One District Eleven Schools

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Community Consolidated School District 62 TRANSFORMATION

2014 CEFPI James D. MacConnell Award Project Dossier

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Executive Summary



Neither the architects nor the District could have imagined the extraordinary impact that this COMPTENSIVE planning process would have on students, teachers, administrators, and the Des Plaines community.

In January 2007, the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 62 and its team of planners, architects and designers embarked on a 26-month-long community-focused District-wide Master Planning process that would set in motion the eventual **complete revitalization** of 11 unique educational facilities across the Chicago suburb of Des Plaines, Illinois.

This is truly a remarkable story of **transformation**.

District 62 serves 5,000 Kindergarten through eighth-grade students in one community, two middle and eight elementary schools. When the Master Planning process began, the District was struggling significantly – dealing with both an inventory of deteriorating buildings between 43 and 73 years old and the lingering effects of budget cuts imposed in previous years. Under the leadership of a new Superintendent, Dr. Jane Westerhold, primary goals were identified.



Goals

- Understand the quality of the existing school facilities, including deficits and needs
- Establish priorities by creating a road map to align educational programs and facility enhancements with the dynamics of living and learning in a global society (in response to the needs of a demographically diverse student population)
- Maximize the potential of young learners and their instructors
- Improve campus and facility infrastructure, learning environments and health/safety/security features, while optimizing taxpayer dollars
- Foster community support for facility improvements

The overwhelming success of the renaissance of District 62 is a result of both the partnership between the architects and the District and an extensive community engagement process. Only by working together were we able to identify the very best ways to help our students.

> Dr. Jane Westerhold, School Superintendent, District 62

A Community-Focused Process

A strong emphasis on community engagement characterized the entire discovery and planning effort which was organized into three stages, followed by an implementation effort, with a clear approach for each step in the process:

Stage 1: Learning Environment Assessment with Recommendation of Needs (LEA/RN) Analysis

Provide a first look at how each of the school's 11 facilities was being used; how the programs were affected by physical constraints; and how learning environments detracted from opportunities.

Stage 2: Charting the Path

Engage a broad cross-section of the community to participate in three designated subcommittees that reported up to a steering committee – all with a shared goal of identifying the most important ("Core") elements of a district-wide facility improvement program for ultimate recommendation to the Board of Education.

Stage 3: Comprehensive Plan Analysis (CPA)

Develop conceptual building improvement options and organize the Board-approved facility improvement recommendations from the "Charting the Path" stage into distinct categories in preparation for the phased implementation effort at the various school sites.

Implementation

Following completion of the master planning phase, District facility improvements began and were implemented in three phases over several years. The final project of the \$109-million construction effort was delivered in August of 2012.

Outcomes

District 62, its students, staff and surrounding community enjoyed numerous positive outcomes from this project:

- Enhanced educational programs made possible through improved technology and availability of collaborative work and meeting spaces within the upgraded facilities
- Dramatic improvements in math and reading test scores, especially among students defined as Limited English Proficient and Economically Disadvantaged
- Reinstated team sports, intramurals and extra-curricular activities that could now take place on newly enhanced school grounds
- Third-party recognition of success through local and national awards programs
- An overwhelmingly positive community response
- Revitalization of an entire school district through physical improvements that successfully transformed aged buildings into dynamic, forward-thinking learning environments







The Master Planning process for the revitalization of District 62 was initiated with a goal of understanding needs and establishing priorities. The District and the architect worked together to define three stages of work: (1) Learning Environment Assessment with Recommendation of Needs (LEA/RN) Analysis; (2) a more detailed analytical process called Charting the Path, and (3) the Comprehensive Plan Analysis.

Within these stages, the architect performed the following scope of work: Master Planning, Educational Planning, Integrated Delivery between Architecture and Interior Design, Mechanical/Electrical/Plumbing Engineering, Civil Engineering, Structural Engineering, Landscape Architecture, and Construction Management.

Stage 1: LEA/RN Analysis

The LEA/RN Analysis was intended to provide a quick, first look at: (1) how the schools were being used; (2) how the programs were impacted by physical constraints; and (3) how learning environments detracted from opportunities.

The LEA/RN Analysis found that the buildings were wellmaintained, but that age had caused significant deterioration. The newest school was already 43 years old and the oldest school was 73 years old. Each building also faced challenges in meeting the needs of diverse learners, ranging from gifted students to those with learning disabilities. Capacity itself was not a major issue at the Elementary Schools, but the Middle Schools required enhanced learning spaces for new programs and to ease overcrowding. Specific challenges within each facility were also identified in the LEA/RN Analysis.

In a district with a high percentage of children from immigrant families, it was determined the unique needs of the bilingual students were not being met. Additionally, the LEA/RN Analysis determined that the libraries were outdated. Food service needed a major overhaul and student safety was jeopardized with minimal security at building entrances and confused vehicular circulation routes at each campus. Furniture was also old and in poor condition. The architects gathered all of this information, organized it into a recommendation report, and presented it to the School Board in April 2007 on a facility-by-facility basis.

> Des Plaines Community Consolidated School District 62

Deliverables developed for Stages 1, 2, and 3.

Stage 2: Charting the Path

The District then embarked upon a broader, District-wide community engagement process called *Charting the Path* that would be community-based. It would provide recommendations to expand and refresh curriculum offerings, offer more authentic learning experiences, and provide children with the necessary knowledge for success in the 21st century. The District organized a Steering Committee and three designated subcommittees comprised of community groups, leaders and District personnel. The Community Engagement Process is described in detail in Section 4 of this submittal.

Stage 3: Comprehensive Plan Analysis

Following Board approval of the recommendations outlined during the Community Engagement Process (Stage 2: Charting the Path), the team was charged with crafting the Comprehensive Plan Analysis (CPA) document, which was the final stage of the evaluation process. Over several months, District administrative personnel met weekly with the architects, analyzing, synthesizing and organizing the previously collected information into a series of conceptual building improvement options for the Board of Education to adopt and implement in subsequent years. The recommendations were defined by three (3) distinct categories:

Health Safety, Security Work Scope Selected Infrastructure Upgrades Curriculum Modernization Improvements

All three categories established common work that would take place across all 11 facilities. Of note, categories (1) and (2) accounted for 75% of the construction budget. Category (3) efforts, while not the most costly, provided a special opportunity to push the envelope related to the future of the District.

