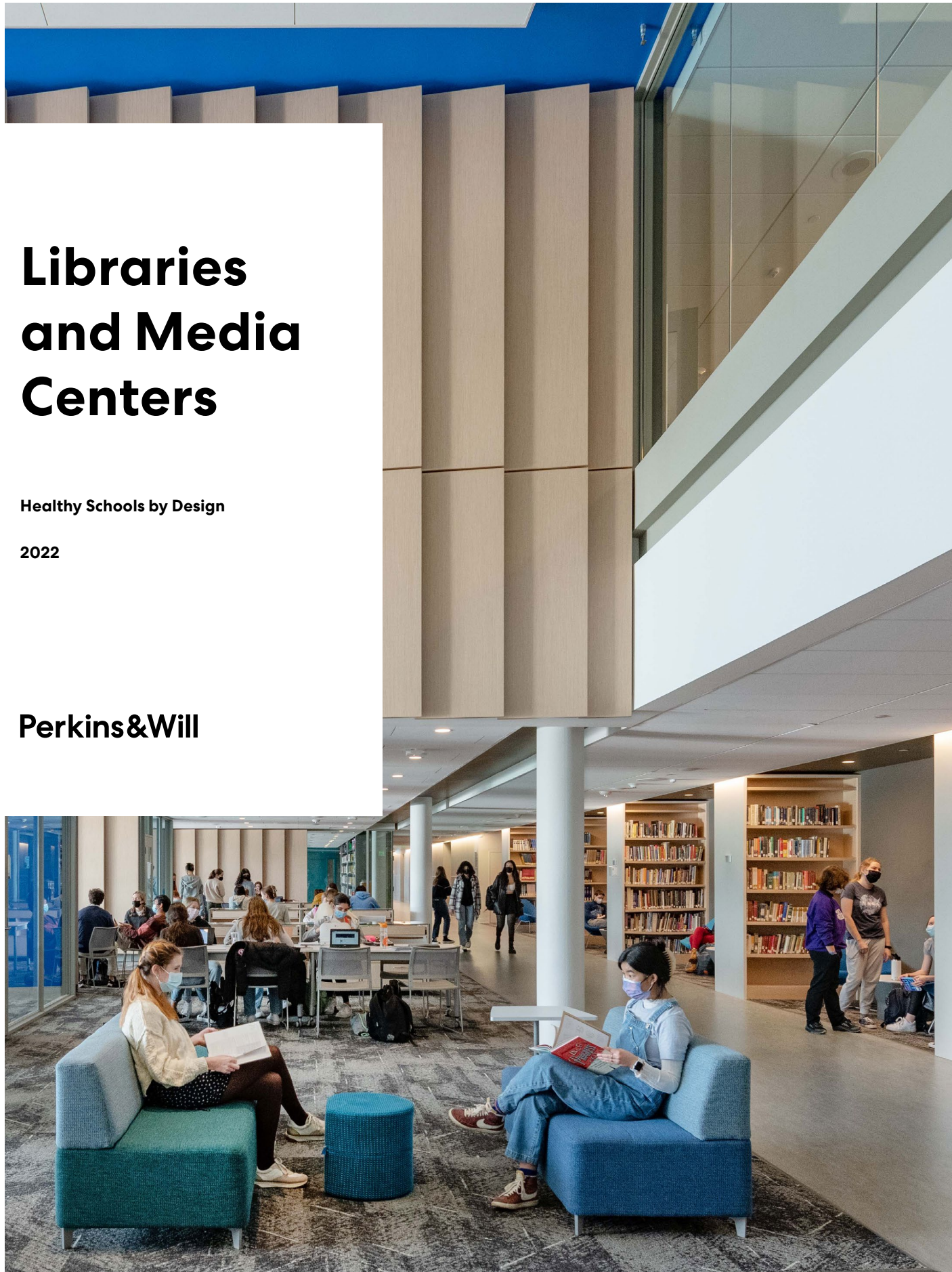


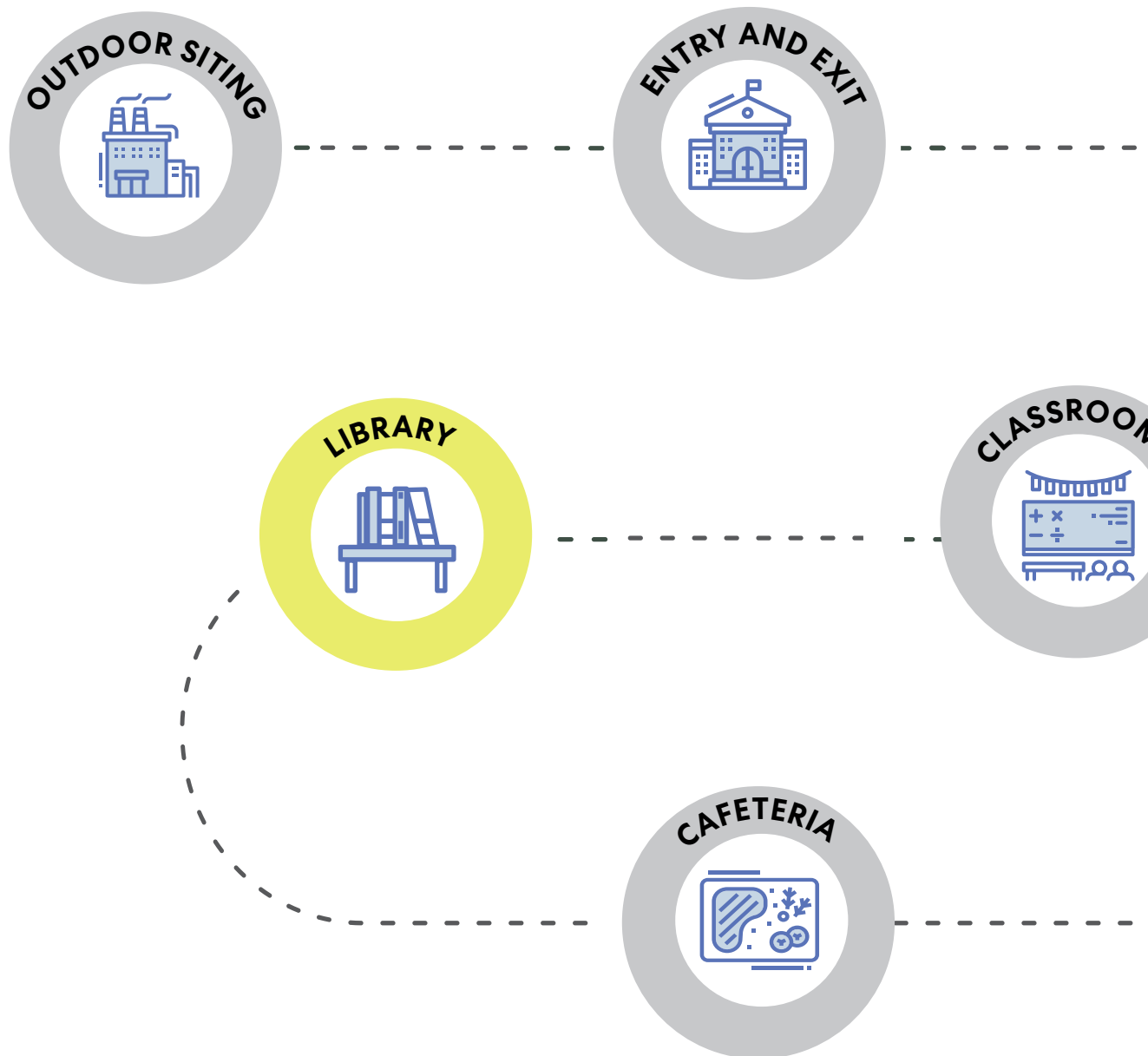
Libraries and Media Centers

Healthy Schools by Design

2022

Perkins&Will





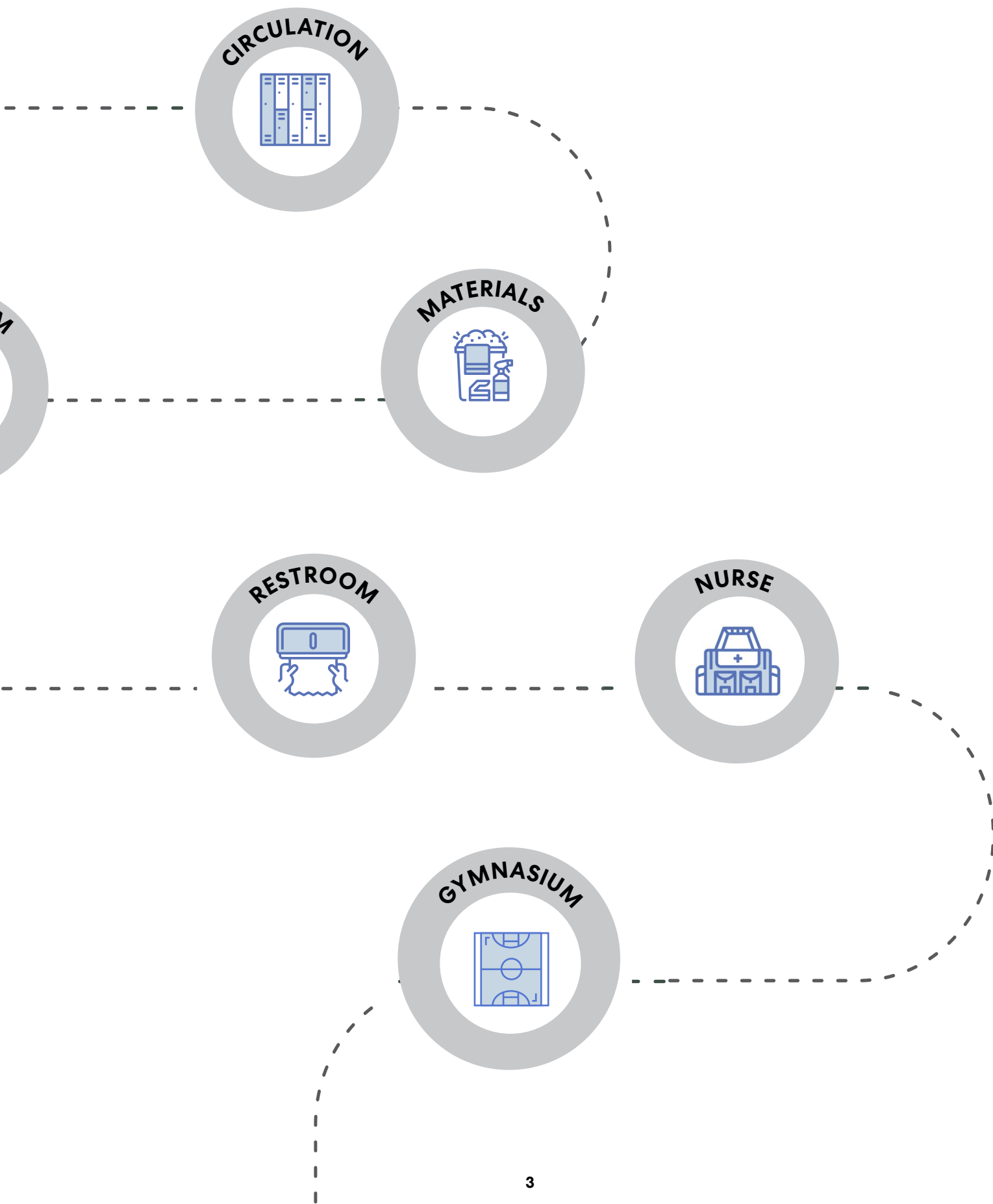
A DAY IN THE LIFE

Meet Riley

In the pages that follow, we invite you to imagine how these design interventions will impact Riley, an imaginary—but very real—student. We owe it to students like Riley to make school buildings as inviting, safe, and healthy as they can be.



Follow Riley's journey through school at
healthyk12.perkinswill.com/



Why you should read this!

- 96% of Americans agree school libraries are important because they give every child the opportunity to read and learn.
- Students in high poverty schools are almost two times as likely to graduate if there is a certified school librarian on staff.
- 73% of students who used the school library had higher literacy scores than the average student who did not.
- More than 90% of traditional public schools have a school library but less than half of public charter schools do.
- Across the United States, 2.5 million children are enrolled in districts where there are no libraries.



Our Goal



This series is focused on translating research into practical design solutions that promote health in our K-12 schools. The guidance provided is based on the available information as of the date of publication and does not replace federal, state, or local public health recommendations. It aggregates best practices and innovative solutions at the intersection of buildings and school health. We encourage schools to reach out and seek expert advice on their unique circumstances.



