



Qudwa 2017 – Global Teachers' Forum Coffeehouse Sessions

"Classroom Design"
Mark Reid
Saturday, October 7, 2017

Mark Reid started by giving the audience 15 seconds to reconfigure the seating in the room to get an understanding of the thought process of the audience. It is important to arrange the classroom in a meaningful and constructive way. Teachers teach in different spaces – sometimes outside, sometimes inside.

Teachers have to think about how to make the classroom useful to students needs. Every design element has to serve a learning goal.

During his workshop, Mark asked: "What is your vision? What are the goals you would like to achieve? What are the solutions you have to redesigning the learning space? Are you providing an opportunity for your students to grow?"

Answers from the audience of teachers included:

- Classroom design is about creating spaces that make students love their classroom. "Bring plants to the classroom", one teacher said.
- The space becomes the teacher. The classroom is extension of the teacher.
- Solutions sometimes come with challenges. There are barriers put by the education system.
- One teacher commented: "I teach ballet in Kenya. My vision of a classroom is students. Not structure. Students are the school, not the structure."
- Ask parents to buy things, give money and more to do upgrades that benefit the entire school.
- Place students' designs up. Display them. Students should feel proud of their designs.
- A teacher from Mozambique mentioned that she teaches students under trees, which is a challenge. How do you organize the space when you have 80 students? She arranges the space as though it was a constellation. The students are in space and sit in small groups of 8-10 with the teacher in the center. Students learn to work together.
- Give control to students. Learning order is important. Have a drama corner; a reading corner, etc. Classrooms have to be living laboratories





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Mark Reid mentioned that the worst person to design a school is an architect. Designing a school should establish a relationship between everyone involved in the school. The design should look for the future.