At the completion of the CPA stage, an implementation strategy and schedule was recommended by the architects.

Scope of Work • Schedule: Stages 1-3 & Implementation Phases





Implementation Schedule

An implementation schedule was developed by the architects, with a recommendation to begin work in June 2009 and complete the projects by August 2012, with specific projects prioritized based on their ability to address expectations and "**core considerations**" of the District and the community.

- 1. Take advantage of the favorable bidding climate
- 2. Complete all work over a three-year period
- 3. Immediately start the new centralized Early Learning Center (ELC)
- Minimize impact of construction on students over the three years by first completing work on the Middle Schools
- 5. Evenly spread the work throughout the District

Three schools received immediate improvements that they would have otherwise not received for several years in the Health Safety, Security Work Scope category.

Work at the middle schools was recommended to occur in the summer of 2010 as the first major construction activity. Performing work at the middle schools during the beginning of the implementation process eliminated the possibility that a group of students would be subjected to continuous construction activity during their grade school experience. The 50,000-square-foot Early Learning Center (ELC) at Forest Elementary School also began construction in 2010. As a Category 3 project, it provided one of the greatest opportunities to create a transformational, forward-reaching, learning environment within the district. By consolidating under one roof all of the special needs and at-risk programs that had been scattered throughout the District, the new ELC allowed space to open up in other District school buildings.

Finally, the phasing of the new and renovated District facilities over several years allowed the District to apportion their funding more evenly across the construction schedule. All in all, 22 different projects were implemented (design and delivered over three-and-a-half years. Specific schools and projects are detailed on the pages that follow.

	Hauth Solety Security	Phase 3	Press II.	Phone III
School	2009	2010	2011	2012
Algonquin		New Construction	Building Kenevarian	
Central	1			Building Renovation
Chippewa		New Construction	Building Renovation	
Cumberland		Building Renovation		
Forest		New Construction - EIC	New Contraction RC/Juliding Resources	
Iroquois		She Work		Balacele to Fored ILC (Option) Building Resources (Yest Recent Urbedde)
North			New Construction	Building Renovation
Orchard Place			Additions	Major Building Reno-critic
Plainfield				Building Renovation
South			Building Recovorian	
Terrace				Building Renovation
Administration				Building Renovation
Maintenance				Building Renovation

Scope of Work • Phase 1 Implementation



Algonquin Middle School

Students: 642 New Construction: 26,000 sf Renovation: 84,000 sf Total Construction Cost: \$19,000,000





Cumberland Elementary School Students: 271 Renovation: 67,400 sf Total Construction Cost: \$5,700,000





Chippewa Middle School

Students: 657 New Construction: 9,000 sf Renovation: 81,500 sf Total Construction Cost: \$10,000,000





Forest Elementary School / Early Learning Center

Students: 988 New Construction: 51,000 sf Renovation: 71,100 sf Total Construction Cost: \$17,400,000





Scope of Work • Phase 2 Implementation



Central Elementary School

Students: 316 New Construction: 600 sf Renovation: 42,500 sf Total Construction Cost: \$4,800,000





South Elementary School Students: 234 Renovation: 50,700 sf Total Construction Cost: \$8,600,000





Orchard Place Elementary School

Students: 344 New Construction: 28,400 sf Renovation: 23,000 sf Total Construction Cost: \$12,400,000





North Elementary School Students: 530 Renovation: 56,900 sf Total Construction Cost: \$8,600,000





Scope of Work • Phase 3 Implementation



Iroquois Community School

Students: 475 Renovation: 58,100 sf Total Construction Cost: \$8,000,000





Plainfield Elementary School Students: 329 Renovation: 43,300 sf Total Construction Cost: \$6,500,000





Terrace Elementary School Students: 273 Renovation: 44,200 sf Total Construction Cost: \$6,700,000





TOTALS

Students: New Construction: Renovation: Total Construction Cost:







\$109,000,000 reflects the combined, actual project implementation cost of the Phase 1, 2 and 3 work scopes. Approximately 80% of those funds were designated for health, lifesafety and infrastructure improvements – compared to the targeted 75%. The variance reflects the age and condition of the existing facilities before the start of construction activity. Curriculum-related enhancements comprised the remaining 20%.

BUDGET \$109 million

Each of the three phases of work was delivered under a unique "design-led" at-risk integrated delivery approach.





In August 2007, building upon the data collected during the "Stage 1: LEA/RN Analysis" effort, a group of Des Plaines community members, District 62 Administrators and members of the architect's team convened to kick off a year-long community engagement process.

As part of the overall master planning effort, the "Stage 2: Charting the Path" initiative was conceived to engage a broad cross-section of community stakeholders in the District's school facility planning process. A Steering Committee was charged with the monumental task of overseeing three subcommittees: (1) the Community Discussions Committee; (2) the, Community Buildings Committee, and (3) the Programs and Services Committee.

Committees and Roles

(1) Community Discussions Committee (CDC)

The Community Discussions Committee was convened to engage stakeholders in the school facility planning process through surveys and community forums. The CDC based this approach on the Harwood Process (developed by the Harwood Institute), which focuses on changing and strengthening the relationship between communities and schools through a variety of social methods.

The community forums were built around the concepts of Engagement, Evaluation and Endorsement. The

purpose of the first forum, held in December of 2007, was to listen to the community and gather input on priorities and values regarding District 62. The second forum was held in April 2008 and centered upon the Evaluation of findings from the earlier forum. Here, feedback on preliminary options and strategies was gathered and breakout sessions took place between the subcommittees. Community members were also asked to complete a post-meeting survey questionnaire. dorse The third and final community forum took evaluate

place in June 2008 and sought Endorsement of directions. Recommendations from the architects were presented and reviewed.



