

The School Library of tomorrow: Towards new collaborative resource and creation spaces that promote the "Living, Doing, and Learning Together"

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Abstract:

For several years, the French Ministry of Education has been thinking about the issue of learning spaces in schools. Since 2012, a guideline for learning centers has been distributed and is being updated. A new policy has been implemented for a few months with a series of innovations. The first is the creation of an Archi-class web site: The site accompanies the definition of the renovation project, or construction, of a school with the ambition to facilitate and anticipate the uses of digital in life time. Furthermore, the ministry has opened an innovation laboratory, called "Le 110 bis" : this laboratory is an open space located in the heart of the Ministry of Education and offering a framework of freedom to experiment, exchange, learn and test solutions that meet the challenges of today's and tomorrow's education. Many achievements illustrate this new policy in many academic regions, such as Auvergne, the Grand-Est or the region of Paris.

Keywords: Inclusive school, co-working space, innovation spaces, school of trust

A vast reflection has been initiated within the Ministry of National Education in 2012, in connection with university research, on new learning spaces. Thinking about the inclusive school library of tomorrow is one of them. The national Vademecum of the Knowledge Culture Center (KCC) published in 2012, and currently being updated, promotes digital tools, aims at developing digital and informational skills, ensures a Media and Information Education in an inspiring and inclusive Third place¹. The KCC for which the designation is a French translation of Learning Centre, offers various digital tools, ergonomic and modular spaces for comfort and flexibility of use, an extended opening, and remote resources for educational continuity and students with specific needs.

Education ministerial impulse continues today. It is a part of a more overall reflection on school grounds and hours that should be rethought with the digital environment. The surge of learning spaces triggered by new pedagogies that now include digital technologies questions about the classroom design and layout. A project implemented by the Digital Education Department has taken the form of a website, “Archiclasse”, launched on February 2018². The site offers a common working environment and enables each actor who feels involved in this project to contribute and participate in the overhaul of the education system.

In addition, innovation is encouraged. The innovative lab’s purpose of the national education ministry inaugurated on the 5th of July 2018 is to support anybody who creates an innovative project³. This learning place where we experiment different solutions aims at showcasing the transformations that impact our digital and ever-evolving society and at spearheading new ways of working, collaborating and informing.

Canopé, a part of the Ministry of Education, points the way with its national network of 100 redesigned workshops. They are new co-working spaces, based on the « learning and training center » model and on the European future classroom project, to support school librarians in their projects and achievements.

Thanks to this national and academic impulse, thanks to the growth of digital practices and research on school climate and inclusion, some school libraries have developed a very extensive user approach by involving students in the planning of spaces and the choice of services. Their evolution is also inspired by foreign libraries, guided by Education reforms, and by a continuous training. But above all, these school librarian teachers are focused on the students’ practices, needs, and commitment to the school community. The user approach grows, from the consultation of the students, towards their real involvement in the choices of accommodation and services, to make the CDI/KCC a "capabiliting" space for all publics.

For example, in the first French Learning Centre opened in 2012, at Emile Mathis High School in Schiltigheim (Strasbourg School District), the originality was the cohabitation in a unique place of the CDI and the “school life”, with the view of creating a sense of well-being.

¹ <http://eduscol.education.fr/cid60332/-vers-des-centres-de-connaissances-et-de-culture-le-vade-mecum.html>

² <https://archiclasse.education.fr/>

³ HTTP://WWW.EDUCATION.GOUV.FR/110BISLAB/CID130754/PRESENTATION-DU-110-BIS-LAB-D-INNOVATION-DE-L-EDUCATION-NATIONALE.HTML#DECOUVRIR_L_OFFRE_DE_SERVICES_ET_S_EMPARER_DU_110_BIS

In Paris, students from “Ecole Boule” (Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design) have transformed the CDI of Boris Vian middle school into a multifunctional structure. They have proposed a wide range of solutions helping the pupils to find their place.

In the Auvergne region, since 2016, continuous training for school librarian teachers has included sessions on new collaborative spaces (Makerspace, Fablab...). In 2017, Design Thinking and remix methods were also offered in the continuous training. These courses are shared with librarians. Canopé, national structure of expertise, resources and training, supports school librarian teachers in these approaches of co-design and Hackathons. The goal is to reinvent spaces to meet the different needs by involving students, with tools such as IDEO. The objectives of these new spaces are:

- Attracting all students to printed resources and reading practices;
- The meeting of different cultures generating a community;
- Values of inclusion and solidarity on which true cooperation is based;
- Students’ motivation and empowerment, and other pedagogical aims.

The KCC and Makerspaces offer diverse tools and mediations for creative, motivating and cooperative activities, and of course, reading practices. These community places develop transversal skills by peer-to-peer learning and by participating in a social project.

In the Makerspace of a middle school (Alexandre Varenne - Saint Eloy les Mines), some students made a computer with recycled parts assembled in a can (projets “Jerry DIT”). Others students chose to make a hat for the blind and a connected garden. The school librarian teacher went from an offer policy towards a demand policy. Camille, 13 years old, said : “It interests us precisely because we wanted to do that”. Students must do research, build a bibliography and sitography on a blog, learn the code. Their production for other people justifies and values their efforts. Their projects strengthen the feeling of belonging to a collective. This participative and equipped space promotes empowerment and builds up community.

In a rural middle school (Le Monteil - Monistrol sur Loire), the students were separated by their activities either reading and researching in the CDI, or working in the study room, on the other side of the hallway. Now the KCC has become versatile, designed by students in a co-Design approach. Openings were drilled in the walls. Today the students move freely from one side of the corridor to the other and have arranged the places in their own way in an approach of "engaging communication" monitored by the school librarian teacher. Resources and books are scattered everywhere.

In a middle school, an urban college welcoming numerous nationalities (Albert Camus - Clermont-Ferrand), a reflection has been offered to students, about living and working spaces. This CDI has become multisite, imagined by the students thanks to Design Thinking. The CDI annexes three other rooms dedicated to "doing and living together“. This Makerspace is decorated and animated by the students. They also maintain a webradio. Tablets, comics, novels are available. The school climate has calmed down and incivilities have diminished.

Currently, a group of high school students with learning difficulties start working for the construction of a new high school in Clermont-Ferrand. “Archi S’cool” is their name. They are working with school librarian teachers and Canopé, in a co-Design approach. They will draw on the work of Laurent Jeannin, a French Researcher, to imagine new spaces for learning, living together and culture for all.

Other similar initiatives have emerged on all the territory. A group of expert school librarians conduct projects to publish them in order to make them become visible. « Open our CDI » is a twitter and Instagram hashtag (#OpenOurCDI) to share innovative spaces.