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LIB 534: Administration of Library Media Centers
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Library Redesign Project

A. Introduction

1. The goal of this project is to redesign an existing library into a dream library. I chose the library at Jefferson High School, one of the schools in the Portland Public Schools district. The presentation with image slideshows and multimedia content can be seen here: http://amytaramasso.com/lib534
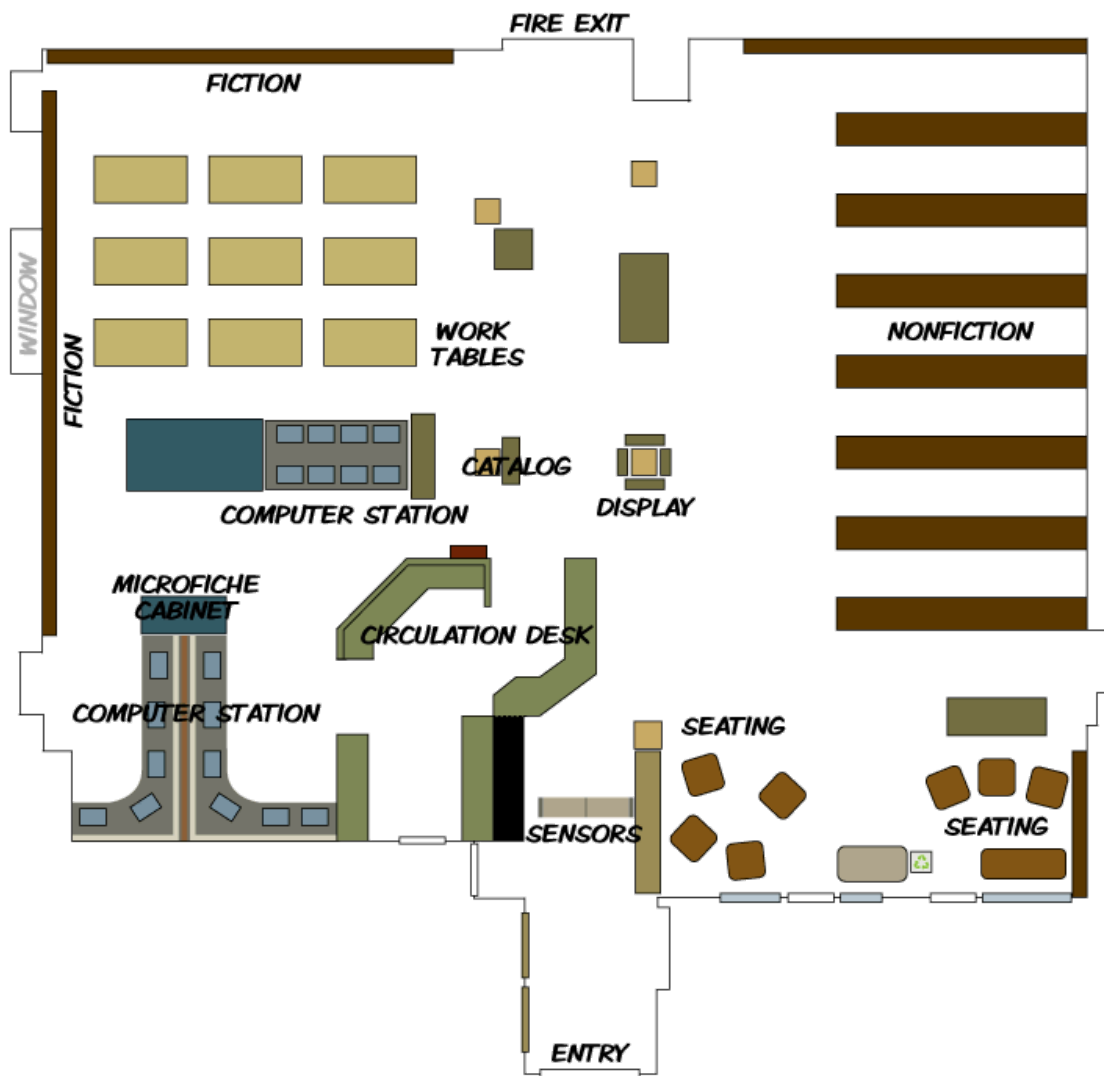
This illustration represents the current configuration of the library.

Twelve computers run in a double "L" along the wall near the circulation desk.

The fiction area and work tables occupy half of the east side of the library.