STAKEHOLDERS

- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Kiwanis Club
- Lions Club
- Optimist Club
- Rotary Club
- Former District 62 Employees
- Des Plaines Residents
- District 62 Foundation
- Boy Scout Troop 114 Adult Leaders
- Boy Scout Troop 114 Scouts
- YMCA Members
- Central School Neighborhood Group
- Home Schooling Parents
- Polish Speaking Parents
- Service Clubs Members
- Community Building Committee
- Self-Help Closet & Pantry Volunteers
- Maine West High School Students
- Spanish Speaking Group
- All 11 schools
- A School Principal
- Assistant Superintendent for Business Services
- Director of Buildings & Grounds
- Maintenance Staff
- Parents
- Union Leaders & Parent/Teacher Association Representatives
- Des Plaines Fire Department
- Des Plaines Park District
- Des Plaines Police Department
- School Board Members



(2) Community Buildings Committee (CBC)

The Community Buildings Committee was formed to assess the physical condition of the district's facilities. The committee consisted of a School Principal, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services, Director of Buildings & Grounds, Maintenance Staff, Parents, Union Leaders and Parent/Teacher Association Representatives, Des Plaines Fire Department, Des Plaines Park District, Des Plaines Police Department, and School Board Members.

Simultaneous to the activities of the Community Discussions Committee, the CBC spent several months conducting a multilevel review of the school facility needs. The primary purpose of the study was to gather information from multiple groups of teachers, staff, community members and architects. Building upon the architect's findings from conducting a comprehensive Physical Condition Assessment for all 11 schools during the LEA/RN Analysis stage, the CBC was charged to answer the following key questions and submit collective responses to the Steering Committee:









The CBC was charged to answer the following key questions:

- What does research say about characteristics of the optimal learning environment for instructional programs for students in today's world?
- 2. Given our current reality, what is the best way to configure our facilities to provide optimal instructional space to support the kind of learning and teachings identified by the Programs and Services Committee?
- **3**. What are our top facility priorities/issues that need to be addressed in order to reach our goals and provide the best learning environments for our students?
- **4**. Can we recommend to the community and Board of Education a plan to address all of the above questions to provide input to an overall building plan?



(3) Programs and Services Committee (PSC)

The Programs and Services Committee (PSC) was established to assess the current educational environment and programs and make recommendations to the Steering Committee regarding improvements, priorities, and learning environment conditions necessary for improvement. The PSC was composed of 25 members representing teachers, administrators, and community members. In order to expand the scope of input, each committee member also served on one of five subcommittees representing the major educational program areas in the district:

- 1. Core Curricula and General Education
- 2. Specials and Enrichment
- 3. Instructional Technology
- 4. Second Language
- 5. Student Services and Early Childhood

The PBC utilized a list of "Guiding Principles for Teaching and Learning" that the School Board had previously adopted to serve as a foundation for discussions, as they assessed current needs and developed educational program priorities. Similar to the CBC, the PSC used their responses to a list of key questions as their organizational tool for compiling feedback for the Steering Committee: •

To broaden the reach of the community engagement effort, surveys were conducted by both the PSC and CBC sub-committees to gather input from:

744 parents



23 administrators

Participants were asked to comment on current instructional practices in the district and what they considered to be improvement priorities related to program offerings and the educational environments. Based on these findings and information gleaned from the facility assessments, the committees developed the "Educational Specifications for District Modernization Program" document which was also submitted to the Steering Committee. See Section 5 of this submittal for further details.



six key questions served as a guide for the PSC:

- What does research say about characteristics of the optimal learning environment and instructional programs for students in today's world?
- 2. Given our current reality, what kind of learning and teaching would we like to see happening in our classrooms in our schools in 5-6 years?
- **3**. What educational programs would we like to have for our students in 5-6 years?
- **4**. What kind of physical learning environment would help make this happen?
- 5. What are our top instructional priorities/issues that need to be addressed in order to reach our goals and provide the best instruction for our students?
- 6. Can we recommend to the community and the Board a 5-6 year program improvement plan that address all of the above questions and provide input to the building plan?



(4) Steering Committee

The Steering Committee was tasked with reviewing the findings from the three subcommittees, and all of their stakeholders, in order to make recommendations to the Board of Education for improving the learning environments while maintaining financial stability. In July 2008, after reviewing subcommittee findings and developing an understanding of the broad range of needs across the schools, the Steering Committee presented their findings, which included a list of recommended "Core Elements" of A District-Wide Facility Improvement Program.





In October 2008, the Board of Education approved the Steering Committee's recommendations and implementation projects began in June 2009.





Challenges

During the community engagement process, community members were surveyed about qualities they believed would make Des Plaines a better place to live. Their responses created a host of exciting challenges for the architects as they began rethinking the 11 facilities within the District.

Overwhelmingly, community members were concerned about funding for the facility improvements. Many people struggled with the idea of spending money on facilities versus spending money to retain and attract qualified teachers and staff. Another related concern was that money spent on facilities would take away from money that could have been spent on educational programming. Participants also struggled with trusting whether the improvements would actually address their concerns in the schools or ever be implemented.

Through the community engagement process, it also became clear that there were two general perceptions of District 62 schools: those who were connected to the schools (e.g., former students, parents, staff) had generally positive things to say about the schools; and those who were not connected to the schools (e.g., community service groups) had generally negative things to say about the schools.

Generally speaking, five major themes – or challenges to be addressed through the planning and implementation process – arose:

- 1. Updated and Improved Technology Programs
- 2. Improved Safety
- 3. Well-Controlled Climate
- 4. More Efficient Use of Space and Improved Environmental Qualities
- 5. A Much Improved Lunch Program

District 62, in partnership with the architectural team, worked diligently to communicate goals, rationales and potential outcomes of the master plan implementation effort to the community at large, while also addressing specific concerns. In addition to utilizing the community forums as an outlet for information sharing, the process relied heavily on digital and print communication strategies to build consensus, encourage feedback and create an overall sense of cooperation.







Available Assets Financial

In 2005, well before Charting the Path ever began, District 62 passed a \$.50 rate increase for education funding. This meant the District was able to accumulate significant financial resources in its reserves before the process began. Community members were especially resolute in their desire to see funds were spent wisely and appropriately.

Physical

Again and again, the community expressed appreciation for the quality of District 62 teachers and the overall educational experience. Within the LEA/RN Analysis, the architects also observed the schools seemed to function well for current instructional practices with limited physical resources. For example, some schools had Art Classrooms that also housed Instrumental Music. While this is how it was done for many years before, the community needed schools that optimize the available space and offer a variety of spaces for diverse learning styles, instructional methods, and support anticipated curriculum changes.

