

# Does space matter?

## Teacher Learning in Changing Contexts



Today's students are tomorrow's teachers, and tomorrow's students haven't even been born. The spaces we design and create today must meet the needs of today and for these future teachers and learners. Future-ready learning environments with flexible, adaptable furniture and re-purposed classrooms call for new educator practices and rethinking of how we utilize our spaces.

Much like all industries in which innovation is highly prized, education relies on the principle of constant growth and adaptation. This is true for the student's knowledge and understanding of the world, how instructors teach, and even educational programs' evolution. The best school furniture design isn't about the furniture itself; it's about crafting the ideal environment. Making sure that a given space and its furniture complement each other can transform the learning experience.

Building a future-ready program requires more than arranging materials and furniture. It is an adaptive shift in the district, school, its leaders, and teachers. Classroom interactions involving practices such as reading, writing, interpretation, math, and collaborative groups are influenced by social spaces and guide new spatial arrangements. Schools and teachers excel when we begin to reimagine new daily routines to incorporate best practices in new ways. As educators transition to flexible, adaptable environments, how can we support their changing contexts?

**Take a deep dive into how schools and teachers effectively balance what is in the classroom with how to use new spaces to ensure increased opportunities and enhanced performance for all students.**

Join Jill Ackers as she explores new ways to position learners as creative agents.

The impact of including your physical environment and the dynamics of gathering in planning for content is a crucial component for school building utilization, educator success and student achievement. The dynamics of fostering critical thinking and collaboration are bound together by the physical space and teachers' pedagogical actions and activities. – Jill Ackers



JILL ACKERS, ALEP

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Jill Ackers is a middle school teacher at heart. After teaching Algebra and Geometry for many years, she became a school leader, professor, and author and has consulted with schools and organizations worldwide to transform various learning ecosystems. As an educator with 25+ years of experience, Jill brings her passion for constructivist learning, languages, and technology to educators through authentic, relevant professional development. She has launched new schools, been a school leader in private and public institutions, and taught PreK-12 programs, including the first Dual Language Project-Based Learning School in Dallas, Texas. She has redesigned university professional development programs and was a founding designer for Southern Methodist University's (SMU) first urban transformational leadership master's program, where Jill coached principals in school turnaround and adaptive change management. As a Learning Design Principal, Jill has worked with architects and designers to develop district-wide master plans, and pedagogical master plans to align bond money with long-term professional development initiatives. As an accredited learning environment planner, Jill supports the interconnectedness of pedagogy and space - and how space plays a profound role in curriculum delivery.

## POSITIONING LEARNERS AS CREATIVE AGENTS

Explore how the art and science of teaching is an integral part of everyday educator decision-making. Key to the teaching and learning process includes the dynamics of fostering critical thinking and collaboration are bound together by the physical space and teachers' pedagogical actions and activities. In this workshop, we will explore how the impact of including your physical environment and the dynamics of gathering in planning for content.

Explore what makes a flexible learning environment meaningful and effective.

Examine how furniture positioning has the potential to change student outcomes and improve well-being.

Explore how the dynamics of gathering, when embedded into educator planning, helps learners make meaning of content.

Engage in a variety of learning activity strategies to link spatial features to develop spatial fluency.