Nonfiction stacks take up most of the west side of the library.

B. About Jefferson + the Library

1. Jefferson serves approximately 700 students. The school has suffered from fluctuating enrollment and chronic low achievement. Last year (2011-2012), 707 students were enrolled at Jefferson. The previous years saw numbers of 583 (2010-2011), 621 (2009-2010), and 611 (2008-2009), with a low of 566 in 2006-2007), down from 985 students enrolled in 1998 and numbers above 1,000 in previous years.[1]

2. Most recently, the school has reorganized into a "middle college" model, which allows students to take concurrent courses at Portland Community College, earning a year or more of college credit as well as a regular diploma.

3. The media specialist is Nicole Newman. She has been at Jefferson for two years and has already been working hard to revamp the library collection. Last year a Titlewave report showed that the average publish date of the books in the collection was 1982. There was a massive decline in book purchases in the 1990s and 2000s. Nicole was able to get many updated nonfiction books from the closure of the Young Women's Academy, which boosted the nonfiction collection; for example, reference works on cancer jumped 20 years from an average age of 1980 to 2000. Nicole still does not consider the collection acceptable for doing research, but she says that students are having an easier time finding more relevant research resources. She has especially focused on science and technology topics, as those are the areas that change most quickly and often.

   She found that the fiction collection had been maintained better, but she still had to do some weeding to remove duplicate titles of less popular books. She also removed books that were not appealing to students and had not been circulating.

C. Current Library

General Layout

The library is on the ground floor, one floor down from the entrance. The total space is 3,675 square feet. There is only one entrance, but a central hallway dominates the space and leads to a fire exit on the opposite side. Fiction and the computer work stations are on the left (west) side, while the nonfiction and seating areas are on the right (east).

The entrance to the library from the first floor hallway

1. Entry: When you enter the library, there is a hallway that is about 11 feet long with three inset display cabinets, two on the left and on on the right, as well as an elaborate panel containing a circuit breaker that controls lights, heat, and so on throughout the school.

The room to the left when entering the library, currently labelled "club room," is the Jefferson Archives. It houses old yearbooks, newspapers, scrapbooks, and other things that document Jefferson history.


The security gates are a long distance from the doors, so an ad-hoc barrier of shelves and posters has been created along the right-hand side to prevent going around them.

2. Fiction: The fiction section has two rows of shelves that wrap around the room in an L-shape. One half of the room is dominated by nine maple tables with chairs. The other half has two rows of computers (12 total) tucked into the corner. In the center there is a large cabinet and a table with eight more computers.

3. Nonfiction: The nonfiction area has seven free-standing bookshelves and one row of shelves along the rear wall. Nicole has also created a reading space with couches and chairs near the foreign language section. The area also

shares space with two offices and the copier.
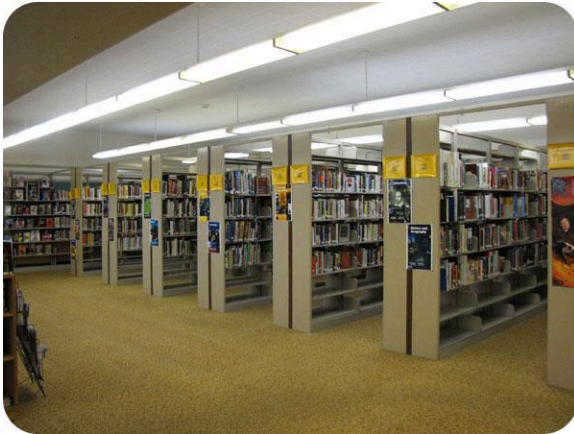
Nonfiction stacks