Project: Springfield High School,
Springfield, Pennsylvania



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— Libraries and Media Centers

Libraries and media centers function as the epicenters of knowledge in our schools. As technology increases, media centers and libraries will be less about where we house paper books and more about collaboration, socialization, and community use.

Our holistic framework address the most critical issues affecting the school library through three lenses: Educational Adaptation, Health Promotion, and Risk Mitigation.



Inspire communities of knowledge and growth.

Libraries have evolved from physical book storage into spaces that celebrate knowledge and innovation. **Studies** have demonstrated that students in schools with library programs score higher on standardized tests in comparison to peers without similar resources.

Effective library programs are a combination of both certified school librarians and dedicated physical space. In fact, the **2016 Scholastic School Libraries Work!** Study noted quality library programs foster 21st century skills while also supporting English Language Arts (ELA) achievement.

Technology has become a ubiquitous component. Incorporating technological infrastructure transforms the traditional library into a media center and a place for discovery, inspiration, and creation. As such, the design must accommodate and support a variety of needs- **from quiet study spaces to active group project zones.** This redefining transforms the space into a point of universal convergence. The **2017 NMC Horizon Report** highlighted this convergence as “students are relying less on libraries as the sole source for accessing information and more for finding a place to be productive”. In response, libraries must adapt and be increasingly flexible in terms of space and technology to accommodate the evolving needs of learning.

Introduction



SUPPORTING INCLUSIVE DESIGN

In the United States, nearly 10 million people are hard of hearing, and almost one million are functionally deaf, according to the Survey of Income and Program Participation.

As technology has improved, a focus on inclusive library design has grown. Braille, audiobooks, large prints, and accessible software are important tools but, with an increase in the prevalence of makerspaces, recording, and fabrication studios, children are being introduced to new technologies, and it is important that these are also designed with inclusivity in mind.

Barbara Klipper, Youth Services Librarian, said "Accessible 'making' at the library can enrich the lives of people with disabilities in many ways, allowing them to create items to improve their world, have fun, and identify hobby and career possibilities."

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

For students, in addition to intellectual skills, non-academic proficiencies such as competence and self-regulation are also crucial to future academic success. The National Early Childhood Longitudinal Study Kindergarten Cohort highlighted the importance of social skills. The results showed “children with a combination of low/average reading skills and higher levels of social skills performed better on later academic assessments than children with similar reading skills but lower levels of social skills during kindergarten.” As such, social development has the potential to impact future academic outcomes and school libraries are in the unique position to impact this development. The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) offers the Standards Framework for Learners as a comprehensive guide for library programs to foster student success. Within the document, social skills are highlighted, most notably through the “Collaborate” and “Share” Key Commitments.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement through school libraries allows students to create relationships with community members. As of 2013, 24 percent of public school libraries allowed community members to use the library. The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) hopes to increase that number by emphasizing the benefits of student-community collaboration. Partnered with the American Library Association (ALA), AASL created Libraries Transforming Communities, an initiative highlighting libraries’ role as part of the community. The initiative offers a toolkit to help achieve this goal.



Project: New Castle County Route 9
Library & Innovation Center

A Sensory Room, where visitors can modulate the levels of sensory stimulation to their personal preferences, serves children at all points on the autism spectrum.

STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT

Libraries have always been a cornerstone of knowledge. While the objects now include both books and digital resources, the idea remains the same: libraries foster a learning culture for all. Research has shown that school libraries assist in student progress to achieve educational goals and benchmarks. Literacy and reading capabilities are considered valuable skills developed during childhood. However, the impact of these academic skills can vary based on gender, socioeconomic status, and English proficiency, in the United States. The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) assessment is given to students in grades 4, 8 and 12. The assessment measures students’ reading comprehension. In 2019, only 21 percent of low-income fourth graders scored at or above the proficient level as measured by students eligible for National School Lunch Program (NSLP). In contrast, 51 percent of all fourth graders scored at or above proficient. School libraries can help students achieve the critical fourth-grade benchmark. In fact, 73 percent of students who used the school library had higher literacy scores than the average student who did not. For low-income students, school libraries and certified librarians offer opportunities to engage with and gain knowledge in a safe space. Having a haven to read, explore, and learn, especially for students who do not have access at home, leads to higher confidence and enjoyment of reading and writing outside of class.