Value of Process and Project to Community at Large

Throughout the community forums, the strongest and most pervasive theme was the desire for District 62 to maintain quality schools with a strong academic reputation in the future. These schools should be an asset to the community and an incentive for people to move to Des Plaines. The District 62 community is the foundation for the schools themselves and was inherent to the project; without input from and consideration of its members, this community-based process could not have been successful.





Educational Environment



The Guiding Principles for **Teaching** and **Learning** adopted by the School Board in 2007 served as a foundation for discussions held by the PSC as they assessed current needs and developed educational program curriculum priorities.

Educational environments were planned and designed in support of these guiding principles.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING



Digital-Age Literacies	Inventive Thinking
Basic Literacy	 Adaptability & Managing Complexity
Scientific Literacy	Self-Direction
Economic Literacy	Curiosity
Technological Literacy	Creativity
Visual Literacy	Risk-Taking
Information Literacy	Higher-Order Thinking & Sound Reasoning
Multicultural Literacy	
Global Awareness	
High Productivity	
rigii riodociiviiy	Effective Communication
Prioritizing, Planning, & Managing for Results	Effective Communication Teaming & Collaboration
 Prioritizing, Planning, & Managing for Results Effective Use of Real-World Tools 	Effective Communication Teaming & Collaboration Interpersonal Skills
 Prioritizing, Planning, & Managing for Results Effective Use of Real-World Tools Ability to Produce Relevant, High-Quality Products 	 Effective Communication Teaming & Collaboration Interpersonal Skills Personal Responsibility
 Prioritizing, Planning, & Managing for Results Effective Use of Real-World Tools Ability to Produce Relevant, High-Quality Products 	 Effective Communication Teaming & Collaboration Interpersonal Skills Personal Responsibility Social & Civic Responsibility
 Prioritizing, Planning, & Managing for Results Effective Use of Real-World Tools Ability to Produce Relevant, High-Quality Products 	 Effective Communication Teaming & Collaboration Interpersonal Skills Personal Responsibility Social & Civic Responsibility Interactive Communication



Environmental Support of the Curriculum and a Variety of Learning & Teaching Styles

Environmental Support of the Curriculum and a Variety of Learning & Teaching Styles Surveys were conducted by both the PSC and CBC sub-committees to gather input from 744 parents, 146 teachers and 23 administrators about current instructional practices in the district and what they considered to be improvement priorities related to program offerings and the educational environments. Based on these findings and information gleaned from the facility assessments, the following recommendations were developed and served as the guiding Educational Specifications for District Modernization Program. The role of these specifications in supporting curriculum and learning/teaching styles is indicted in the "apple" columns on the right.	Environmental Sup.	Front of the Curriculum of Learning & T. Supposed	Direct Impact on Facility Design
EDUCATIONAL SPECIFICATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS	/	(
Provide technology-infused curriculum delivery for all students by each teacher at least by 2010.	<u> </u>	(<u> </u>
Establish a comprehensive Early Learning Center for Early Childhood (PK-K: full-day at risk PK, blended special needs K) by 2013.	2	6	2
Provide a rigorous, on-going professional development program for staff that increases student learning by 2010.		6	
Evaluate current gifted program and establish one that better meets students' needs by 2009.	``	6	
Provide a qualified Reading Specialist in each school for meeting the needs of all students and developing the skills of teachers by 2009.	<u>)</u>	6	
Provide a continuum of team sports and extra-curricular opportunities/activities for all students (K-8) by 2008.	<u>è</u>		
Implement a staff development program to expand upon cultural awareness & appreciation of diversity for all staff by 2008.		٠	
Provide a solid instructional program based on scaffolded course content for Music, Art and Drama, beginning in K taught by certified specialists by 2010.	è	6	
Offer instrumental and choral instruction for all 4-8 students and opportunities outside of the school day for K-8 by 2013.	<u>``</u>		
Provide appropriate physical space for all Student Services Personnel by 2013.			0
Provide a comprehensive therapeutic program for ED and BD students by 2009.	è	6	
Provide all Specials programs (i.e., P.E., music, art) to all students in integrated settings by 2009.	è	6	0
Provide hands-on learning opportunities and appropriate physical space in all content areas for all students by 2012.	è	(0
Provide district-wide opportunities for gifted students to work together on after-school problem-centered activities by 2009.	è	۲	
Develop a Multilingual Academic vocabulary for all core areas by grade level by 2009.	è		
Implement a skill-based, comprehensive program of instruction in P.E. and Health by 2010.	è	۲	
Provide technology tools, technology access, and technology teacher delivery equitably among all students by 2010.	è		
Provide and maintain up-to-date hardware resources on a 3-year replacement cycle by 2010.	è		
Provide ADA-accessible environments for all students and staff by 2013.			0
Purchase and install a VOIP classroom phone system for the safety and communication needs of all staff and students by 2010.	è		0
Upgrade infrastructure for all buildings by 2010.			7

Educational Environment

While each of the 11 schools that were improved through the master plan implementation process enjoyed new educational environments that critically supported a broad curriculum and a variety of learning/teaching styles, a prototype for a unique supportive space type was developed in response to the relocation of numerous programs to the new ELC, which created vacated space across the district. This newly captured space was converted into technology-rich, flexible classrooms called **Technology Integrated Learning Environments (T.I.L.E.s**).

T.I.L.E.s are meant to serve as "living laboratories" where students and teachers can experiment with different technologies, furniture options, and teaching approaches before making them District-wide as funds become available.

A driving force behind the use of T.I.LE.s is making classroom media easily available to students. Furniture must be agile and the overall spaces should be accommodating to active learning styles and techniques.

The T.I.L.E. spaces are equipped with smart boards, computer tablets, floor-to-ceiling marker boards, and tackable wall surfaces. All of the furniture is varied and mobile. Students can sit on beanbag chairs or motion-friendly, ergonomically correct chairs, which have been shown to improve cognitive engagement.









