



Better Classrooms, Better Minds

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How do certain architectural design elements affect the mental health and productivity of students in schools?

Background

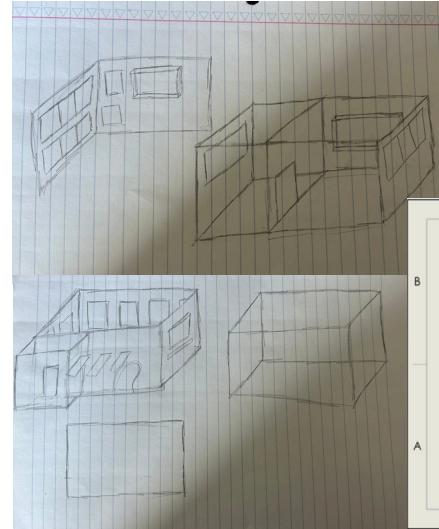
The design of a classroom can greatly influence how students feel and perform. Studies in environmental psychology have shown that elements such as lighting, seating, temperature, noise control, and access to nature can affect focus, motivation, and emotional well-being. Despite this, many schools still use outdated designs that do not support student mental health. This project explores the connection between classroom design and student wellness by focusing on schools in Fulton County.

The goal is to understand which features make students feel more comfortable and ready to learn, and to create a model of an ideal learning space that reflects these needs.

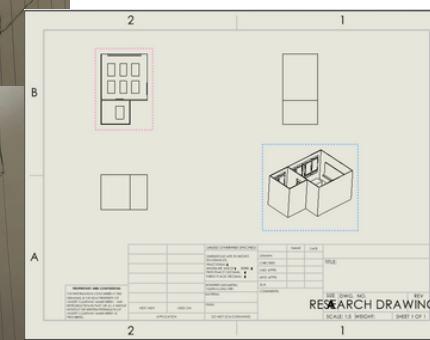
Methods/Materials

To gather data, I created a survey that was distributed to approximately 35 students from different schools in Fulton County including Alpharetta HS, Roswell HS, Northview HS, etc. The survey asked questions about their current classroom environments, how those environments made them feel, and what improvements they would suggest. I also reviewed research on classroom design and how physical environments impact mental health. Using the results from both the survey and my research, I built a physical model that represents an ideal classroom. The model includes features like natural lighting, flexible seating, quiet areas, indoor plants, and calming color schemes. These elements were chosen based on what students said helped them feel more focused and less stressed.

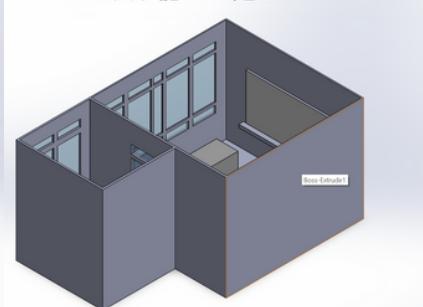
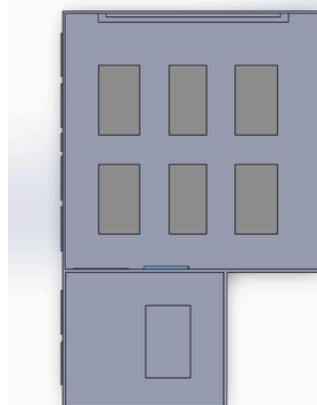
Visuals/Diagrams/Pictures



Initial Prototype Sketch and SolidWorks Drawing



Initial SolidWorks 3D Model



Conclusion

The research and survey results clearly show that classroom design has a direct impact on student mental health and academic performance. Students reported feeling more productive, less anxious, and better able to focus in classrooms that were quiet, well-lit, organized, and offered some choice in where and how to sit. Creating spaces that support these needs can lead to better learning outcomes and healthier minds. Schools should consider updating classroom designs to better support student well-being.

Acknowledgements

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