



MUSCATINE HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER

Students Build on a Dream for the Future

MUSCATINE, IOWA

Creating a student center for active, energetic high school students is no small feat. To encourage connection, maintain emotional well-being, and support diverse social dynamics, these environments need to be mindful of a wide variety of components and details. So, who better to ask to develop and design the space than the students themselves?

In October 2021, Muscatine High School's administration began the discussion of converting the building's former science rooms into a new student center. The idea was rooted in creating flexible learning spaces that motivate young people—not only to study and socialize but to develop formative skills that will follow them into adulthood.

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Over the course of several months and under the direction of school counselor Brandon Welsch, two student teams met regularly to survey their peers and ensure a shared vision for what the center's use should be. After direct collaboration with HON members and drafting and presenting two proposals to the school board, final decisions and purchases were made. With the cumulative vision including think-outside-the-box seating, dynamic surfaces, and vibrant colors, a thoughtful, inclusive space was ready to come to life.

In November 2022, the shared hard work and planning paid off—the MHS Student Success Center officially opened. And the result was not just a tangible space for educators and students to use daily, it became a symbol of something bigger—the students were able to glean real-life work experience, hands-on development opportunities, and—most importantly—gain insight into necessary cultural shifts and inclusion to change the way they envisioned their futures.



"We were placed in our team roles based on our career interests, and I was the interior designer. I was primarily responsible for choosing the furniture, finishes, and layout. It was a lot of fun and reassured my future career plans."

- Kyleia Salyars
MHS Senior

"Our students were very eager to get involved; they didn't know exactly how things would shake out with the project, but they were immediately welcomed & respected by HON's members. As a student-centered district, it was really exciting to see their input reflected in the space."

- Tony Loconsole

Director of Communications & Community Engagement, Muscatine Community School District



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