Physical Environment



Physical Attributes

Modernizing Buildings for Improved Maintenance and Cost-Efficient Operations

The school buildings across the District had never been comprehensively modernized and were visibly outdated – both in terms of building system operation and aesthetics. The CBC recommended developing a building improvement scope of work that would address deferred maintenance, increase energy efficiency, and create an inspiring physical learning environment for students:

Fitting in with the Larger Community

Creating Welcoming and Safe School Sites and Buildings Because each of these school facilities is located within a neighborhood of Des Plaines, architects gave particular consideration to the identity of the buildings to create a more welcoming and inviting image for the larger community. A consistent theme that arose during virtually all discussions throughout the community engagement process was the safety and security of children. The concerns ranged from traffic pattern issues on site to security at main entrances to basic emergency systems that are required in all new schools today.

Inspiring and Motivating -

Developing Healthy, High Performing Learning Environments for Tomorrow's Teaching and Learning

In working with the architects, the CBC sought to create learning environments that respond to a growing body of research and evidence that link enriched and personalized learning environments to the varied ways in which children learn. Thus, the core educational objective calls for the use of many different instructional methods and models. With this in mind, the CBC established the recommendations to the right.

In the "Results of this Process" section of this submittal, we have highlighted the projects that best illustrate the physical attributes of the educational environment. These projects include:

- The Early Learning Center at Forest Elementary School
- South Elementary School
- Orchard Place Elementary School
- Iroquois Community School

Each school presented unique challenges that required the design team to think "out of the box" in very special ways. All four facilities incorporate the same building program elements and materials, to create consistent physical environments, but were reinterpreted to reflect the individual character of each school.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Alignment of Instructional Spaces with Educational Programs - Develop District-wide priorities to upgrade spaces in alignment with the educational needs of District 62 curriculum and the specific needs of students.
- Environmental Characteristics of Instructional Spaces - use natural lighting, temperature and humidity control, indoor air quality and acoustics that have been understood to positively impact student performance.
- Instructional Technology upgrade network infrastructure, hardware and equipment to support tomorrow's learning with technology. Upgrade electrical service and distribution in the school buildings to support the use of technology in all instructional spaces.
- Furnishings and Equipment replace aging student desks, tables, chairs, and writing boards to provide more comfort and flexibility for different learning styles.



The District-wide Master Plan / Transformation of District 62 is an outstanding example of a consensus-driven approach that directly ties to the end results. The planning process led to implementation of numerous new and renovated educational facilities at 11 different sites. The projects have been very well received, primarily for their success in:

- (1) Facilitating a marked improvement in student achievement;
- (2) Responding to the unique and specific needs of the users – students and staff – as well as the District's goals; and
- (3) Addressing the concerns and aspirations of an entire community.

Achieving Educational Goals and Objectives

The District has experienced a **remarkable increase** in reading and math test scores across all demographics. Every school has seen their Hispanic students increase test scores from 51.5% to 76.1% in reading and from 57.7% to 93.1% in math. Perhaps most significantly, the "Limited English Proficient" and "Economically Disadvantaged" demographics have both seen increases in reading and math by 30-40%.

The creation of the Early Learning Center was a major step towards achieving the Educational Goals and Objectives of the project. Sparking **lifelong learning** in our youngest students starts with the idea that architecture and the natural surroundings are teaching tools. By stimulating a child's curiosity and excitement for learning early, these special users of the ELC are poised for a streamlined, and successful educational career.

Based on programmatic recommendations during the Process, the School Board has already approved a **literacy pilot program** to provide three Literacy Coaches in five of the schools. The Second Language Committee examined the need for exposure to world culture and languages and recommended Spanish should be offered beginning in the sixth grade. There has also been a greater emphasis placed on technology, including the acquisition of laptops, document cameras, SMART boards and more.







PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING BY SUBGROUP: MATH





The completed projects collectively embody each of the three District-wide goals and recommendations identified in the Comprehensive Plan Analysis:



Health Safety, Security Work

Scope - site circulation and main entrance/ security upgrades and restroom renovations; architectural environment features; food service program modifications and expansion



Selected Infrastructure Upgrades mechanical, electrical and technology enhancements



Curriculum Modernization

Improvements - centralized Early Learning Center program; large and small group meeting and instruction venues for students and staff; T.I.L.E.s

Achieving Community Goals

Despite initial concerns and challenges along the way, the Des Plaines community received 11 "new" elementary and middle schools in their district. The **five themes** set forth during the Community Engagement Process are now realized:

- Updated and Improved Technology Programs make school technology compatible with the rest of the world, including enhanced technology curriculum.
- Improved Safety in/around schools through controlled entries, better defined entry doors, and safer pick-up and drop-off areas with less congestion and better traffic flow.
- Well-controlled Climates allow children to learn more easily because they are comfortable, with air conditioning, better ventilation and heating systems.
- 4. More Efficient Use of Space and Improved Environmental Qualities allows a large amount of flexible space and different types of grouping and activities, especially small group work, and space that is inviting, comfortable, and bright.
- 5. A Much **Improved Lunch Program** promotes healthy eating habits, with better food quality, healthier choices and a more friendly dining environment.

Achieving School District Goals

Additionally, following Implementation, District 62 reinstated and/or enhanced many of its programs. Professional Development for teachers was reinstated and the building upgrades and improved technology allow for **collaborative work** and meeting spaces for small and large groups. As a result of enhancements to buildings and school grounds, **team sports, intramurals and extra-curricular activities were also reinstated**, allowing for safe and improved sports and student activities.

Gifted programming was reviewed and improved upon through an alignment of instruction and content. Cross-content, project-based models of instruction were created for students in third through fifth grades. As well, technology upgrades and space improvements in the school buildings have allowed for more effective instructional practices, including the use of more **online resources and digital materials**; a collaboration across the District and with students in other locations; the introduction of new technology devices to motivate students; and collaborative and project based work that takes place in new, flexible work spaces.

Through the master planning process, District 62 experienced not only a major transformation of programs and infrastructure, but also a complete overhaul of their image and identity. An updated logo was adopted during the process to reflect the refreshed and contemporary feel of the newly planned and constructed school facilities.



Additionally, through the numerous local and national **awards won**, community members who are not involved with the schools on a daily basis can also see **positive results** and external validation from the Master Planning process without ever setting foot in the buildings themselves.

The response from the community has been **overwhelmingly positive**, and both parents and students are proud of their new facilities and excited by the opportunities they offer. With so many immigrant families in District 62, the availability of quality schools goes beyond simply aesthetically pleasing places, representing a bright future and the realization of **hopes and dreams** for a new generation of American citizens.



