



TIM LAMORTE/RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE

The new library at Ardsley High School

## Redesigned library opens as school starts

By Kris DiLorenzo

The Ardsley High School library has stepped into the future. Without fanfare, the school opened its high-tech, bright new space on Sept. 9, surprising students who had not visited since final exams in June.

Much of the furniture — including bright blue, orange, and chartreuse ergonomic chairs — is now on wheels. Small glass-walled rooms on both the lower and upper levels of the space are equipped with

LED display screens for working collaboratively using wireless technology. Some rooms have SmartBoards or white boards, and 60 Chromebooks are available for student use. Surround-sound speakers will be used for announcements and movies, and school board meetings held in the downstairs area will be live-streamed on the school district website.

“This is a renaissance of the library,” Schools Superintendent Ryan Schoenfeld stated. “It’s not a library; it’s a multime-

dia flexible learning space. It’s definitely ramped up.”

The library’s reconfiguration allows more activities to occur at the same time. A group of students can work on a project in one room, a teacher can administer a test or have a one-on-one private discussion with a student in a smaller room, a class can be taught in another, and students can study in the Quiet Room, without sound traveling.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

# Library

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Schoenfeld called the redesign “thoughtful,” and added that “school districts are recognizing that we need to change how teaching and learning happens, and to create options for instructors and students.”

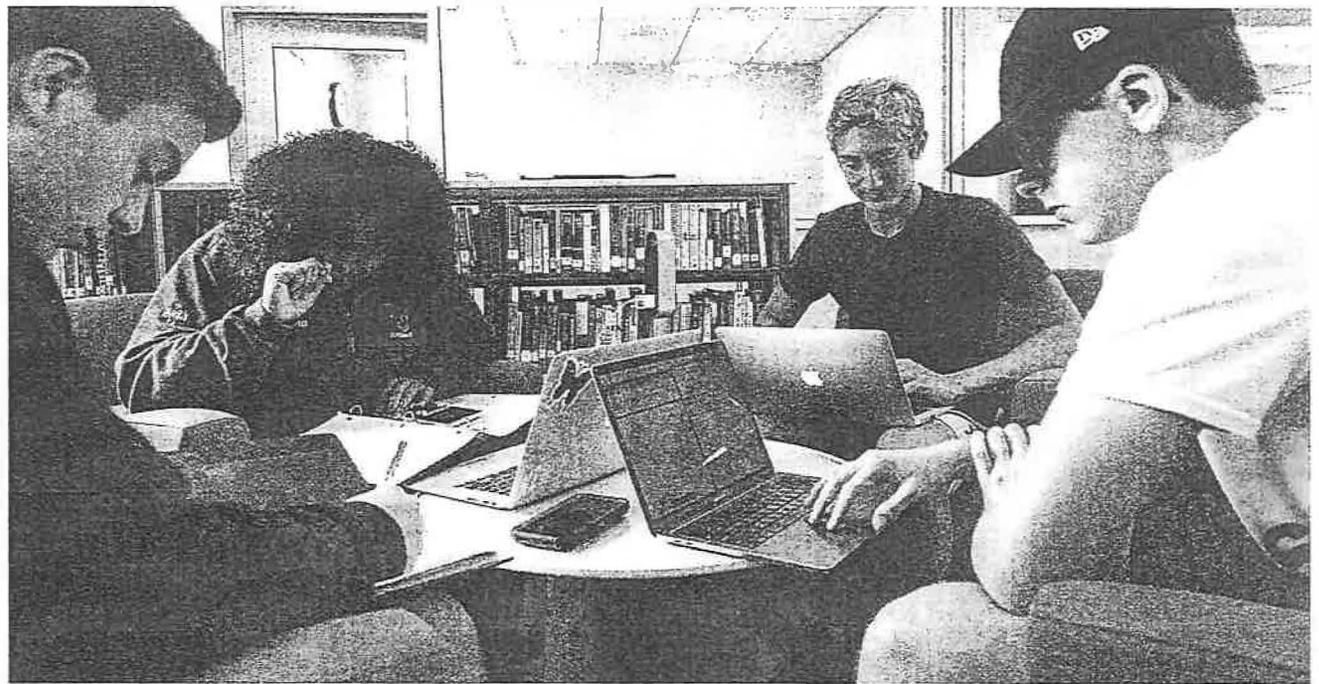
Schoenfeld, library media specialist Sari Goldmeier, and district technology director Sabrina Rich cited flexibility and collaboration as the key benefits of the upgrade. “We wanted to create different spaces that accommodated everyone, allowing for large group instruction classes, quiet individual work, student collaboration, and active learning,” Goldmeier said. “The flexible furniture allows us to change the arrangement from period to period, depending on the needs of our students.”

LED lighting plays a big part in the overall look of the new design. Suspended from the peaked, frosted-glass ceiling are three glowing spirals, and round LED lights are recessed into the second-floor ceiling, providing illumination without the harshness of fluorescent lighting. Throughout the library, electrical outlets and charging stations are plentiful.

On the downstairs level in a wide-open area are nine tables with four moveable chairs each; in the Quiet Room, students have a choice of working at a table or a counter.

Upstairs, which might be characterized as a gallery, are quartets of comfortable club chairs, each centered around a small central table. Library users also can work at tables abutting the waist-high glass panels that outline the gallery.

“This space is whatever it needs to be,” Goldmeier added.



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Alexander Treglia, Kaija Watts, Sam Hutter, and Jared Trupp work at the library on Sept. 9.

Schoenfeld commented on another innovation. “There are private spaces, quiet spaces — and other areas where you can be more loud. You would think a library would be quiet all the time; this creates an opportunity to have a louder space.”

Rich, who formerly taught computer science at the middle school, noted that teachers were involved in the transformation process all along. “We asked teachers what they need, researched, and even brought the teachers to the city to try out furniture,” she said.

The library’s makeover process began with the district’s 2017 \$20 million bond, which included \$7,557,747 for capital

projects at the high school. Upgrading the library was one of those projects.

At the time, then Superintendent Lauren Allan said, “The library redesign will make the instructional area bigger, and the furniture will enable students to work collaboratively.”

According to Schoenfeld, the library’s 5,719-square-foot footprint hasn’t changed much, but there is slightly more instructional space.

Fuller and D’Angelo P.C., based in Elmsford, designed the new library.

Before renovation work began, the library closed in mid-June and had its thousands of books boxed up and brought to a

climate-controlled storage facility.

On the library’s opening day, seniors Kaija Watts and Alexander Treglia made themselves comfortable in the club chairs to do homework for their U.S. history course.

“I love it all — the quiet space, the availability of books, computers, and charging stations,” Watts said.

“I thought it was a lot different from before, but it looks really cool,” Treglia commented. “I didn’t really notice the upstairs before, but now it’s open and light.” He found working at the tables downstairs most useful. “There are a lot of resources to help you.”