“There are so many things in a library, so many books and so much stuff, that I sometimes wondered if any one single person could possibly know what all of it is. I preferred thinking that no one does – I liked the idea that the library is more expansive and grand than one single mind, and that it requires many people together to form a complete index of its bounty.”

–Susan Orlean



As climate change continues, schools in the future will have to withstand both environmental and man-made challenges. Educating students on resilient strategies can increase climate literacy.

Signage discussing energy saving strategies, health promotion activities, and building features can turn the building itself into a teaching tool. The library is great place to highlight this information, as it is accessed by all within the building and often times, the community at large.

Libraries and Media Centers

STRATEGY		CATEGORY	NEW/EXISTING	IN YOUR SCHOOL?
L.1	Provide fully integrated technology to support virtual engagement. This can include: mobile charging stations, microphones, and amplified acoustics systems so the school community can engage in person and remotely.	Risk Mitigation Health Promotion Educational Adaptation	New Construction Existing Building	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable
L.2	Provide multiple portable flat screens available to allow flexible collaboration and support librarian-led lessons.	Risk Mitigation Health Promotion Educational Adaptation	New Construction Existing Building	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable
L.3	Provide storage on wheels to reduce clutter and increase ease of cleaning.	Risk Mitigation Health Promotion Educational Adaptation	New Construction Existing Building	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable
L.4	Offer direct access to and views of the outdoors so students have the opportunity to read, learn, and collaborate outside.	Risk Mitigation Health Promotion Educational Adaptation	New Construction Existing Building	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable
L.5	Include quiet areas (nooks, pods, caves, etc.) for heads-down focused work.	Risk Mitigation Health Promotion Educational Adaptation	New Construction Existing Building	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable
L.6	Provide charging ports or include additional outlets , as individualized technology increases the need for power for each student.	Risk Mitigation Health Promotion Educational Adaptation	New Construction Existing Building	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable
L.7	Provide digital devices/tools to allow easy access to information (i.e. e-books, computers, tablets, wi-fi)	Risk Mitigation Health Promotion Educational Adaptation	New Construction Existing Building	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable
L.8	Select or replace old furniture with products free of antimicrobials , flame retardants and PFAS chemicals	Risk Mitigation Health Promotion Educational Adaptation	New Construction Existing Building	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable
L.9	Locate library within floorplan so easily accessible from main entrance for community engagement.	Risk Mitigation Health Promotion Educational Adaptation	New Construction Existing Building	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable
L.10	Include variety of services such as printing areas and meeting spaces for community use and engagement with students.	Risk Mitigation Health Promotion Educational Adaptation	New Construction Existing Building	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable
L.11	Consider appropriate height for bookshelves based on anthropometric data of average student based on age.	Risk Mitigation Health Promotion Educational Adaptation	New Construction Existing Building	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

Our aim is to support holistically healthy buildings, but we understand that each learning community is unique and has their own health priorities. Use these strategies as a starting point!