Example 1 Early Learning Center (ELC) at Forest Elementary School

An Inspiring Space to Support the District's Youngest Learners

Aspirations

The District's goal for the Early Learning Center was to provide a safe, secure environment where children could grow **physically, emotionally, socially,** and **intellectually.**

While stressing these developmental areas, the staff hoped to gear activities to meet the needs and interests of individual children. The programs would include Book Time for 2's, Mini School, Preschool, Jr. Kindergarten, Extended Day Kindergarten, and Before/After School activities for school age children.

Challenges

Two programming challenges emerged from the very start of the ELC project. The first challenge was to take two schools serving students of differing program needs and age groups and combine them under one roof while maintaining their own distinct identities and operations. The second challenge was to create a welcoming and nurturing environment for students while fostering the efficiency and benefits of shared equipment and support spaces for the faculty.

Solutions

The overall planning concept started by **reconfiguring the** elementary school floor

plan so that all student-occupied spaces were located on the first floor. This restacking was made possible by shifting pre-k functions to the addition and relocating District administrative offices and professional development spaces to the partial second floor of the existing school.

A separate, dedicated entrance for District staff prohibits crossing of visitors with students on either side of the facility. The main entrance to the elementary school was repositioned along the west side of the facility to help preserve the identity of each school and effectively manage vehicular and pedestrian traffic at peak congestion times.



Example 1 • Early Learning Center (ELC)

The primary instructional spaces in the schools are positioned around two, secured courtyards. In both cases, a combination of fixed/ operable windows and stackable glass doors allow an abundance of natural light to permeate from these outdoor instructional venues into the core of the building. Constructing the ELC addition along the east side of the elementary school forms the first courtyard. It is intended to accommodate shared-use garden plots. The second courtyard (Zone 3) is the organizing feature of the ELC. Classrooms and support spaces are arranged in two distinct zones (Zones 1 and 2) around this area.



Equally accessed and developed for outdoor, play-based activities.



Example 1 • Early Learning Center (ELC)



Now complete, the new Early Learning Center (ELC) serves over 500 children, ages 3-5, with varying developmental limitations. The existing elementary school has capacity for 440 K-5th grade students. At over 900 square feet, each instructional room in the ELC is designed to accommodate multiple, simultaneous activities. **Nooks and crannies** of varying sizes define the non-traditionally shaped rooms and work in conjunction with the movable furniture to provide **flexibility for individual and/or group activities.** As the program evolves, wireless smart boards will be installed in each ELC instruction room to maximize flexibility and interaction between the instructors and students.



The ELC has **GREATLY EXCEEDED OUR EXPECTATIONS.** From the Illinois Superintendent of Schools to our senior citizen representatives who have visited the ELC, they all have commented on the design and vision of educating young learners that was so obviously at the **FOREFRONT OF THE MINDS OF THE ARCHITECTURAL TEAM.**

> Dr. Jane Westerhold, School Superintendent, District 62



Example 1 • Early Learning Center (ELC)

A variety of views depict the quality and character of the semi-public ring. The casual arrangement of rooms off the corridor in conjunction with the infusion of natural light, a variety of materials, and an earth tone color palette combine to mimic the feeling and experience of MEANDERING through a FOREST.



One of several activity areas in the semi-public ring. Here students are gathered for a SPONTANEOUS STORY TIME. Extensive use of glazing allows an abundance of natural light to penetrate into the building and also helps frame views to the courtyard.





Example 1 • Early Learning Center (ELC)





Example 1 • Early Learning Center (ELC)

View of the secured courtyard highlighting landscape beds. The fiber glass splash blocks in the form of specific leaves are situated under directional gutters located at the four corners of the courtyard.





One of our parents called our building a MAGICAL PLACE. I love that. When you put your foot in this door, you can't help but be happy. All the kids are supported and loved.

> Margarite Beniaris Director of the Early Learning Center, District 62



















Example 2 South Elementary School

Creating a Bright Future for our Historic School

Aspirations

Built in **1934**, South Elementary is the oldest structure in the District. Through the years, little consideration was given to respecting exterior and interior elements that reflect the **vintage** quality of the **building**. For these reasons, District leadership gave serious consideration early in the planning process to demolishing this facility and starting anew. However, appreciating the importance that this neighborhood school has to community members and with an eye towards sustainable measures, the Board of Education decided to reinvest its capital resources into keeping the building operational for decades to come. With this in mind, the District established a set of goals for South Elementary that included upgrading the infrastructure and, at the same time, transforming the building to meet the demands of current educational performance standards and curriculum mandates.

Challenges

South Elementary is a **multi-level facility** with a half basement and two upper levels that awkwardly connected to a two-story gymnasium/Library Media Center addition constructed at ground level. A number of "improvements" over its history made access into and throughout the facility a challenge for those students and staff members with physical limitations. In fact, two-thirds of the facility was **inaccessible by current ADA standards**.

Solutions

The design of the newly renovated school celebrates, rather than masks, its age through sensitive and consistent incorporated colors and materials throughout all rooms that are in keeping with its **historic character**. The circulation challenges were mitigated by "surgically" installing an elevator aside the central stairway, as well as providing a new entry stair/ramp/ planter configuration by the relocated main entrance. Mechanical, electrical, plumbing and fire protection systems were updated to reflect current code requirements and standards for high performing learning environments.









SECTION

- 5. Health Office
- 6. Staff Workroom
- 7. New Elevator
- 8. Library Media Center
- 9. Kindergarten
- **10. Special Education**
- 11. T.I.L.E.
- **12. Small Group Instruction**
- 13. Social Worker
- 14. Psychologist
- **15. Conference Room**
- 16. Classrooms
- 17. Gymnasium
- 18. Large Group Instruction
- 19. Stage
- 20. Staff/Student Entry
- 21. Old Main Entrance/ **New Activities Lobby**



Example 2 • South Elementary School



South Elementary is the oldest multi-level Elementary School in the District and benefits from ample room to house the educational programs that are offered to students. As such, a T.I.L.E. space is located on both the first and second floors. Each is equipped with **Smart boards, computer tablets, floor-to-ceiling marker boards,** and **tack able wall surfaces.** All of the furniture is varied and mobile. Students can sit on beanbags or motion-friendly, ergonomically correct chairs, which have been shown to **improve cognitive engagement.**



Whoa – what happened to this school?

