



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2021.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).


PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico
Program Title: Student-Built Classroom: If You Build It, They Will Come
Program Category: Customer Service

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Victoria Davis
Title: Public Relations Specialist
Department: Public Relations
Telephone: 804-501-4933 Website: www.henrico.us
Email: dav127@henrico.us

SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Brandon Hinton
Title: Deputy County Manager for Administration
Signature: 

Program Overview

At the start of the 2018-19 school year, Douglas S. Freeman High School in Henrico County, Virginia, struggled to find enough classrooms for all of the classes the school offered. A creative solution was needed to provide space for television production classes. Students enrolled in two different Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS) high schools and centers, as well as staff from several departments, collaborated to create a solution and reconfigure an existing space to address the issue.

Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

In the fall of 2018, Douglas Freeman High School was working to meet the space requirements for all of the programs and classes offered in the building. When the school administration examined the utilization of all classrooms in the master schedule, they found that the television production studio was not being used for multiple academic periods each day, and space was critically needed. This resulted in the production studio being repurposed for a class that could be used for multiple periods a day.

While the need to fully utilize all available classroom space was important, a creative solution was now needed to provide an alternate television production studio. While a temporary alternate studio had been established, it lacked adequate lighting, the means to isolate and deaden sound and enough room for larger-scale activities.

How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria

It can be challenging for a school to maximize limited space. Many competing needs have to be considered, and sometimes difficult decisions have a ripple effect. Through collaboration and innovative thinking, a meaningful solution was reached that benefits the students, teachers, and

school administration. This solution met the challenge head-on, maximizing the learning opportunities for students participating in the project, as well as for those that will benefit from this new space for years to come.

How Program Was Carried Out

In November 2018, students in the technical drawing and architecture classes at Douglas Freeman were given a real-world assignment: to take an existing classroom at the school and modify it to accommodate a new television production studio. Students interviewed the “client” (school staff and students along with central office administrators) to determine the scope of the project.

Several designs were created, including 3D walkthroughs of the space. A student’s design was selected for consideration. In an attempt to think outside the box, space was identified in the photography and video instructional room that could be reconfigured. This space could be modified to support a television production studio while still providing sufficient space for instruction for other classes. This “space within a space” not only worked for the video class, but it also provided an area that could be used by the photography classes for multiple academic periods each day. This win-win allowed the school to increase valuable space while meeting the needs for high-quality video and photography programs at the school.

Beginning the following school year in September 2019, HCPS’ Career and Technical Education (CTE) central office staff met with the Douglas Freeman principal to review possibilities for this new studio. It was determined that the studio could be done, in coordination with the HCPS Department of Facilities, and provide a real-world learning experience for students. Construction began in November 2019. Carpentry students from the Advanced Career Education Center at

Highland Springs High School who were zoned for Douglas Freeman High School were included in the project. They worked alongside CTE and Facilities staff to learn from experts while helping to build the new studio. Henrico County electricians and painters supported the students while giving them an opportunity to learn about their trade.

Students involved in the photography and video club at the school were also a part of the process. They learned about the proper way to prepare a new wall for painting, how to prepare an existing wall with a different type of paint, and proper application techniques.

Since the studio was built inside the instructional space for the video and photography classes, the space can now be used for more academic periods during the day. In addition to television production, wall space and lighting can be integrated into various photography assignments. Using the “space within a space” concept, the teacher can more readily and safely supervise students in the classroom and the studio.

Financing and Staffing

Costs for this project are for the materials used to build out the new space. Including the construction of three additional walls (production space and control room), electrical modifications, painting, and the installation of large windows to improve safety and visibility, total costs were under \$10,000.

Program Results

Four meaningful outcomes came from this project:

- The school increased its physical space to meet instructional needs for general instruction and special needs for a technical course.

- Overcrowding was reduced, with five classes per day benefiting directly.
- Technical drawing and architecture students created designs for a real-world project.
- Carpentry students had a meaningful “on the job” learning experience.
- A quality studio space was built that matches the level of quality and professionalism of the classes. The entire Douglas Freeman community now benefits from the more professional video productions that are possible with an enhanced space.

Brief Summary

Douglas S. Freeman High School in Henrico County, Virginia, was struggling to find enough space for all of the classes the school offered. A creative solution was needed to provide space for television production classes, as well as for general instruction. Students enrolled in two different Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS) high schools and centers, as well as staff from several departments, collaborated to create a solution and reconfigure an existing space to address the issue.

In the fall of 2018, the problem was presented to technical drawing and architecture students who then researched the needs and presented possible design solutions. A “space within a space” design was selected in order to maximize flexibility and usability. Over the course of the next school year, CTE staff, school administration, and the Department of Facilities worked with students enrolled in HCPS’ carpentry program to complete the work.

The finished space is now utilized in multiple ways - as a classroom, a television studio and a photography space. The students involved learned invaluable skills working alongside professionals in the field on a real life project. They felt pride in the role they played and know that their work will benefit their fellow students for many years to come.

**Student-Built Classroom: If You Build it, They Will Come
Supplemental Material**

