

# FLEXIBLE LEARNING

We are often challenged to interpret how a building truly supports 21<sup>st</sup> century learning. ACI Boland believes flexibility is part of the solution. Approaches to flexibility include lightweight furniture that can be easily relocated or grouped into ad hoc meeting spaces (or forts), movable walls that allow for team-teaching, and breakout/collaboration spaces outside of classrooms. These flexible solutions allow students to work together quickly on team-based projects or peer-based group learning.

An often-overlooked benefit of designing flexible learning spaces is the option to utilize environments for various uses throughout the day. This means taking opportunities to equip and engage building corridors, cafeterias, maker spaces, and the media center so they aren't restricted to one role. Instead, they are available in multiple capacities for teaching and learning by providing the ability to morph into something else quickly, creatively, and easily such as an impromptu performance space or spontaneous group reading space.

## ACOUSTICS

- Appropriate acoustics are critical to successful learning and even more important in collaboration areas

## NATURAL LIGHT

- Abundant natural light aids in learning and sense of well-being while reducing the need for artificial light
- Great light defines great spaces

## SENSE OF PLACE

- Students appreciate a sense of place and scale
- Built-in “study cubbies” are popular as they create a sense of comfort and security
- Movable furniture sized for different ages allows students the freedom to “make” their own spaces

## MULTIPLE LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

- A hierarchy of engaging places allows students to find their “comfort place” since all children learn differently

## FLEXIBLE LEARNING

- Flexibility is key in all spaces of the building as programs and children evolve day to day, year to year, decade to decade
- We design spaces that are adaptable to your needs quickly and easily

## PROJECT-BASED EXPLORATION

- Hard floors, writable walls, flexible furniture, tons of storage, and messes are all trademarks of successful project-based learning. We see these types of spaces in innovation labs, art rooms, robotics labs and maker spaces, and more recently in media centers as the lines start to blur across disciplines

## INNOVATION LABS

- Innovation happens in the spaces between planned spaces, meaning we don't know what kids will dream up so we have to create spaces that are loose enough to allow that exploration to happen
- Robotics labs and maker spaces have more defined programs but still require a loose-based approach for success

## UNDER UTILIZED SPACES

- Cafeterias, corridors, and specialty classrooms are notoriously underused. Placing them close to highly used areas and leveraging them with garage doors, movable walls, etc. allows spaces to work together in an effective way

## TECHNOLOGY

- Technology must be easily accessible and appropriately sized for the space and intended use. Taking into account surroundings such as acoustics, natural light, and adjacent activities are key

## MULTIPLE LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

Overhead garage doors connect low and moderate activity spaces in the media center while providing sound and visual separation from the cafeteria to allow for multiple levels of engagement.



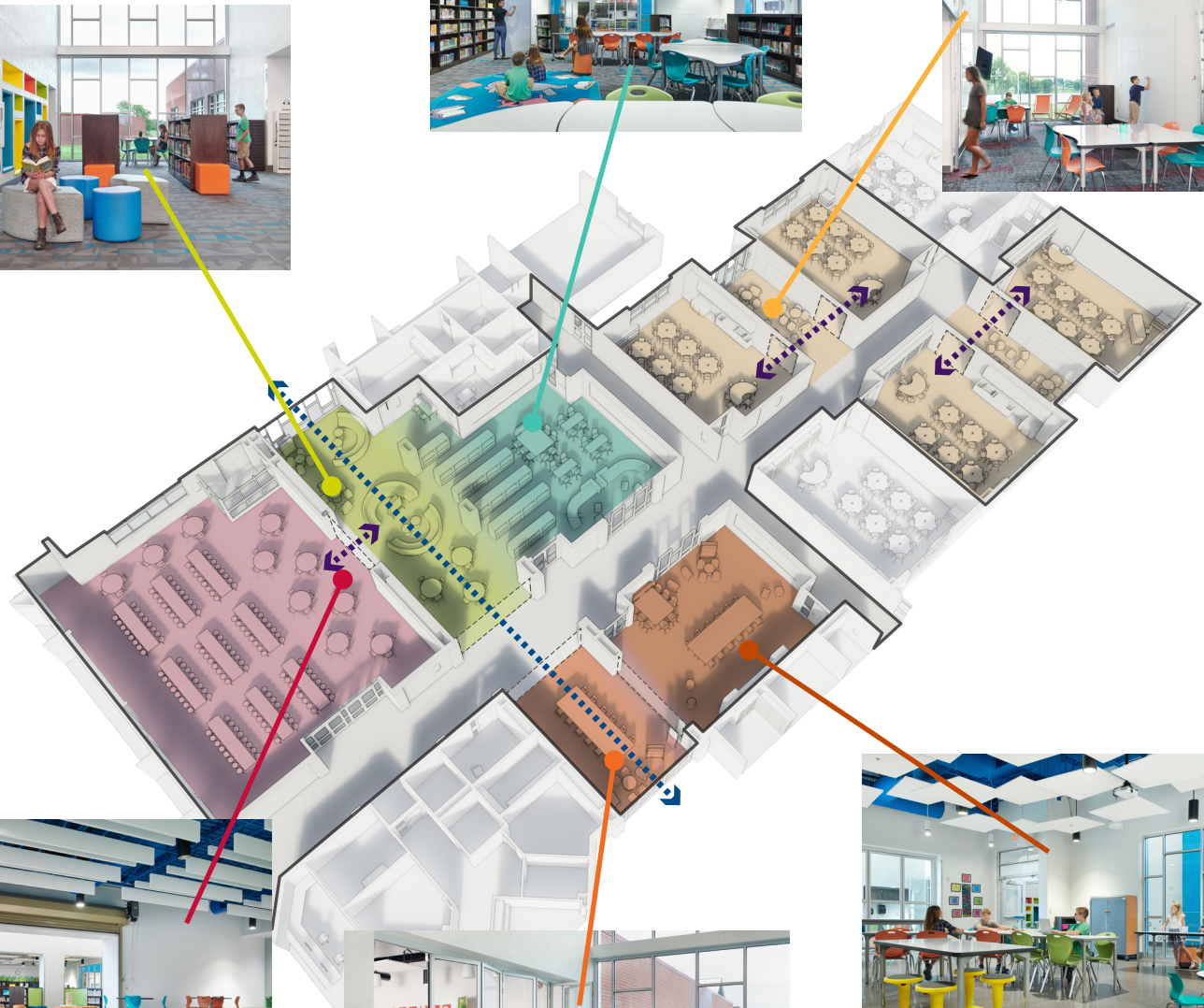
## SENSE OF PLACE

Flexible, lightweight furniture and bookcases on wheels allow students to create a place of comfort and security.



## FLEXIBLE LEARNING

Teachers leave garage doors between classrooms open most of the day to extend the classroom and give students space to collaborate.



## UNDER UTILIZED SPACES

Placing the cafeteria next to the media center allows the space to be activated and more effective instead of sitting empty most of the day.



## PROJECT-BASED EXPLORATION

Hard surfaces, natural light, configurable furniture, and flexible space make for an excellent space to work individually or with teams.



## INNOVATION LABS

The innovation lab consists of two rooms connected by a movable glass wall, offering extreme flexibility.