BCWH
ARCHITECTURE
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PLANNING

PAUL H. CALE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Media Center Improvements

DRAFT
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Albemarle County Public Schools

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PURPOSE STATEMENT

Traditionally school libraries have formed the nucleus of academic support space, providing a storehouse of static materials to support teaching and learning across disciplines. As teaching and learning have evolved to be more interactive and project oriented, so must the role of the library evolve in support of access to current and multimedia based information sources and to foster the love of life long learning. Access to the latest information in a variety of formats and accommodating places to evaluate, develop, organize/reorganize and present information becomes the basis for reimagining the elementary school media center of the 21st century and an appropriate model for Albemarle County Public Schools.

The academic model for elementary schools used by ACPS is based on professional programs; ie, engineering, science, arts, etc. These programs focus on problem solving and project based learning across the core curriculum and by should support an interdisciplinary approach to learning. The media center acts as a neural center of the school in which physical and virtual information is collected, managed and distributed.

The 21st century media center for ACPS supports this interdisciplinary project based approach in four key themes:

Collaborative – allowing for a variety of group sizes – individual student reading, small team work groups and large group teaching and performance activities; teachers and students are engaged in projects together

Multipurpose – accommodating a variety of activities from research, display, performance, reading, and project spaces that are easily reconfigured and altered as programs and needs change

Connected – the program and its resources are distributed throughout the school in various ways and can be easily allocated as needs shift; provides programmatic and digital connection to other project or information commons areas within the school, other schools within the system, schools in other parts of Virginia and to the world beyond.

Interactive – collecting, displaying, performing and sharing of ideas; the programs, the activities and content engage all the senses

These themes should provide the basis for programmatic and physical developments as the role of the media center continues to evolve in the future.

Programmatically the 21st century media center is changing from a place where knowledge is stored and accessed to also include areas for sharing ideas and information, encourage learning activities and support project work. With the addition of these activities, the media center has become a more dynamic environment where multiple types of learning occur simultaneously within the media center, as well as, throughout the school in spaces that are digitally connected to the media center. Providing a media center with a flexible foundation will enable the space to change and evolve in the future as student, school and community's needs change and as new teaching and learning methods emerge.

FUNCTIONAL AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Programmatic functions that have been identified and described are as follows:

Display – variety of areas to display student work (2D/3D) within the MC and along the corridor; this could be spread out to the classroom areas as a link back to the MC; there are some enclosed display cases and open display areas; a large storefront display case, like a department store window, could be located prominently that functions as a display and a small recording studio. Digital display is also accommodated though video screens throughout the space as well as the school.

Performance Area (large group) – with a small, portable stage platform, this area is equipped with chairs and tables and can be easily reconfigured for a variety of events: class discussions, student performances, group projects

Small Team Areas (small group) – areas for groups of 4 – 6 students to work together on a project, play games, or research

Individual Reading Area – provide spaces in more private areas to allow individual students to read in a comfortable environment

A/V Studio – also described as a Broadcast or Communication studio, small space for up to 4 – 5 students to record and edit audio visual projects

Project Work Area – dedicated area for activities that need access to water and more durable finishes; the area includes casework and sink access for variety of project needs

Information Desk – the circulation desk is replaced with a smaller, more efficient work area centrally located within the main room for the Information Director to visually control the space as well as provide greater accessibility for assistance.

Information Director Office – ID work area that is secure and private. Similar to the traditional office setup.

Library stack space is provided around these program elements and is not a separate, designated area.

The following summarizes the physical characteristics of a 21st century media center:

Architecture of the space –

- Provide for shelving and other methods of displaying books; ie, tubs, etc.
- Visibility – maximizing visual connections throughout the space
- Consistency of lighting levels and controllability of natural and artificial lighting
- Ceiling height varies to accentuate types of activities in the varied areas
- Provide open space to accommodate maximum flexibility

Furniture –

- Flexible – easy to move
- Comfortable – upholstered
- Appropriate scale for varied age groups
- The furnishing used should be ergonomically appropriate, comfortable, attractive, and durable. The furniture should be able to easily adapt to a variety of layouts and uses, and be supportive of a technology rich environment. It should encourage mobility and interaction between students

and teachers. The furniture will play a key role in the ability for a space to be modified to serve large group, small group, and individual instruction.

Color/Materials –

- Age appropriate – fun
- Use to establish zones or reinforce areas within the MC
- Color that is applied to a learning environment must be carefully balanced between colors that promote focus and attention with those that are stimulating and energizing.

