CANYON VIEW HIGH SCHOOL
Agua Fria Union High School District | Waddell, Arizona

2019 SUBMISSION – JAMES D. MACCONNELL AWARD
The traditional boundaries of teaching and learning were expanded to create the best possible learning environment for students and teachers attending Canyon View High School. To support the District’s vision of a new school that "blurs the lines between ages and abilities...fosters authentic learning and curricular exploration" – a team of educators, designers, engineers, community members, and researchers set out to turn the traditional collaborative process into an experimental, co-creative journey. A journey that began in 2015 and continues to influence how we might re-invent a new way of school for the future of teaching and learning.

**Executive Summary**

**Courage to Experiment.** Throughout the planning, design, construction, and professional development process – and now at the conclusion of year one - the AFUHSD District has been fearless in pursuing an iterative process of experimentation to develop a new model for school that engages each student with their road map to success. To get there – no stone was left unturned – rather than leaving solutions up to conventional assumptions, an engaging holistic ethnographic approach was used to see more thoroughly into the world of teaching & learning. As a result of this process, three bold principles emerged for new Canyon View High School.

**Catalyst for Change.** As expressed by the District and supported by the community from day one, “this is the time to be bold. This is when we unite around a common set of goals that are on the horizon.” The outcome has been far reaching, with a solution for Canyon View High School as a substantial investment that will transform the community and continuum of learners for decades to come.

**Spatial Agility.** Flexible, agile spaces will help students prepare for their college or workforce-ready futures. Open, democratic use of space allows the whole facility to be used by different groups in a variety of different ways; from students-to-staff; to a community of lifelong learners and partners throughout the region. Spaces are easily reconfigured school year to school year, but also hour-by-hour throughout the day. Every inch of every space is versatile enough to constantly be in use.

**Allied Partnerships & Community.** What does it mean to involve the community in the learning process? It was recognized that the time to embrace elements of a larger culture, like: safety, health, engagement & well-being, challenge and holistic support was here. There was agreement to return to a 24-hour community use, every day of the year whereby the whole campus is considered to be collaborative space; where the learning culture is more than the school facility itself, it is the collective relationships that develop a vital presence for the community to play in the eventual success of Canyon View High School.

The result of this experimental approach to design and education, begun in 2015, is clear: a school with neither cells nor bells; a school that is centered around the learner; and a place that is safe for failure and fosters success.
Re-Inventing High School | Engagement & Well-being

The process of discovery through experiential tours for the District was an opportunity to seek and find the most forward-thinking examples of education and architecture to build a baseline framework from real life experience. The rich and rigorous process of observation created a deep understanding of what spaces and collaborative processes constituted the “diamonds and pitfalls” leading to a future forward vision for a “unique ecosystem that will foster collective ownership and afford failure as much as reward success.” The District used these facility tours as a jumping off point to develop six guiding principles as a framework of overarching metrics of success for the District.

Teaching & Learning. The new facility must foster and enable innovation and measurable advancements in teaching and learning to meet or exceed the District’s academic vision. The facility will provide spaces to allow students to: examine coursework in-depth, develop collaborative opportunities, and for teachers to advance their professional skill sets. The school will endeavor to cater towards future flexibility by providing an environment that is student-centered, interdisciplinary in our teaching approach, and focused on developing problem-solving skills.

Community. The school will be a focal point for the community, allowing for social and intergenerational engagement. It will serve as the center for the District with enhanced staff training facilities, and high-tech project-based learning environments. These enhanced environments will benefit the students academically, as well as supporting the community.

Partnerships. Partnerships between Higher Education institutions and local businesses will provide students the exposure, experience and opportunities necessary for success after high school. Through real world experiences, students learn skills in high demand regionally - while developing a portfolio of innovative college-ready projects.

Healthy Learning Environments. Learning will be enhanced through a healthy, sustainable, and performance-driven environment which includes: natural daylighting, views & connection to the outdoors, shade and protection from natural elements, and comfortable settings to create a space that is flexible, safe, and sustainable. The learning environment will also include measurable physical and environmental qualities necessary to support healthy human and environmental performance; indoor air quality, ventilation rates, human-centric lighting, acoustic control, solar mediation, water quality, energy conservation.

Technology. Technology should be integral to the learning environment to support project-based, STEM curriculum, and applied learning to help students establish connections to workforce development, while also being adaptable for future needs.

Security. Community members, leaders, experts, law enforcement, mental health professionals, students, educators, and district administration must come together and arrive at the right solution. A combination of facility design and an awareness of the human factors such as peer networks, relationships, and the comprehensive school system will be considered in order to create a school that is both welcoming and safe.
A group of visionary public school teachers, administrators, and community members, along with the architectural planners, have captured the essence of what teaching and learning will look like in the future. Through extensive research and visits to some of the leading educational and private sector institutions in the U.S., this project blends pliable teaching environments with digital platforms for learning. The learning applications for all our students and educational practitioners to grow together are unprecedented. I hope you’ll join us on this journey moving forward and realize this community investment in education is measured through creating a foundation for each student to excel and accelerate their academic and career preparation.”