Reading area & foreign language books

4. Rear hallway: In the long hallway that leads to the fire exit, there are two rooms. The one on the left is the office of the information technology person, and the one on the right is used as technology storage. The technology storage room used to house a computer lab, but now is full of computers and carts.
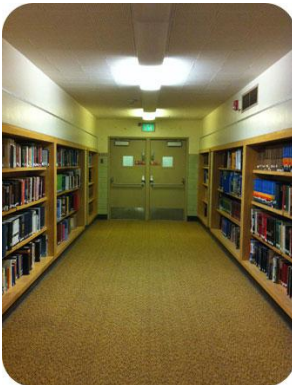
The view to the fire doors
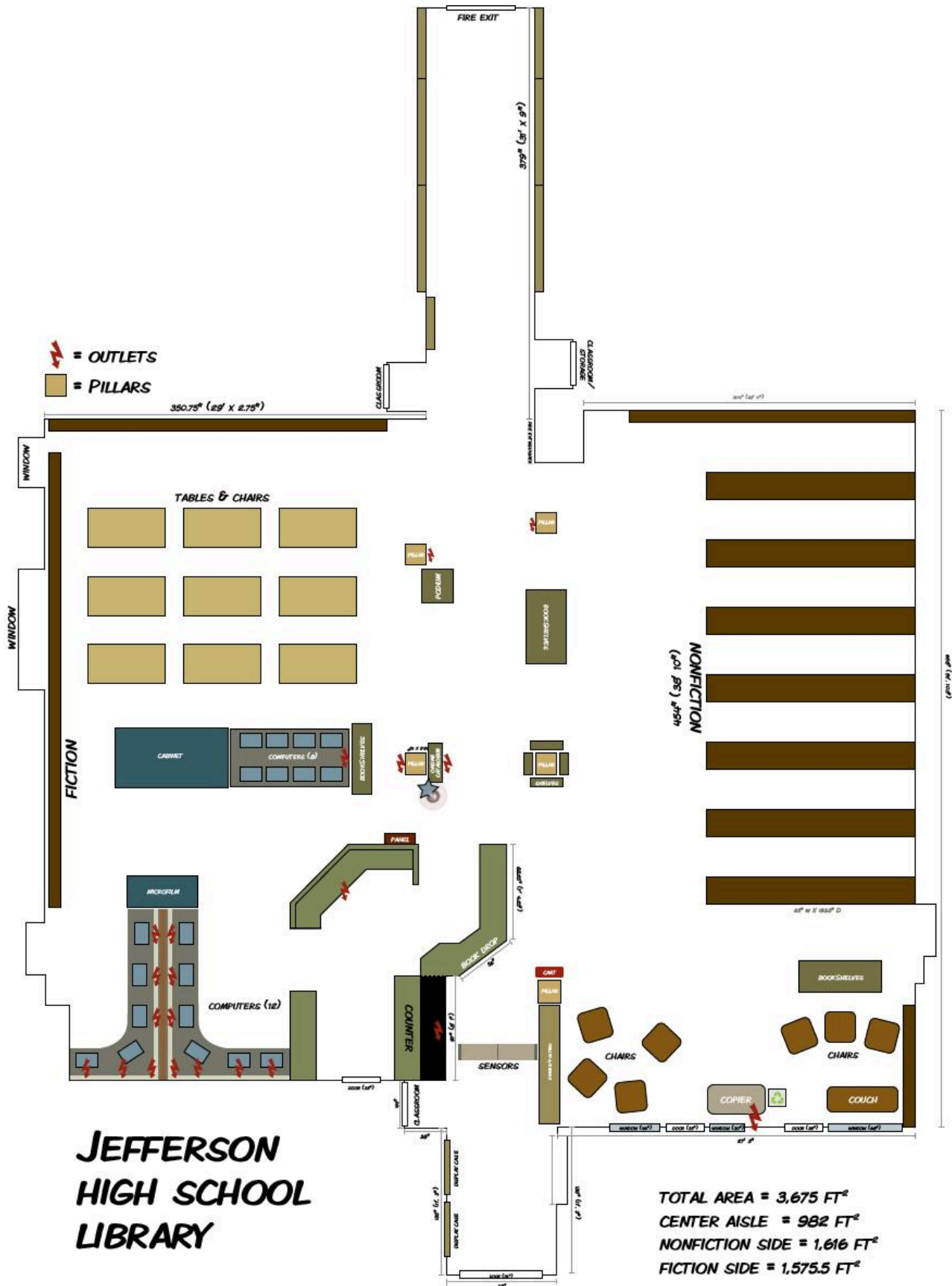