Acoustics –

- Controlling the overall sound levels within the space to help allow a variety of activities to occur simultaneously

Technology –

- Wireless access for all types of hardware – ipads, Kindles, notebooks, easy relocation of hardware within the space
- Controllability of lighting with use of technology
- Variety of resources for student and teacher use – collectively and independently

DESIGN IDEAS

Option A – create three activity zones

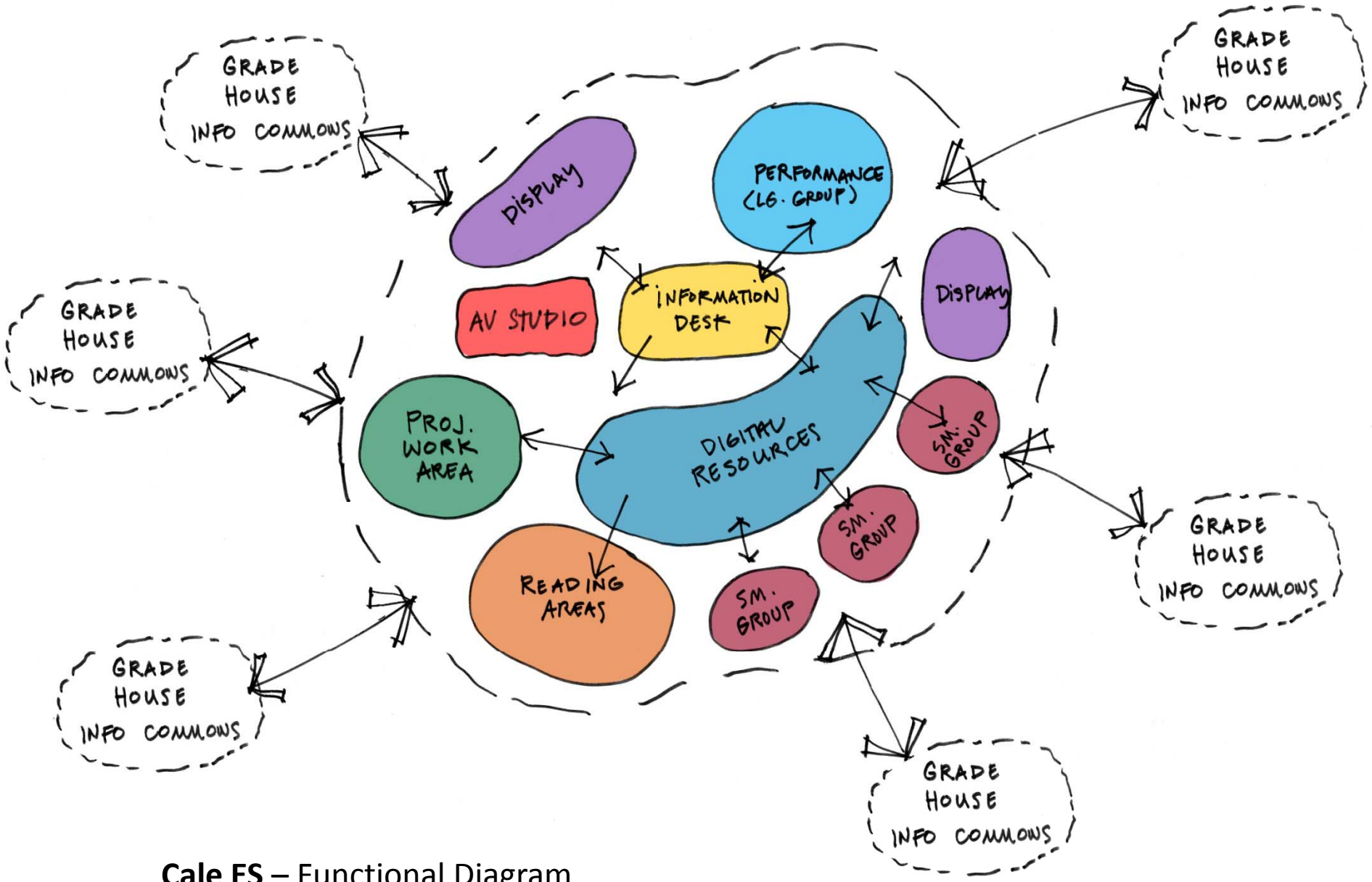
Using shelving and furniture pieces create three zones

