

A photograph of a modern school interior featuring colorful modular seating and tables. The scene includes a large green modular sofa, a red modular sofa, and a red cylindrical ottoman. In the foreground, there are two round wooden tables, one of which is partially obscured by a large yellow graphic overlay. The background shows a light-colored brick wall and a blue wall section.

School district creates collaborative spaces to support student achievement

Case Study | Warner Middle School



Project specs:

Location: Farmington, Michigan

Space: 4,370 sq. ft.

Students: 635

Collaborative areas: 4

The Farmington School District in Farmington, Michigan, wanted to set students up for success by creating more collaborative workspaces in their schools. ODP Business Solutions™ Workspace Interiors helped the district take full advantage of the unused spaces, transforming them into special areas for everything from teamwork to quiet reading.

Like many organizations, the Farmington School District aims to make the most of the facilities they have. With some of the district's buildings dating back to the 1940s, the administrators try to optimize areas that are underutilized.

The district prioritizes supporting student achievement by making the best use of their spaces, often in ways that provide new areas for teachers and students to work. Recently, that meant embarking on a project to turn underused locations at other schools into collaborative workspaces.

Administrators chose Warner Middle School as the first facility for the new collaborative spaces. Particularly for this school, the new spaces would give students and staff additional working areas, empowering everyone to gather in new places.





New workspaces help the district meet its objectives

Until the project, students gathered in circles in underutilized areas, such as hallways, T-junctions, and the front of the gym.

The school district administrators established three goals when they began the project.

1. **Efficiency:** Foster imagination and creativity in spaces where students and teachers can collaborate more effectively than in traditional classroom settings.
2. **Control:** Enhance the school's interior environment to energize teachers and students and yield greater learning integration.
3. **Cost savings:** Maximize each school's real estate by doing more with the spaces they have.

The district enjoys an ongoing relationship with the Workspace Interiors team. Workspace Interiors has provided furniture for offices, cafeterias, meeting rooms, classroom storage, and more. With all that successful collaboration, it was natural that Workspace Interiors and the administrators would work together on the new spaces.





The principal and assistant superintendent were enthusiastic and welcomed ideas from Workspace Interiors.

The team proposed the design, along with suggested furniture solutions to support the new design. After minor adjustments to the storage height and number of tables, the district's team gladly approved the plan.

Workspace Interiors defined the different spaces, including:

- An empty space in the hallway, which now has soft seating, modular tables, and storage
- A hallway recording space where students record videos on a new curved green wall for computer-generated backgrounds
- A third space that had built-in seats along the walls, so Workspace Interiors added soft seating and tables to make full use of the space
- The gym hallway, which had minimal seating and a large underused space and is now one of the most prized areas for gathering before events or in breakout groups





Workspace Interiors created a small design prototype using real furniture, including a curved sectional sofa, two ottomans, and a round table.

The team worked with its network of manufacturers, which built the furniture to the design team’s specifications so that every piece used the actual fabrics and materials in the final version.

The new destinations are a welcome departure from a traditional classroom’s rows of desks, smart board, and teacher’s desk where they can’t move furniture around. The new collaborative locations provide flexibility and movable furniture compared to those cramped, tight spaces.

The new areas can accommodate everything from small-team work to whole-class sessions. And because they aren’t walled off or closed in, the collaborative spaces have an open feeling that contributes to the activities students perform there.





Students, teachers, and staff all benefit from the project

The collaborative workspaces are a result of the teamwork and relationship between the district and Workspace Interiors.

The yearlong project ran in two phases. Between November 2021 and October 2022, Workspace Interiors performed these activities and more:

- Site visits
- Collaborative meetings
- Presentation of design ideas
- Demo space creation
- Furniture ordering
- Delivery and installation coordination

Workspace Interiors leveraged the Region 4 cooperative contract to provide strategic value and time savings to the district. The cooperative contract is the result of a bid from this lead agency and includes language that enables the school district to use compliant bidding processes that meet the procurement standard. It provided significant time efficiencies and reduced the cost of goods and services for this project.





Effective collaboration delivers for the school community

Workspace Interiors managed the furniture orders, especially through supply chain issues.

Workspace Interiors ordered the furniture and monitored the orders' progress with the manufacturers. When supply chain challenges came up, Workspace Interiors tracked the order and kept the district informed.

Warner Middle School was ideal for new collaborative spaces, so it was the first of the schools where the district will create them. Workspace Interiors team members are already visiting other schools to begin planning.

At Workspace Interiors, we have the unique ability to offer OMNIA Partners members increased purchasing power through our partnership. Alongside OMNIA Partners and our key manufacturing partners, Workspace Interiors delivered excellent value overall by providing innovative product solutions and exceptional service, all under the OMNIA Region 4 contract.*



* Region 4 Education Service Center in Houston, TX, has competitively solicited and publicly awarded the agreement available through OMNIA Partners, Public Sector cooperative purchasing organization.



Workspace Interiors is here to support you.

We're broader than a furniture vendor. Workspace Interiors provides total turnkey solutions that suit your unique requirements, and we can manage any or all parts of the process.

"ODP Business Solutions™ Workspace Interiors provided us with flexibility, warmth, and welcoming spaces for our students to be comfortable in their learning, which allows teachers to be innovative with their collaborative groups."

*Kelly Kaminski
Principal
Warner Middle School*

Learn more.

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