Superintendent, Agua Fria Union High School District #216
Maximizing a Return on Investment | Project Data

Date of Completion: 8/1/2018
Project Context | People: 1,800 Students/458 Students Last Year
Site Area: 60 acres
Floor Area (GSF): 237,120
Number of Stories: 2
Actual Costs | Site Development Costs: $12.1 million
Actual Costs | Building Costs: $63.66 million
Actual Costs | Furnishing Costs: $2.9 million
Actual Costs | Technology Costs: $2.1 million
Actual Costs | Total Project Costs: $75.76 million
Energy Usage (energy code that the project was built to?): IECC 2012
Predicted Net EUI: 28 kBTU/sf/yr
Predicted reduction from benchmark: 78%
Does the Project meet the 2030 challenge?: Yes
Does the project generate renewable energy on site?: Yes
Post Occupancy Evaluation: Yes
If yes, what type of evaluation?: Student Engagement Index (SEI)/Teacher Engagement Index (TEI)
% Minority and IEP at Canyon View last year:
33% Free and Reduced Lunch
45% Hispanic
45% Caucasian
08% African-American
12% Students with an IEP

Canyon View High School's First Spirit Friday*

*Student population expected to be Title One next year.

We have students from all walks of life. We have students living in one million dollar homes and students living in their cars. Everyone is welcome here and everyone is expected to succeed.

– Phillip N., Principal
01 School & Community Engagement
Co-Creating with Educators & Designers | Timeline

Participatory Design. Imagination to Integration. Programmatically ambitious, architecturally challenged with a modest budget, Canyon View High School fosters academic and curricular exploration by expanding the definition of a ‘place-based’ high school. Guided by the heavy involvement of local businesses, government officials, parents, students, and community members – the school was built through a journey of collaboration. In total, over 480 of the project’s stakeholders participated in community meetings to create three bold ideas and five guiding principles prior to conceptualizing the design. The future place-based learning at Canyon View High School was thoughtfully crafted with aspirational consensus to consider the project as a unique invention – with the student experience at its proverbial center.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS included architects, engineers, community members, business partners, government agencies and district leadership - all aspired to treat the project as a unique invention. Together they developed a path forward that shaped the outcome of Canyon View High School.

![Timeline Diagram]

[Timeline Diagram showing key events from 2015 to 2019 including: Pre-Bond, Programming + Design, Contract Documents, Construction, Bold, and Post Occupancy phases.
Co-Creating with Educators & Designers | Process

“I truly felt that my input mattered and was listened to, and saw some of the results in the design. Truly everyone had a voice in the process.”
— Helen B., Community Member

Three consecutive weeks were spent exploring multiple facilities in each region where each could be understood pedagogically as well as how space supported and enabled the curriculum. The following design charrettes allowed the team to test ideas, fine tune concepts, and develop iterative design options using colorful foam cubes to signify major program elements. In small group breakouts, clarity was added to the program aspirations of the learning suites and the accelerator, both significant elements that would become cornerstones of the design solution. With these cornerstones defined, multiple scenarios were developed and tested against the guiding principles.

Lessons Learned from Educational Tours

Inspirational Places: That Make Us Dream Big
Learning Communities: That Create a Sense of Pride
Flexible Space: That Allows Architecture to Adapt
Maker Space: That Provides Freedom to Invent
Collaboration Space: That Gets Us Talking
Nodes: That Help Us Find Our Way
Follies: That Infuse Fun and Unexpected Moments
Relevancy: That Connects Learning to “Real Life”
Special Learning Spaces: That Let Us Dive Deeper
Dispersed Support Areas: That Deliver Services When Needed
Outdoor Spaces: That Connect Us to Nature
I feel like the open space, since it was designed in a college format, when I went to go visit a college [CVHS] provided me a lot of comfort. It will let me adjust to a more advanced way of learning.

– Emily, Freshman Principal’s Advisory Group

As you move classrooms... To me, it feels like it engages my mind. It gets my mind thinking. It treats me like I am an adult. I am not in a place where I have to stay in this small spot. I am free to do more things.

– Carly, Freshman Principal’s Advisory Group
Creating a Learning Marketplace | Placemaking

We solicited from community members as to what a high school might look like, not from a design standpoint but from a substantive performance point of view. The questions that drove the discussion were, “What and who is the 2019 student? How does he/she learn? How should this student be taught, and what kind of a teacher will team them. How will these same questions be answered a decade from now? Will our project still be relevant?” The answers to our questions became Canyon View High School.