- display (static/ performance)
- research
- study

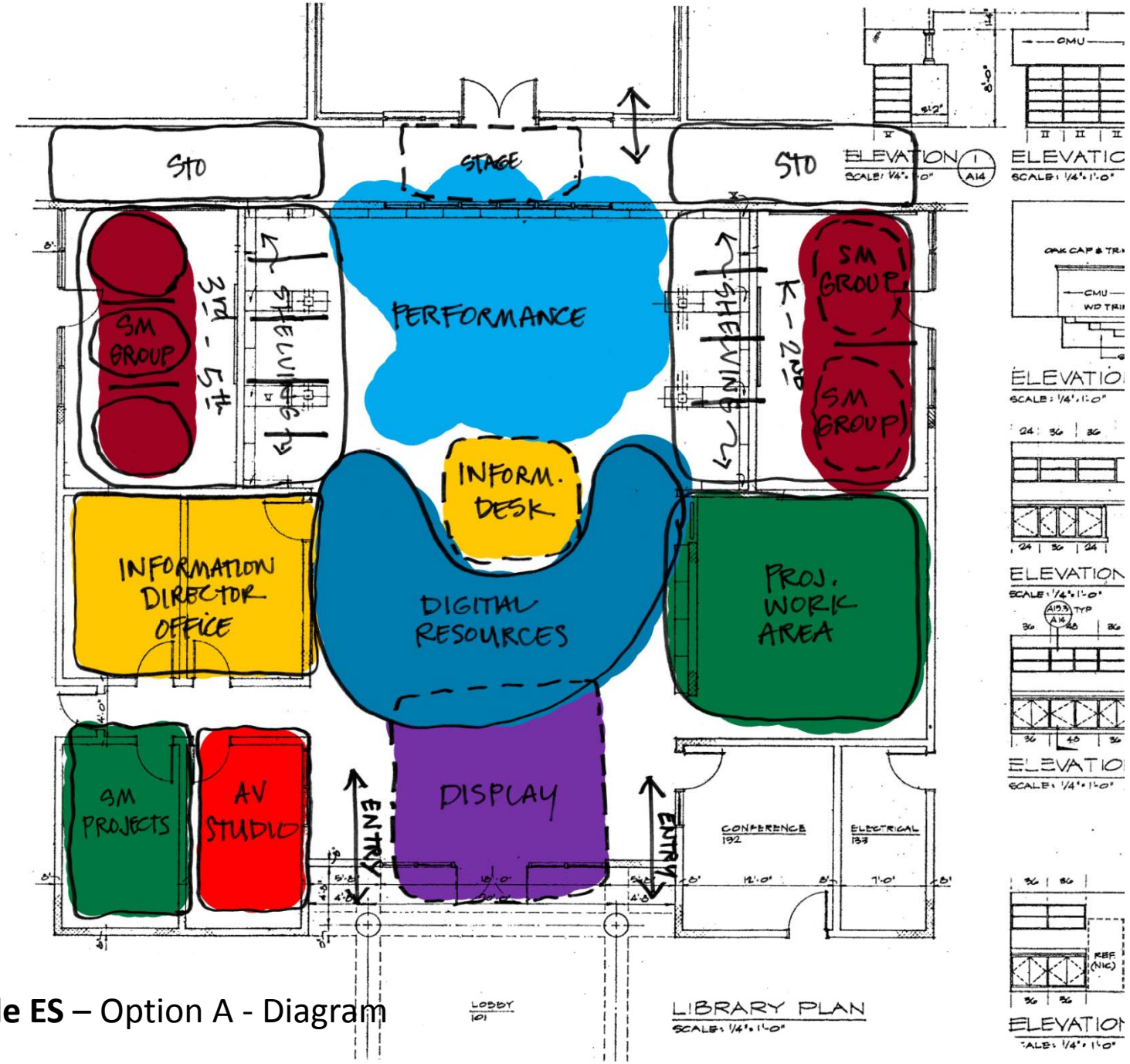
- Interior finish upgrades – paint, carpet
- Minimal changes to ceiling
- Connection to the Courtyard

Option B – similar to option 1

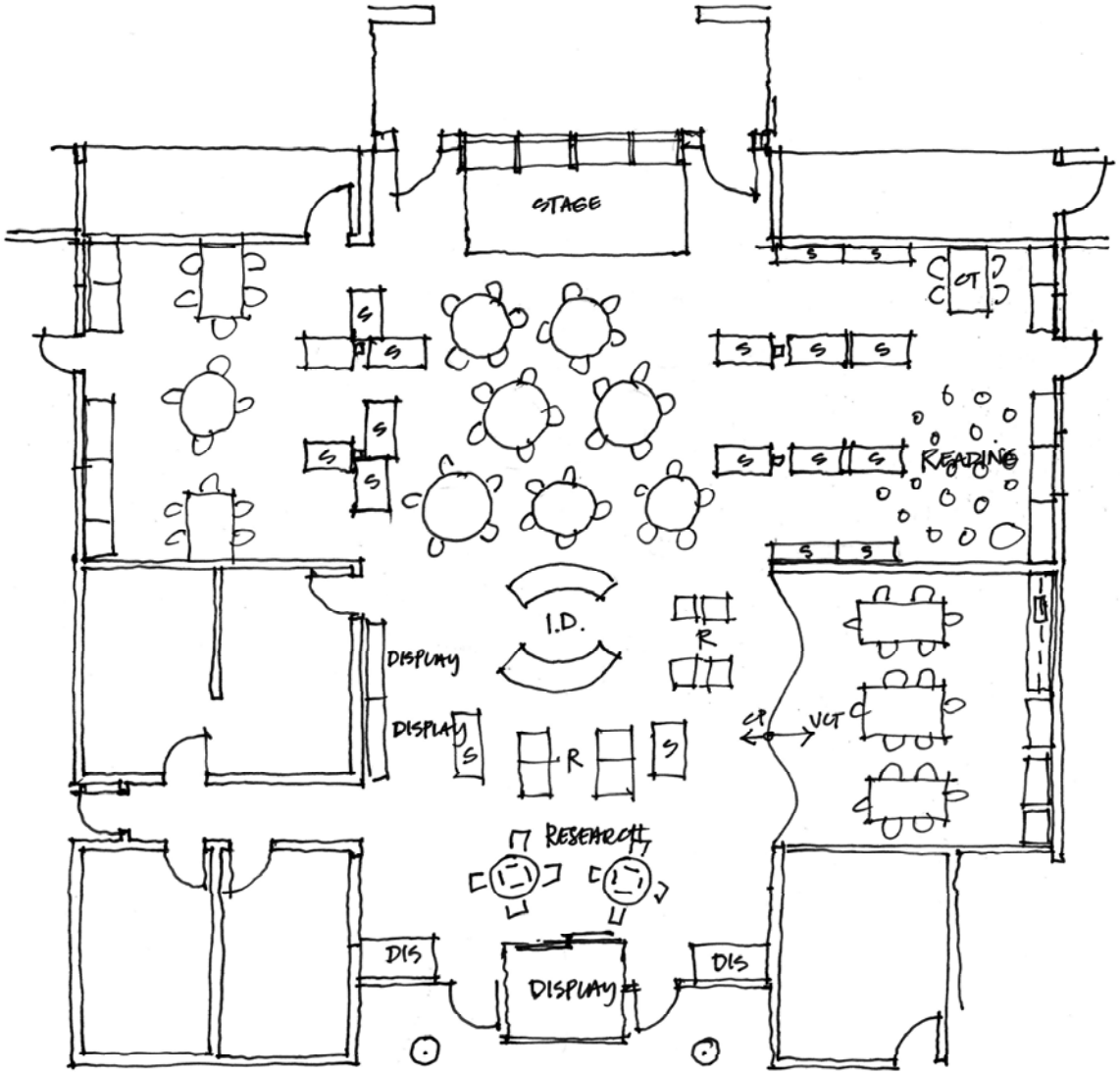
- Performance/Large group space is switched
- Additional spaces for personal reading nooks off the small group area
- Small group area focuses out onto the courtyard