The IT office/ classroom

AV carts outside the technology storage room

D. 360 View
I've created a 360 degree panorama of the current configuration that you can see [here](#).
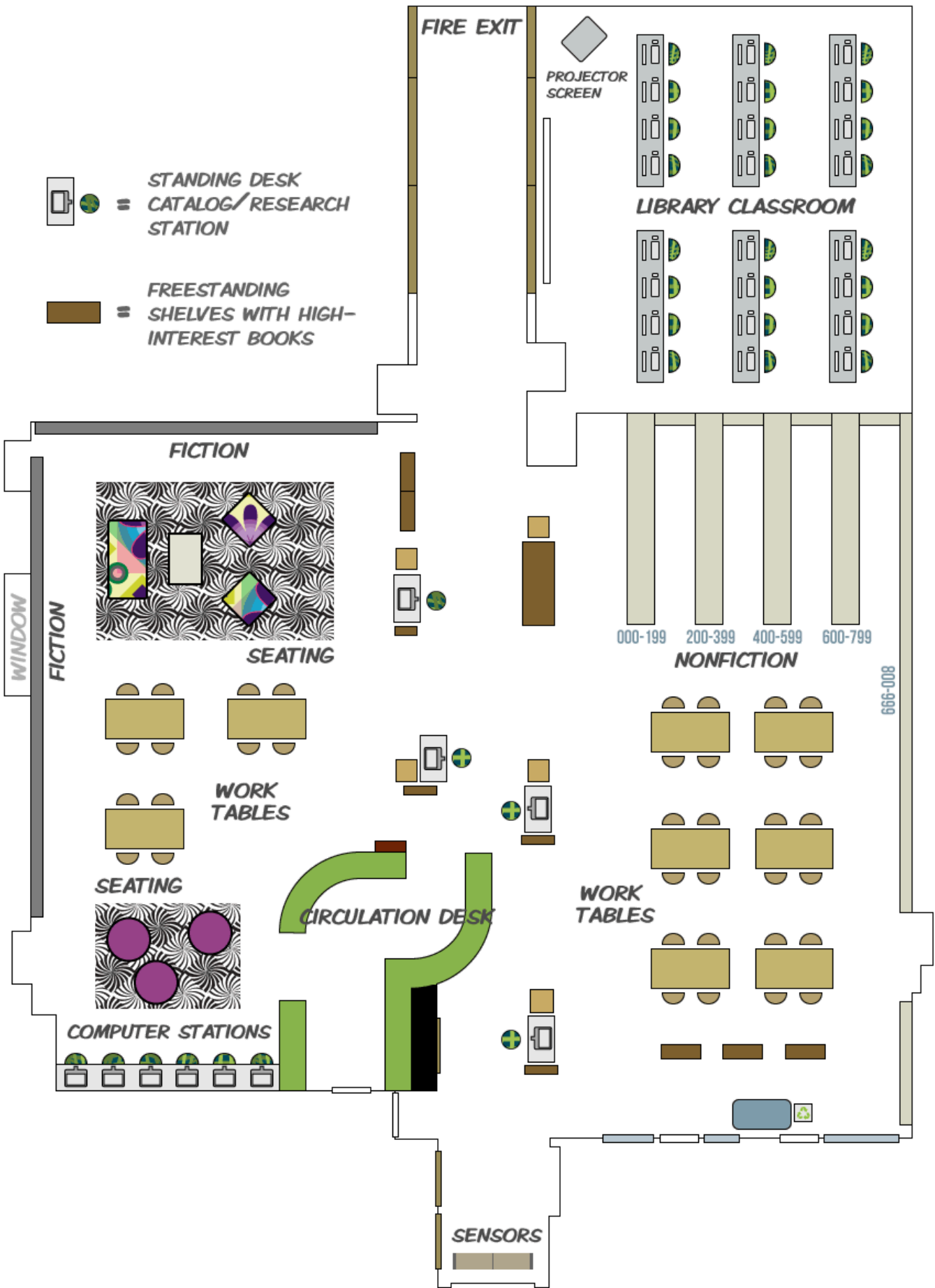
The illustration on the next page shows the current layout with measurements and current furniture configuration. The one that follows shows my proposed layout and changes.

FIRE EXIT

375" (31' x 9")

350.75" (29' x 2.75")

= OUTLETS

= PILLARS

CLASSROOM

CLASSROOM/
STORAGE

WINDOW

WINDOW

TABLES & CHAIRS

FICTION

PILLAR

PILLAR

PODIUM

BOOKSHELVES

NONFICTION
(454' x 35')

CABINET

COMPUTERS (8)

BOOKSHELVES

PILLAR

PILLAR

SHELVES

PANEL

MICROFILM

BOOK DROP

COMPUTERS (12)