Libraries and Media Centers

Strategies in Action

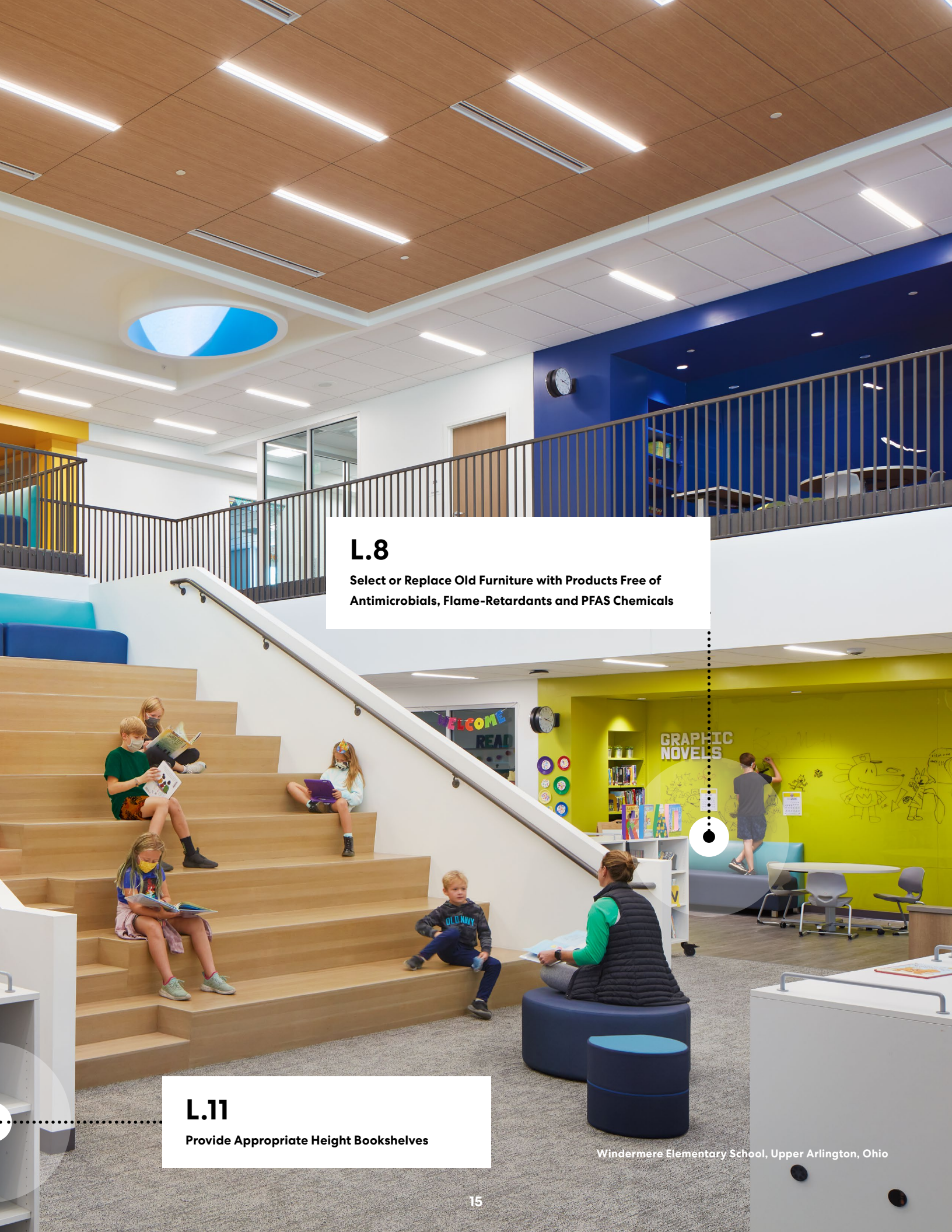
L.3

Provide Storage on Wheels to Reduce Clutter and Increase Ease of Cleaning

L.5

Include Quiet Areas (Nooks, Pods, Caves, etc.) for Heads-Down Focused Work

NEW BOOKS



L.8

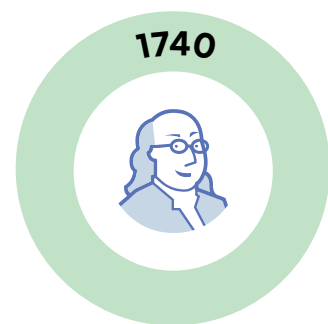
Select or Replace Old Furniture with Products Free of Antimicrobials, Flame-Retardants and PFAS Chemicals

L.11

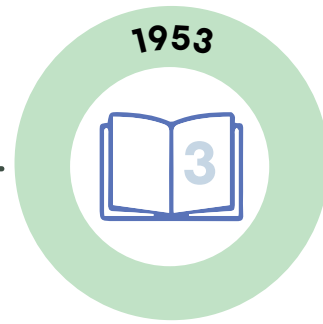
Provide Appropriate Height Bookshelves

Windermere Elementary School, Upper Arlington, Ohio

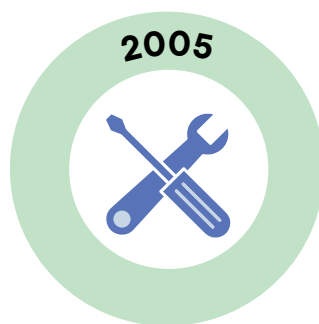
Evolution of Libraries to Media Centers and Beyond



Benjamin Franklin recommends school libraries as key component to education.