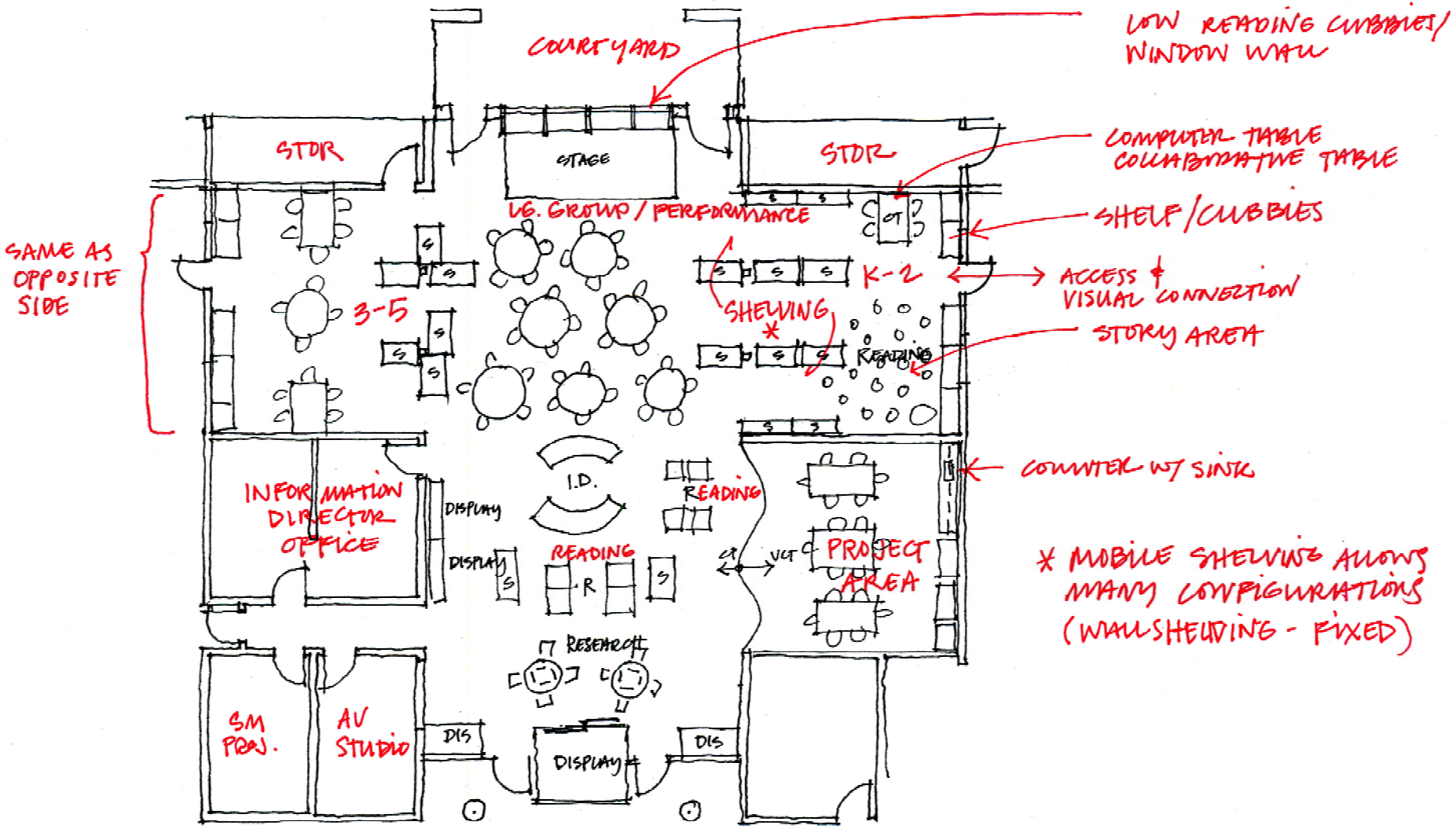
Cale ES – Functional Diagram



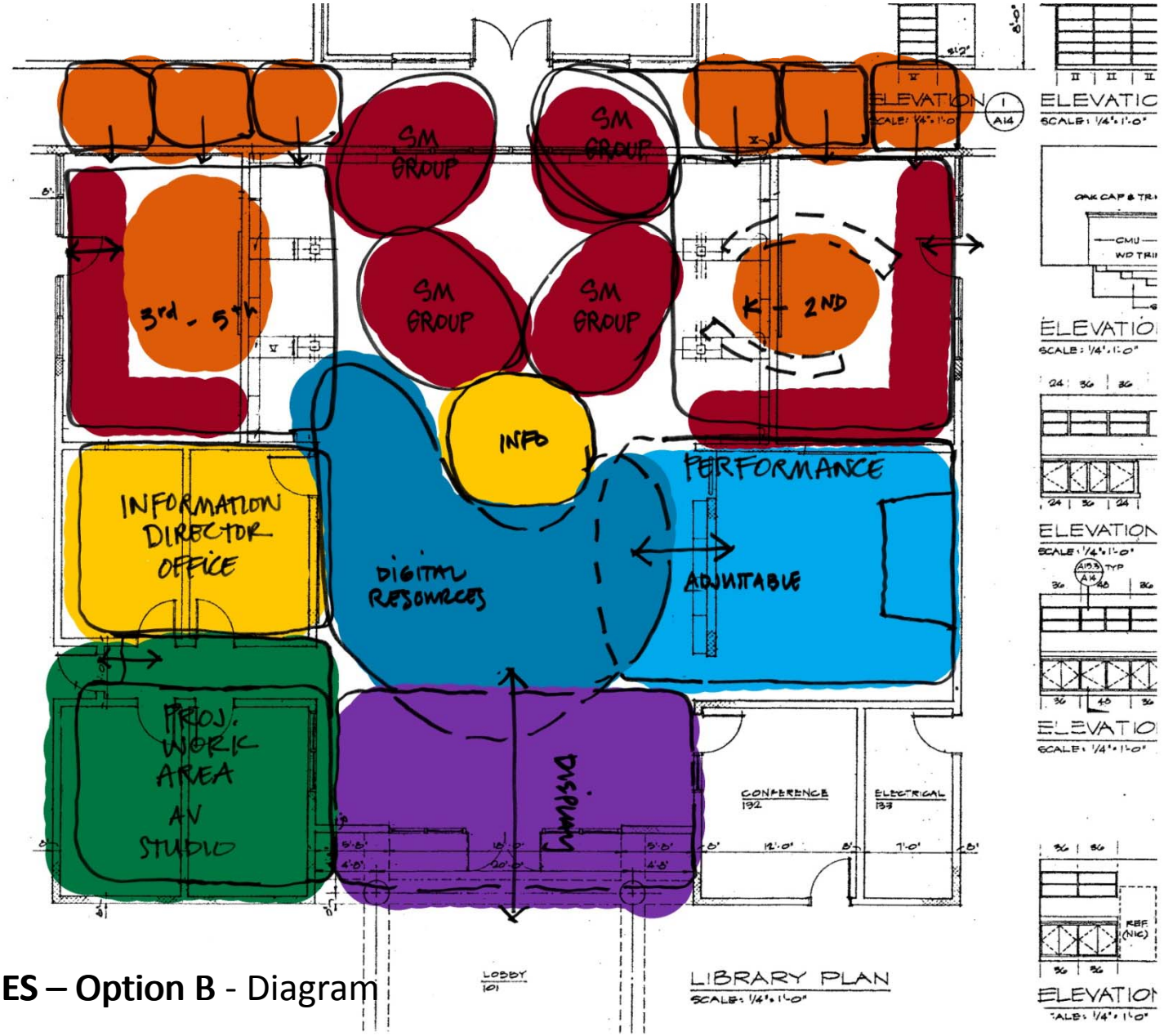
Cale ES – Option A - Diagram



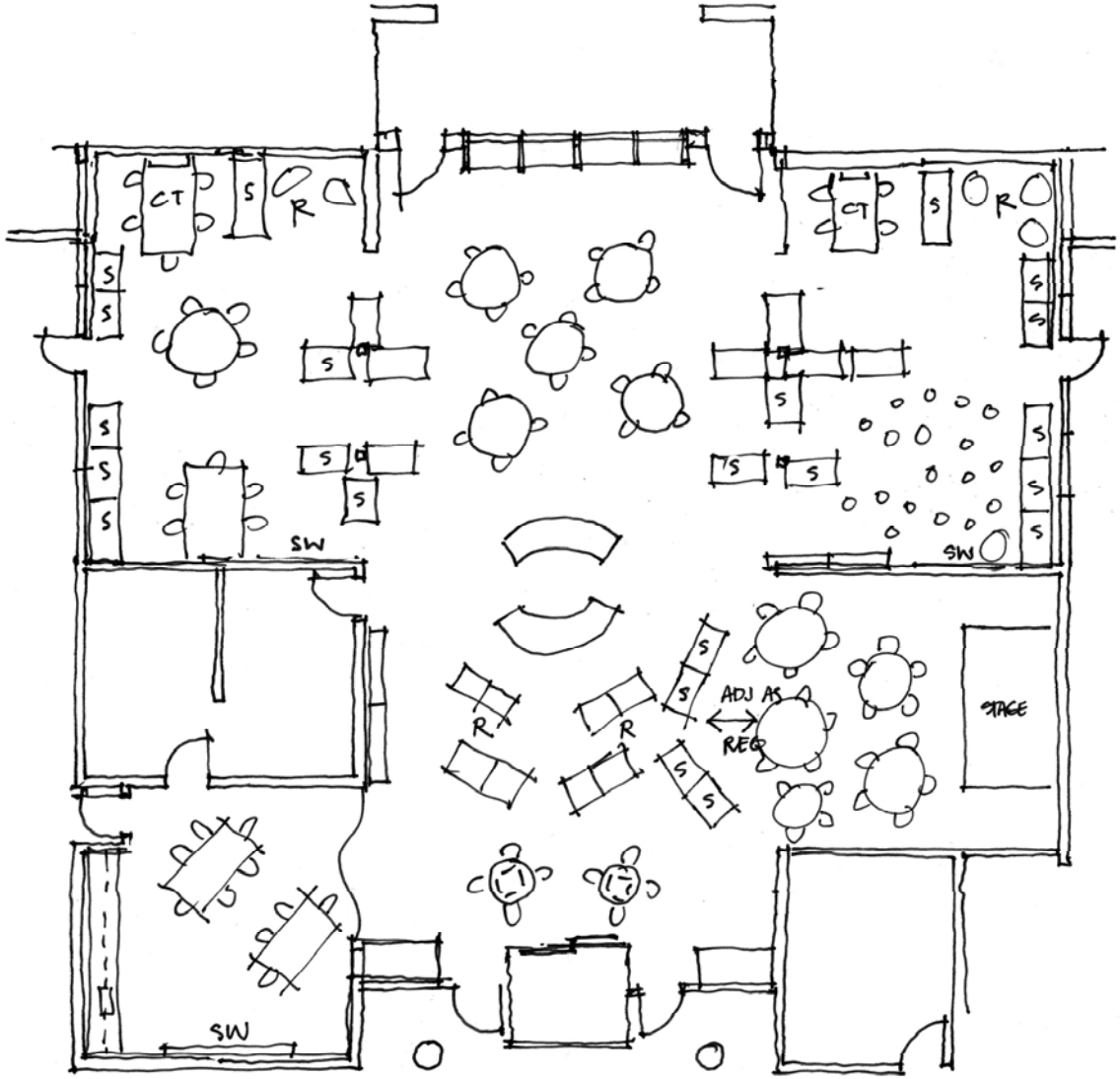
Cale ES – Option A



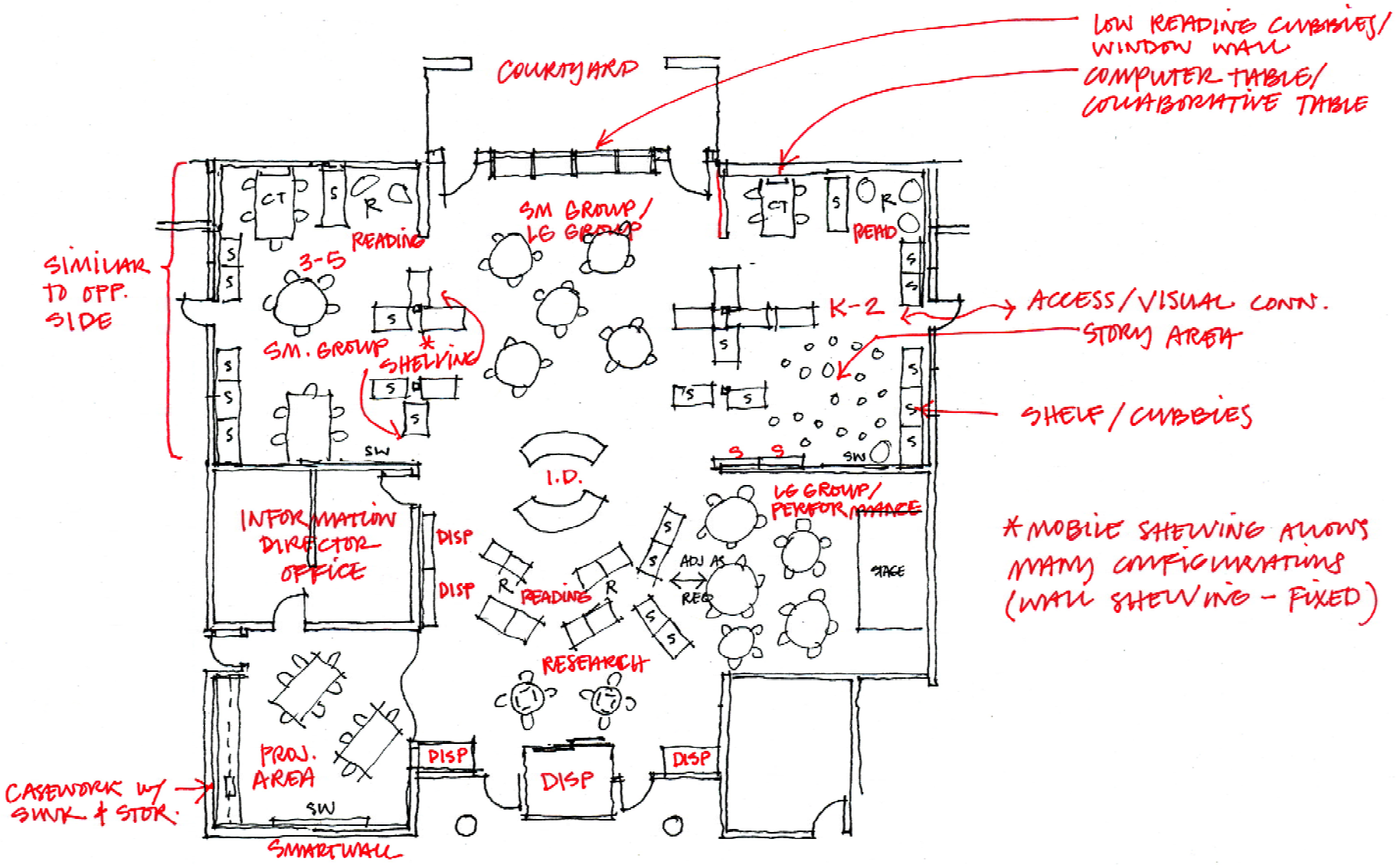
Cale ES – Option A



Cale ES – Option B - Diagram



Cale ES – Option B



Cale ES – Option B

EXAMPLES

Photos of media centers and library projects in recent work as examples of color, finishes, furniture, and how spaces will be used.

Spaces

Spaces


CHILDREN'S LIBRARY

Furniture

The following are furniture examples of the types of shelving, seating, technology and display items that could be used.

REFERENCES

Trends in school library media centers for the 21st century …

