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Georgia Library Spotlight - Union Grove Middle School Library Media Center

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GLA SPOTLIGHT

Union Grove Middle School Library Media Center

Union Grove Middle School (UGMS) is in the Henry County School district just south of Atlanta. The UGMS Library Media Center (LMC) is both a virtual library that is available 24/7 and a physical space that houses materials and provides a location for a wide variety of activities to support its mission. The mission is threefold: to promote reading as a foundational skill for learning, personal growth, and enjoyment; to provide and promote research resources that address multiple literacies, including information literacy, media literacy, and technology literacy; and, finally, to provide a well-managed, safe, and welcoming environment, including flexible and equitable access to physical and digital resources and encourage respect for all.

With the exception of the physical books and equipment, the UGMS virtual library (https://schoolwires.henry.k12.ga.us/domain/2918) provides access to all the LMC services and information resources. Besides giving access to the online databases like the library catalog, e-books, GALILEO, Newsela, and more, the LMC website contains curated web pages for specific assignments and projects, instructional pages like "How to Cite," and links to services offered

such as "Request a Book." It also contains links to outside information sources, like the local public library system and websites for parents.

The physical space has always operated as a learning commons, but the recent renovation enhanced these activities. The LMC is used in many different ways before, during, and after school by individuals and large groups. For example, students come to use video and audio equipment, or to work individually or in groups, and classes do presentations. With this in mind, flexibility was the guiding principle in the renovation. With the installation of a large, permanently-installed green screen, students no longer have to film between the bookshelves in front of green poster paper tacked to the wall.

All students in Henry County Schools are now issued Chromebooks, so all but four of the desktop computers were removed from the LMC to allow more collaborative space. Two of the desktops have the video editing software Pinnacle. Six individual, wheeled tables with whiteboard tops and wide-based stools have replaced some of the heavy library tables. They can be lowered or raised, used as standing desks, grouped together, or used individually. Casters were installed on the rest of the library tables making them easy to move quickly.

In addition, a ceiling mounted projector, speakers, and a wall screen were installed and four low bookshelves removed to open up the space. This space now allows all 120 seats to be directly in front of the screen. Colorful, molded plastic floor rockers, stackable when the space is needed, replaced the bulky upholstered ones, still allowing the students to enjoy rocking.

Heavy duty, double-sided portable whiteboards on wheels replaced the stationary whiteboard easels. Finally, makerspace was moved out of the alcove and closer to the circulation desk, where help is more readily available since the librarian media specialist is often the only staff person.