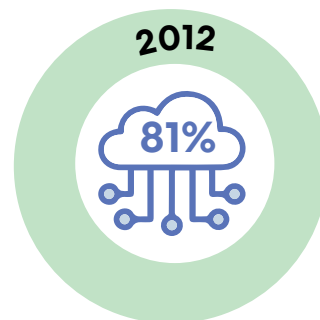
Across 46,880 public schools with library media centers, the average circulation is 3 books per pupil.



Makerspaces first appear as part of the popular Do It Yourself (DIY) movement.



96% of school libraries have Internet access for student computer use.



81% of school libraries have a wide variety of online reference databases for student use.



Library Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

The American Rescue Plan: Humanities Grants for Libraries, offered \$10,000 each to over 200 libraries during the pandemic. The Palmas Academy in Humacao, Puerto Rico was forced to furlough the only librarian and shut the facility down. Thanks to the funds, the library reopened, re-hired staff, and welcomed back students. It is now considered the main hub for activities in the community.

1980s



Computers are first introduced to schools and installed in the library.

2000



Across 76,807 public schools with library media centers, the average circulation is 17 books per pupil.

2019



52% of librarians incorporate tech-related programs to engage students.

2020



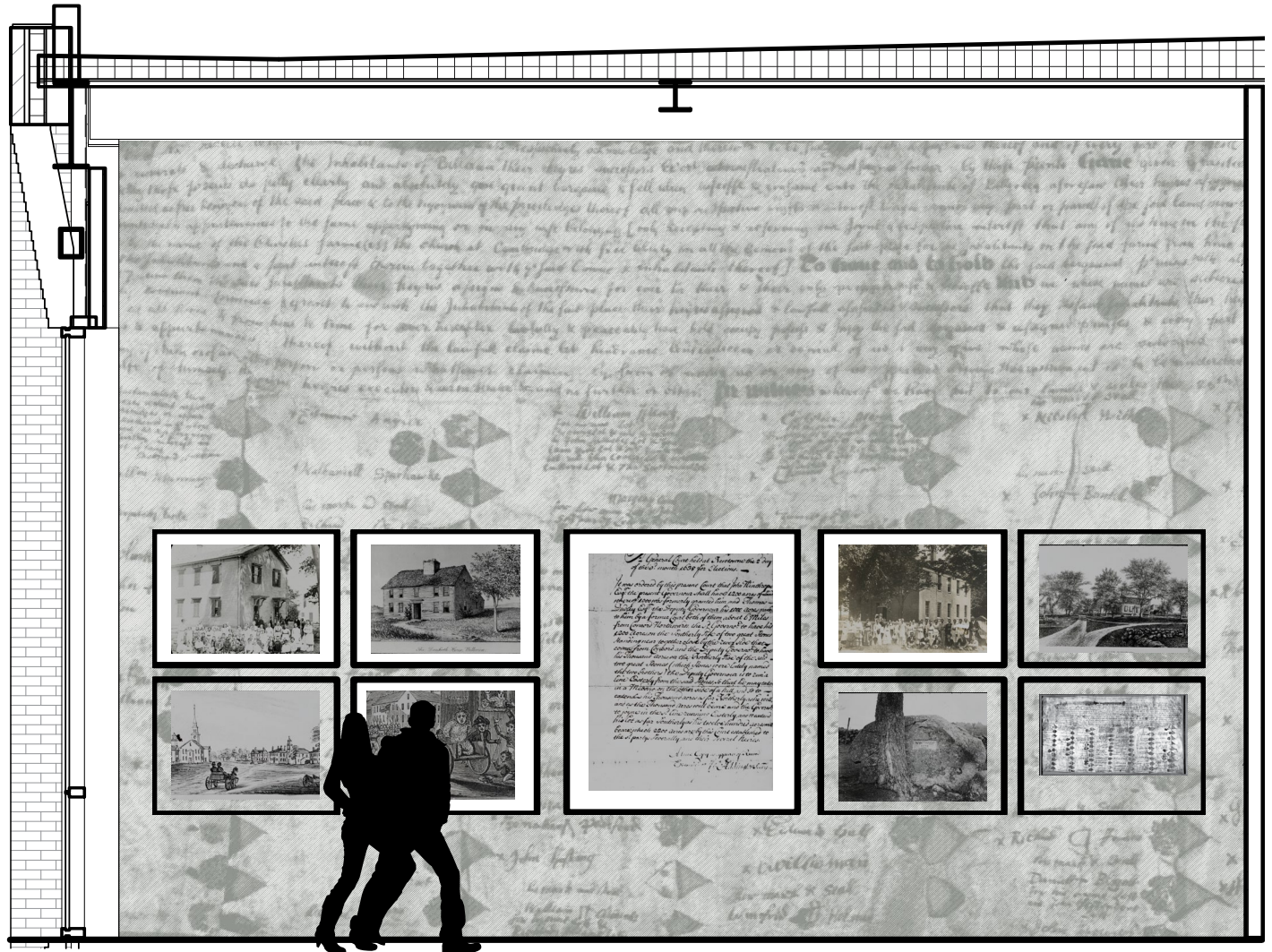
80% of school and public libraries currently engage or plan to engage with the broader community.

