

A Mobile Makerspace

Sharing and collaborating with others is a fun, and yet an important way to learn. Teachers at my district, Nordonia Hills City Schools, are doing just that at professional development days. Two years ago a colleague, Miss Katie Patterson, shared her vision of a Makerspace. *"Makerspaces provide hands-on, creative ways to encourage students to design, experiment, build and invent as they deeply engage in science, engineering and tinkering."* John Spencer, Episode 96, the Cult of Pedagogy Podcast.

A makerspace provides students with an opportunity to have time to design, experiment, collaborate, and share ideas and create projects together. A Makerspace is not just a science lab, a woodshop, a computer lab or an Art room. A Makerspace may combine parts of all of these places. After the empowering presentation on how Miss Patterson's Makerspace worked at her school to provide her students hands on time to create, I caught a vision of my second grade students doing the same. I created a space for students to create in our open classroom coat area. I collected pattern blocks, dominoes, and base ten blocks. I searched the supply closets for Popsicle sticks and file cards and tape. I made homemade playdough and bought toothpicks and pipe cleaners. The students began to use the materials to create connections to literature. Students have made structures for the Gingerbread man and his family. Teams of students created examples of urban, suburban and rural communities we learned about in social studies. Using base ten blocks students created and counted the value of their homes, castles and schools. I have many times shared the items in the Makerspace with other classes in our open classroom. The items currently are kept in boxes in a stationary bookshelf. To share with afterschool programs or other classrooms in the building, each bin or box of materials needs to be carted to the classroom. **If I had a Lorell Mobile Storage Tower with Bins from FriendsOffice, I could share to materials with other classrooms in the school so that more students would benefit from the experience of designing, creating and making connections to their learning.** The pullout bins would allow for easy transport of materials, and the casters would allow the entire Makerspace to be moved easily. The steel storage unit would allow me to use magnets to post Makerspace student expectations, sign out chart and a material list. The movable storage container would facilitate more students being able to use the materials in the cart. As students create and use cards, tape, pipe cleaners the consumable items will need to be replaced. The movable cart would bring opportunities for the Makerspace to be more accessible for all students at our school of 360 students.

As I continue to learn and grow as a teacher, I have found that the students today need time to communicate with their peers. They need time to work with their hands to create. They need the opportunity and resources available to express their ideas through building and art. By working together on projects with the Makerspace unit students will use curriculum vocabulary, develop questioning skills, and expand on

explanations for their work in describing their creations. The Makerspace that I first created is evolving as the needs of the curriculum and students change. I see the need for students to be able to work together and share their ideas. Having a movable Makerspace unit for materials will facilitate that students will be able to get excited, talk about their ideas in a location that does not disturb other learning in the classroom.

Thank you to the W.R.I.T.E. Program for the opportunity to create a movable Makerspace that could be rolled to different locations in the school. Sharing with my former students in third and fourth grade classes will exciting to continue the use of Makerspace with their curriculum connections. Sharing with upcoming classes will encourage students to be familiar with the Makerspace. Education of young children is changing. Students need more chances to use their language to be expressive, to share materials, to collaborate in working on a project with a team, to problem solve with peers. The mobile Makerspace will provide these opportunities for the students of Rushwood Elementary.

Mrs. Kathy Goodson, Grade 2 teacher

Rushwood Elementary

Nordonia Hills City Schools