Jeidy, South Elementary Student, District 62



Example 2 • South Elementary School

Typical view of the first and second floor academic corridor. The use of materials and colors represented are consistently applied to all spaces throughout the facility and help REFLECT THE REVITALIZED BUILDING IMAGE.



A small group instructional room at the end of the first and second floor corridors. Even though the facility expresses the historic quality through its styling, the types of spaces provided in the building honor the more FORWARD LEANING **EDUCATIONAL** PROGRAMS AND SERVICES offered to the students.





Example 2 • South Elementary School



In addition to the T.I.L.E. spaces, a number of extended instructional areas and support spaces populate the facility and provide opportunities for large/small group learning exercises and one-to-one intervention/assistance. Specifically, **breakout rooms** immediately adjacent to each T.I.L.E. space are located at the end of the first and second floor corridors. Across the hallway from these rooms are psychologist and social worker offices, conference rooms and areas for special needs services. Most prominently, at the core of the building, positioned between the LRC stacks and **research loft**, is an **amphitheater-like venue** for lectures and other large-group activities.





Example 2 • South Elementary School





Example 3 Orchard Place Elementary School

Recreating a School... Creating a Community Beacon

Aspirations

Orchard Place Elementary is a neighborhood school located in a residential area that serves a diverse student population. The campus is used all week and at all times of the day and is a **Social** and educational hub for community members. For this reason, the District wished to maximize green spaces on the property and provide welcoming and flexible interior environments that could accommodate a variety of group functions and individual needs. Additionally, the District wished to create a **new public image** for the building along with making extensive improvements to the aged building infrastructure.

Challenges

Orchard Place is one of District 62's oldest facilities and was in need of the greatest amount of improvement. Narrow hallways dictated that lockers be located in the classrooms; reducing the usable space in each room. A minimal power supply was provided throughout and little to no consideration was given to space for collaborative exercises and activities. The school lunchroom was located in the basement in two separate, cramped rooms without any exposure to natural light or direct access to the outside. The safety and security of students and staff was compromised, as monitoring visitors at the entry sequence was ineffective. Traffic patterns at the exterior were not clearly defined and the overall image of the facility did little to announce the prominence and importance of this school in the community. In short, a complete overhaul of the building was needed.

Solutions

The recreation was divided into two phases. The first phase involved the construction of a new, two-story classroom/gymnasium wing immediately behind the oldest portion of the building. Once that was completed, students and staff vacated the original 1947 wing and began using the addition. The vacated portion of the facility was then torn down to make way for parking and drop-off lanes. Renovations for the remainder of the facility occurred the following summer (**not one day of school was lost** or cut short as a result of this activity).



Example 3 • Orchard Place Elementary School



This **revitalized** institution is a source of community pride and is utilized on a 24/7 basis. The refreshed building image, through its extensive use of glazing, conveys a sense of openness and welcomes interested community members to experience ways in which students learn in the new millennium. Additionally, play fields and playground equipment were either expanded or maintained in the final design solution as recreational facilities are at a premium in the community. Community group usage encourages and demonstrates to students that **education is a life-long pursuit**.

An abundance of glazing around the addition is used to maximize the amount of daylight that penetrates into the building. It also serves to increase visibility in and around the building, ultimately conveying an appropriate sense of controlled accessibility of this COMMUNITY BEACON to the public.





Example 3 • Orchard Place Elementary School



From the outside, the entire building **appears to be a completely new facility.** The second floor rain screen façade, in combination with alternating precast concrete panels and stone veneer walls, projects a refined contemporary appearance.





- 1. Main entry
- 2. New addition
- 3. Existing 2-story
- renovated building
- 4. Residential property
- 5. Playground area
- 6. Hard surface play area
- 7. Staff parking
- 8. Parent drop-off
- 9. Visitor parking
- 10. Kindergarten drop-off
- 11. Bus drop-off

Example 3 • Orchard Place Elementary School





Example 3 • Orchard Place Elementary School

View of the twostory addition as seen from the new playground. The hard surface play area and playground equipment are reconfigured close to the building to help MAXIMIZE AVAILABLE PLAYFIELDS on the back-half of the site.





A major aspect of curriculum improvements integrated at other renovated facilities in the District was the incorporation of **Technology Integrated Learning Environments** (T.I.L.E.s), discussed in the previous chapter. Specific to Orchard Place Elementary School, the new T.I.L.E. is centrally located between the main entrance lobby and commons area for ease of access before, during and after school hours. It is equipped with SMART Boards, computer tablets, floor-to-ceiling marker boards, and tackable wall surfaces. **Staff training seminars and community group meetings** can also be accommodated.



Example 3 • Orchard Place Elementary School

Inside, the color and material finish palettes were chosen and implemented to provide a consistent look and feel between the new and renovated spaces. The **Cafeteria/Student commons** area **exemplifies** this interface as it straddles the new and renovated sides of the building and has become the **main hub** of the school. Other social zones and small breakout areas are scattered throughout the facility to support the **spontaneous, dynamic activities** happening all day long.

View of the cafeteria/student commons in the new addition. This space serves as a CONNECTING LINK between the renovated and new construction areas of the facility. Besides accommodating students during the lunch hour, instruction activities occur before. during, and after the school day.



View from the second floor stairway leading to the cafeteria/ student commons. From here, it is possible to see the renovated second floor classrooms that overlook this space.



Example 3 • Orchard Place Elementary School



José, Orchard Place Student, District 62

ECTIO

there was a fence around us So i fa object goes-over-theover you lost it sometimessmoke -- he -se nice when it was finished. There, was a witer cateteria ant gym. here new classrooms a new-music-class room and the computer lab is cooler.