2022



The ALA COVID Library Relief Fund offer \$1.25 million in grants to support libraries during the pandemic.

Case Study: Billerica Memorial High School, History Room



Connecting the Community

Libraries can foster social connections- between students, librarians, and the greater community. The ALA's Libraries Transform initiative offers resources dedicated to increase community outreach. **The resources range from information on book mobiles to event suggestions for civic and community engagement.**

One featured suggestion explored how to unite a community through common ground: the town's history.

In 2013, Anthony Cocciolo from the Pratt Institute School of Information and Library Science, wondered "can libraries act as places for promoting civic engagement through the use of socially and culturally significant documentaries?"

While Cocciolo's work focused on airing PBS documentaries, the idea remains: libraries can unify generations.

At Billerica Memorial High School, the library is not only for student use, but also for public use. The learning commons is fitted out with whiteboards, a projector screen, and flexible furniture. But most notably, a dedicated area showcases a special piece of the past. Within this room, the community can take pride in the history of the town. A feature wallcovering depicts the original town deed from 1655. In addition, artifacts from that era are displayed in the room, connecting the students and community with the history of the area.

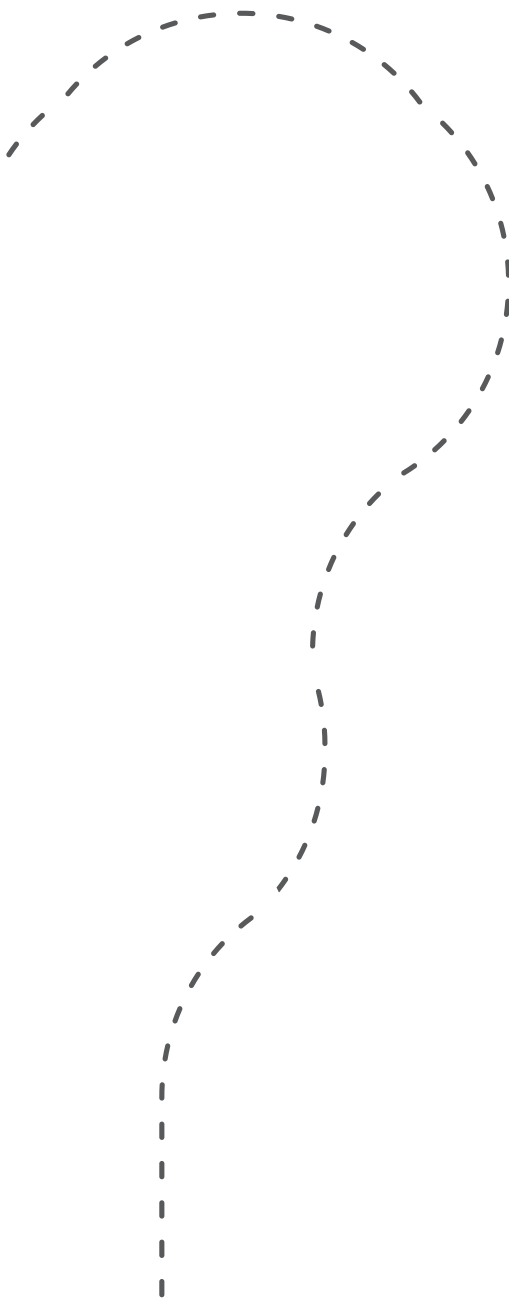


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