Fab Lab + Fab Lib = Added Value for Students
How Two Essential Venues Together Propel 21st Century Learning

Learn by doing. Learn by reading. Learn by thinking. Learn by researching. Learn by listening. Learn by collaborating. Learn by making.

This partial list of possibilities points to a simple truth: There are many ways to learn. What works depends on the learning goal and on the learner as well. Then venue comes into play. What is the right place for right task at the right time?

Just this school year Burke’s added two important and innovative spaces for learning—Makery Up and Makery Down. So how does the Burke’s Library further learning in a maker-space culture? To answer that question, let’s first look at the roles of the Library and the maker-spaces in the learning community and then at how the partnership between the maker-spaces and the Lower School Library program adds up to added value for students.

Inspired by the maker-space movement, Makery Up and Makery Down provide tools, materials, support, and choices for students to tinker and try, imagine and innovate, create and share. (The makeries evolved from our Tech Labs.) From media production to 3-D printing to old-fashioned crafty projects, the maker spaces propel learning by doing and making.

The Burke’s Lower School Library program aims to prepare students to thrive as learners, now and in the future. To that end, the program helps students to grow into competent, curious, creative, and confident researchers; open-minded and critical thinkers; productive, empathetic, and ethical members of the learning community; and enthusiastic readers. Through varied activities, the Lower School program promotes these goals.

The Lower School Library program and the maker spaces are deeply complementary, essential partners, each playing to unique strengths. Through research and literature-based activity, the Library helps students generate rich, accurate, relevant, and engaging information. It also encourages students to wrestle with wide-ranging ideas and tap into their imaginations. The maker spaces allow students to turn information, ideas, and imagination into real-life and virtual projects that further learning, self-expression, and sense of purpose.