Example 4 Iroquois Community School

Creating a High-Tech, Year-Round Learning Environment

Aspirations

The final school to be completed during the implementation stage was Iroquois Community School, District 62's **only year-round, K-8 facility.**

Families in the District who choose to have their children attend this school do so for several reasons: first, they feel there is less knowledge lost when students do not have a three-month summer break; and second, parents value the consistency – both in instruction and the learning environment for their children. Families feel this gives lroquois a tight-knit, community feel. With input from parents, faculty and the community, the District identified three major goals for Iroquois:

- Improve Circulation
- Introduce Natural Light in Facility
- Refresh Building Image

Challenges

Desperately in need of renovation, Iroquois was perhaps more run-down than the other 11 schools within the District. Because of its location along a heavily trafficked arterial highway, near a major interstate, and under a major flight path serving O'Hare International Airport, **noise was a major issue.** When the school was built in the late 1960s, the problem was addressed by simply not including windows at the building perimeter, resulting in a claustrophobic, cave-like interior environment. There were also **code violations** and **awkward interior circulation** routes that needed reshaping.

The yearly calendar posed a unique construction challenge during the implementation stage because, unlike the other 11 schools, there was **no extended summer break.** Therefore, the District redeveloped their academic schedule for Iroquois by adjusting the break sessions to maximize the amount of time available for construction activity.



Example 4 • Iroquois Community School



Solutions

Iroquois required a complete reconstruction of its interior core. The major design challenge for the architects was to create a building that served the needs of students across the kindergarten through 8th grade age spectrum. Nowhere else in the school building did architects face this challenge more than in the recreation of the library or **Academic Research Center** (ARC), as it was renamed.

Inspired by **energized dot-com working environments,** the ARC incorporates many different seating options that define collaboration zones for large and small group activities. It is centrally located and can be accessed from three sides. The T.I.L.E. concept, used in other District 62 schools, is placed inside the ARC. Sliding glass doors separate the spaces but can easily be moved to create an expanded space for all-staff meetings and school-wide gatherings. (see above)

The extensive use of glazing and similar finish material, which extend from the ARC into the corridor, help dissolve the barriers placed between spaces and keep all areas in the facility visually connected to each other. Fixed booth seats and free-standing tables and chairs strategically placed in the hallways surrounding the ARC provide the opportunity for **spontaneous social engagement** and one-to-one instructional assistance away from the formal classroom setting. The remaining portions of the facility reflect the same spirit of the ARC through the **playful and sophisticated use of color** and careful placement of seating nooks.

The District 62 community is overwhelmingly **PLEASED** with the more contemporary environment created at Iroquois. Students are **PROUD** of their new school and seek out opportunities to spend time in the ARC, which they see as a destination with **ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES**. Dr. Westerhold, Superintendent of District 62, recently spoke with the librarian at Iroquois who, when asked how she liked the new ARC space, responded, 'In all my years of teaching, I never could have imagined working in such a wonderful school.'



Example 4 • Iroquois Community School

Built-in and freestanding, flexible furnishings populate the interior of the ARC and support large and small group instructional activities. Selectively placed windows frame views to the surrounding corridors, dissolve the boundaries between these areas, and create enhanced visibility and accessibility to all parts of the school.







Example 4 • Iroquois Community School





Legend

- 1. Main entry
- 2. Security vestibule
- 3. Administration
- 4. Kindergarten
- 5. Gymnasium
- 6. Lockers rooms
- 7. Music/Band room
- 8. Cafeteria
- 9. Academic Research Center
- 10. Renovated classrooms
- 11. Special education
- 12. Art room
- 13. Office space
- 14. Mechanical space

Example 4 • Iroquois Community School



ECTION

Example 4 • Iroquois Community School











Now I like this school because there are bean bags ...

Iroque	ois Com	nmunity S	chool		
Name: S	ylwio-	J			
E	E		C.S.		1
		T	To		T
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IC	Sis	the t	ile-r	000	beca

Windows and coumputer hairs Now e-this-schoo their are windows and ean bags in really 5157



Final Thoughts

Des Plaines Community Consolidated School District 62 embarked upon the District-wide Master Planning process with a goal of creating a road map to align educational programs and facility enhancements with available funds and the dynamics of living in a global society – a daunting task, to say the least. The District worked in close collaboration with their architect and the community, always keeping the final goal in mind. Through this collaboration, the Master Plan and the resulting implementation projects were brought to fruition on time and on budget, with overwhelming support from a community who, through their participation in a well-planned engagement process, set the project in motion along a path of success. Both the process and the resulting facility projects have been repeatedly recognized through external validation.

Perhaps most notable is the recognition that the leadership of District 62 has received since completion of the project:

- On November 18, 2012 the Illinois Association of School Administrators named District 62
 Superintendent of Schools Dr. Jane Westerhold the Illinois Superintendent of the Year (there are more than 800 Superintendents state-wide). Dr. Westerhold accepted the award noting that it represented the achievements of the faculty, staff and community, and would never have been possible without the great success of Charting the Path.
- One year later, on November 24, 2013, School District 62 Board of Education President Brenda Murphy was honored by the Illinois State Board of Education as recipient of the 2013 Thomas Lay Burroughs Award. Murphy was selected for the prestigious award for her leadership in helping students make academic gains, and importantly, closing the achievement gap with improved technology, an emphasis on early learning education, and many more initiatives.

 In response to the Board of Education's bestowment, a proclamation from Mayor Matt Bogusz announced that Monday, December 16, 2013 would be named "Brenda Murphy Day" in Des Plaines.

In addition, pertinent design awards include the following:

Iroquois Community School

2013 Award of Distinction, Excellence in the Design of Educational Environments, Illinois Association of School Boards

Early Learning Center

- 2013 Citation, Exhibition of School Architecture, National School Boards Association
- 2012 Best K-12 Education Project, ENR Midwest
- 2012 Merit Award, AIA Educational Facility Design Award

Orchard Place Elementary School

- 2013 Best K-12 Education Project, ENR Midwest
- 2013 Merit Award Finalist, Construction Under \$15 Million, Chicago Building Congress
- 2012 Award of Merit, Excellence in the Design of Educational Environments, Illinois Association of School Boards

South Elementary School

2012 Award of Merit, Excellence in the Design of Educational Environments, Illinois Association of School Boards

District 62 Superintendent of Schools Dr. Jane Westerhold [pictured in the middle] receives the Illinois Superintendent of the Year.



Although I am extremely proud of District 62's accomplishments, I certainly cannot take the credit in isolation. I share this award with a Board of Education committed to children, an amazing group of fellow administrators, our teachers and support staff, our parents, our partners, our volunteers, and the boys and girls who we serve.

> Dr. Jane Westerhold, School Superintendent, District 62