COUNTER

CART

PILLAR

SENSORS

CHAIRS

BOOKSHELVES

CHAIRS

COPIER

COUCH

JEFFERSON
HIGH SCHOOL
LIBRARY

DISPLAY CASE

DISPLAY CASE

WINDOW

DOOR

WINDOW

DOOR

WINDOW

TOTAL AREA = 3,675 FT²
CENTER AISLE = 982 FT²
NONFICTION SIDE = 1,616 FT²
FICTION SIDE = 1,575.5 FT²

FIRE EXIT

PROJECTOR
SCREEN

LIBRARY CLASSROOM

STANDING DESK
CATALOG/RESEARCH
STATION

FREESTANDING
SHELVES WITH HIGH-
INTEREST BOOKS

FICTION

WINDOW

FICTION

SEATING

000-199 200-399 400-599 600-799

NONFICTION

800-999

WORK
TABLES

SEATING

WORK
TABLES

CIRCULATION DESK

COMPUTER STATIONS

SENSORS

E. Challenges and Assets

1. Location
    a. Because the library is on the ground floor and only has two windows, it is both out of the way and dark.
    b. Its location also demands load-bearing pillars and an electrical panel (next to the circulation desk) that make visibility difficulty and cut off flow
    c. Fire exit hallway is a dead space that has beautiful wooden shelves that are hardly used.
    d. The room that could be used as a classroom is full of technology equipment

2. Aesthetics
    a. Suspended (drop) ceilings
    b. Hanging fluorescent lights make stacks cluttered and offer inconsistent lighting
    c. Worn and stained 1970s-era rug is ugly and smells like mildew
    d. Everything is golden and beige.

3. Technology & Equipment
    a. Currently has 20 computers, but they are somewhat antiquated
    b. No projector or screen for presenting
    c. Has a WiFi router
    d. Has electrical drops in the pillars and on the north wall
    e. Library has a circulation system already in place (Via)
    f. Has nice maple tables, matching chairs and sturdy shelves

4. Collection: The library has not had a budget to invest in books, but needs to replace and grow both fiction and nonfiction titles to provide up-to-date, relevant, and desirable books and resources.

5. Multiple uses: There is not a lot of room for teaching, presentations, or gatherings.

F. Goals & Rationales

1. Though the library deserves a main-floor location, the guiding motto is "Make it work!" and we will use the space the library currently occupies.
2. The primary goal is to make the space both enticing and more useful for students, teachers, and the media specialist to increase the library as a school-wide asset.

3. The proposed renovation will allow the media specialist to be "not just a keeper of books, but a resource for learning"[2] by creating an inviting, functional space for teaching and collaboration.

G. Proposal

1. Remove rug and polish and stain the (presumed) concrete underneath.

2. Replace "drop" (suspended) ceiling with a drywall ceiling and recessed lighting.

3. Consolidate and rotate nonfiction stacks to create more space and increase visibility.

4. Move security gates to increase flow and eliminate need for barrier shelving.

5. Paint walls a bold color.

6. Turn pillars from ugly necessities into assets by painting them and/or using them to mount book and art displays.

7. Add catalog/research stations with standing desks.

8. Create new, sturdy, prominent signage with consistent colors and typography.

9. Renovate circulation desk to streamline it: remove existing structure and create row of counters with space underneath for storing book carts.

10. Remove heavy, unused storage (e.g. microfiche cabinet).

11. Weed and reorganize collection in fire exit hallway to create display space for student work.

12. Remove built-in computer desks and replace with computer bank along north wall, move current computers into library classroom.

13. Use current technology storage room for library classroom—install a projector and screen for presentations and instruction.

14. Increase amount of soft seating and make it more prominent.

On a related note:

15. To adequately serve the students and staff at Jefferson, it will be necessary to make the media specialist position full time, hire a textbook clerk, and give Nicole a budget for the library.

H. Rationale + Outcomes

1. Jefferson's new identity as a "middle college" deserves a library that can accommodate students on their way to post-secondary academics. Though junior and sophomore students have access to the PCC library, it is much busier and often there is competition for resources. Nicole sees it as her job to build relationships with students while they are freshman and sophomores to support them through the middle college transition. Freshman and sophomore students need to become comfortable in the library and learn to be competent researchers before jumping into the community college environment. Creating a well-equipped, inviting space is vital to students' long-term success.

Citations

"Data Reports." *Oregon Department of Education*. Oregon Department of Education, n.d. Web. 17 Nov. 2012. <http://www.ode.state.or.us/sfda/reports/r0062Select2.asp>.

Newman, Nicole. "Two questions." Message to the author. 28 Nov. 2012. E-mail.