1. Flexibility in Student Spaces
2. Visual literacy
3. Extended access
4. Technology readiness
5. Supervision
6. A place for books
7. The distributed library

Research Resources

- Catholic Education Office. "21c School Libraries – Leading Learning" Judy O'Connell, http://www.slideshare.net/heyjudeonline/21c-school-libraries-leading-learning

- eduScapes. "The School Library Media Specialist", http://eduscapes.com/sms/index.html

- e-School News Online. "Six Trends in School Library Media Centers for the 21st Century", Steven Baul, 2007. http://theunquietlibrarian.wordpress.com/2007/09/18/six-trends-in-school-library-media-centers-for-the-21st-century/

  Doug Johnson blogs about technology – education – libraries
- Doug Johnson. Retrieved from Wikispaces:
  - https://dougjohnson.wikispaces.com/NetGen
  - Part I and II - http://doug-johnson.squarespace.com/blue-skunk-blog/2010/8/11/changed-but-still-critical-part-one-of-two.html

- Hayes, Jan, et al. *Libraries as 21 Century Technology Leaders* [PDF document]. Retrieved from Libraries as 21st Century Technology Leaders Wiki Site: http://www.networkedlibraries.info/assessment/documents/21stCentury.pdf

Books:

Rolf Erikson and Carol Markuson's *Designing a School Library Media Center for the Future*, 2nd ed, ALA, 2009

Color Resources:

1. "Functionally color can be used to enhance learning environments by reducing eye strain and increasing attention spans. While high contrast environments are stimulating, lighter tones can promote student focus. Some studies have even indicated monotone color schemes increase the rate of student absenteeism. According to one source, the key to creating ready-to-learn environments is a variety of colors and a range of color intensity, including some hues used as way-finders and culture-builders in common areas." http://www.designshare.com/index.php/articles/color-debate

Meeting Notes

A meeting was held on March 18, 2011, to discuss 21st Century Media Center environments for elementary schools and how these principles may be implemented in Paul Cale Elementary School. Participants in the process included the following faculty and staff representatives:

Dr. Pam Moran	Superintendent	Jack Clark	RW Architects
Dr. Bruce Benson	Asst. Superintendent for Operations	Dee Dee Jones	Cale ES Principal
		Shannon Gavin	Cale – Kindergarten
Vincent Scheivert	CIO	Stephanie Passman	Cale – 5th Grade
Brian Gunnell	A/V Manager	Brooke Asher	Cale – Data Coach
Joe Letteri	Dir. Building Services	Jenn Sublette	Lead Coach
Rosalyn Schmitt	Building Services	Roger Richardson	BCWH
Debora Collins	Director Elem. Ed.	Julie Gerber	BCWH
Cathy Worley	MHS Principal	Charles Tilley	BCWH
Joan Ackroyd	MHS Librarian		

- **Introductions:**
  - Mr. Letteri gave an overview of the process to date and all participants were introduced.

Programming Discussions:
The list of questions provided prior to the meeting was used as a starting point for the planning discussions. The following summarizes the discussions. A copy of the information provided by the School in response to the pre-meeting questions is attached.

Thoughts from Dr. Moran:

- 21st century is the Conceptual age

- Starting with the end in mind – ACPS wants to graduate students who…
  - Have a love of lifelong learning
  - Skilled in a variety of media
  - Maintain healthy lifestyles and concern for wellness
  - Skilled in research with skills in sharing knowledge

- Library as neural center of the school – learning takes place throughout the school; in corridors, classrooms, etc. These areas should link back to the Media Center as a place to share, research, display and connect.

- School should function as a series of connected studios for learning with the Media Center at the center. The MC facilitates production of ideas and offers opportunities to share ideas.

- This is an opportunity to create a model for Media Centers –
  - What are the space changes necessary to meet the future needs?
  - Teaching and Learning – what
  - Technology – creative uses of technology

- School – teachers and support faculty – need to take ownership of the physical changes as well as the program and teaching changes that will take place.

Thoughts from Vincent Scheivert

- Technology will match tools to the right space/program
- Availability and access is key to technology
- Maximize the space by using technology creatively
  - 'the wall' – smart walls or spaces for projection/interactive media
  - Smart tables – collaborative, digital work areas
  - Short throw projectors

Thoughts from Dee Dee Jones/Cale Elementary Faculty

- Wikipage notes – see attached
- Cale is an engineering focused ES – all ES's have a focus program – the program focuses on problem solving and project based learning
- Cale serves a large population of ESL students
- Media Center doesn't really reflect their current beliefs and programs.
- Library is connecting to all the spaces in the school
- Want to showcase projects and teamwork in the Media Center.
- Goals for a new space:
    - Flexible
    - Multipurpose
    - Height adjustable furniture and variety of types for different age groups
        - Round tables
        - Comfortable seating
        - Shelving for display and book storage
    - Definition of spaces using carpets – either fixed or moveable rugs
    - Lots of color
    - Lots of electrical outlets
    - Technology [flat wall surfaces for projection – not concrete block]
        - Lower interactive boards for K-1 students
        - Smart tables – for team electronic collaboration
        - Maybe Xbox type gaming systems
        - Elmos and mobile cameras
        - Integrating technology into children's everyday life
    - Reference desk acts as an information center (current desk too big)
    - Display spaces
    - Need to address media storage (VHS tapes and recorded media)
    - Broadcast studio space – space for recording
    - Comfortable storywell area

Group Discussion:

Books – we didn't hear a lot about 'books'

- Still need but will gradually decrease in amount as popularity of ebooks. In the immediate future, there is still a need for printed materials.
- Display books in MC are not accessible (too high display)
- Books can be spread out throughout the school
- Need to be accessible like students want to access – K students access in bins in classrooms

Media Center should be flexible enough to change as the role of the Library and the program/purpose changes. Flexible furniture to accommodate today as well as adaptable for things in the future.

Read – listen – record – broadcast

How do you want the space to feel?

- Currently teachers drop off students and have planning period. Want to bring students and stay with them while they work on projects.
- Envision media center specialist and teachers working collaboratively learning technology and supporting classroom projects.
- Envision students working on projects all over the school across media center, art, interdisciplinary work.
- Students should have space for mentoring younger students or connecting to other schools across the district.
- Need space with variety of spaces – quiet, small group areas,

Connected to outside – large glass window connects to courtyard. Would prefer the space to be connected directly to the courtyard

Physical spaces – additional discussion:

- Other options – adjacent rooms, corridor – possible removing walls and enlarging the space
- Acoustics are very important – while the space is not quiet, sounds should not disrupt all students working within the space
- Daylighting can be problematic with technology
- Color is important to make the space inviting
- Want round tables
- Comfortable chairs
- Variety of spaces for variety of learning activities
- Carpet to create zones – also non-carpeted areas for work space (possibly with water?)
- Storywell – want a cozy story area with place for a small stage
- Stained glass in the MC needs to be incorporated within the MC somewhere – or alternative suggestion?

The school is already working on incorporating these ideas – using the MC as a central hub for student learning. Already thinking about how to teach students for life lessons not just the minimum standards.