— Ron T., Community Member

Small Learning Communities. The campus plan is the culmination of engineering a local climatic response for indoor-outdoor learning alongside the charge to create small flexible learning communities for a student population of 1,800. Arranged as a linear series of opposing building forms along an exterior central spine, called the Agora, four small learning communities, called Academic Forts, are woven together by interior/exterior navigation pathways along the north. To the South of the Academic Forts, a series of building forms house public functions like the Auxiliary Gym, Music Suite, White Box Auditorium, and the Accelerator – a cluster of complimentary learning environments that promote exploration and experimentation into the future of teaching and learning.

The Accelerator. As the heart of the campus, the Accelerator infuses experimentation into everyday innovation with a multi-use creative lab, maker space, and a focal point for student and teacher professional development. It is here, at the heart, that ongoing invention and re-invention into the art of teaching and learning will occur – sustaining a creativity engine for decades to come. Primary to the Accelerator is the Theater, equipped with traditional fixed seating in the lower bowl and a retractable flat floor seating system at the back of the bowl. The provision of flexible arrangements allows for a wide range of activities including functional testing or medium-to-large scale rapid prototyping. The adjacent complimentary space, nicknamed the White Box eluding to its theatrical and professional collaboration purposes, is designed to work independently or in tandem with the Theater. Special features like glass airplane hangar doors enable the Agora, Accelerator, and Theater to open to the Learning Stair which allows the aggregate settings to support the 137+ activities identified as District priorities; ranging from symposia, expositions, theatrical and lecture events – to hands-on project work and special guest events.

Flexible Learning Suites. The Academic Forts house learning suites as a series of connected settings that can flexibly merge with one another in support of “pedagogy of the moment.” A blend of six primary learning studios are positioned around the perimeter of each suite with two labs and connections in-between. Individual studio ownership is transferred to the collective community, affording students the freedom to explore curriculum that best aligns with their personal, academic, or professional interests. Each suite provides a variety of spaces that can flex in size and configuration throughout the day depending on the type of group activities scheduled or emerging – furniture as a resource and affordance aids in fostering a place that welcomes how students learn best – anytime, anywhere. Anchoring each Fort is a Faculty Collaboration Hub on the ground level adjacent to the Agora and learning studios as varied as Art & Graphic Design, Life Skills, and Career & Technical Education. In total – the building forms and functional adjacencies blur the boundaries between inside and outside; teaching and learning; public and private – giving rise to the deep need for flexibility as a context for relevant learning in the 21st Century.
Learning must be inspiring. Student input was critical to the success of the project. Obtaining firsthand accounts of current needs as well as what students wanted for those who would follow them was profound. While the process was centered around this new campus, the feedback should be considered universally in its emphasis. We heard that tutoring, access to materials and resources, curricular choice, multiple ways of learning topics, the ability to find passion in and relevance of the coursework would drive them towards success faster. In some cases, students expressed that relevance of the coursework could also help them choose a career or college major that suited their skills or at least show them what they might not be adept at sooner rather than when it was costing time and money after high school.

Learning requires a positive culture. The teacher must play a variety of roles as we shift towards a student-centered learning environment. As the curriculum changes, collaboration between teachers becomes more important than ever. Interdisciplinary and project-based learning, for example, require creativity, constant iteration and critical feedback from peers. Working this way requires great spaces for teachers beyond the classroom; we must provide alternatives to working alone in an isolated space. We must build spaces where teachers will collaborate and create, as well as concentrate and prepare. At the same time, we must foster a professional community throughout the school. The informal spaces in-between, from classroom portals to corridors, is just as important to collaboration as formal spaces. Given the challenging nature of the work, teachers require ample downtime. Give them spaces to get away, relax and recharge.

Learning happens in the community. What does it mean to involve the community in the learning process? It means the time to embrace elements of a larger culture (safety, health, engagement, challenge, support) is here. It means a return to 24-hour community use, every day of the year where the total environment is considered a collaborative space. The learning culture is more than the school facility itself – the collective relationships is what will develop it.

Stakeholders throughout the process spoke of the vital presence the community must play in the success of Canyon View High School. Tangible examples listed above speak to opportunities for mentorship, a shared community garden where herbs and spices could be grown for preparation of meals and how skills like fashion design can help deliver a tremendous performance.

The radial graphs and bar charts depict current observations and input collected during our “day in the life” activities. Note the variety of activities by class in the radial graphs on a daily basis while the bar charts show a more uniform approach.
The design has made a big impact. I chose to go to this school; I could have gone anywhere. I am super excited and want to learn everyday. Not only does the environment make us light up, it also makes the teachers light up. And the students can see that in the teachers, and it makes us want to do more.

– Jade, Freshman Principal’s Advisory Group
The entrance to the Accelerator is located in the southern precinct of the campus and is designed to be public in character and scale providing a separate 24/7 entrance for evening and weekend community events.

The Welcome Center (Administration) provides a secure entrance for students throughout the day.
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Variety in furnishings provide options for various learning styles.

Informal learning extends beyond the walls.

Broadcasting is front and center just like Rockefeller Center.

Groups of 3-5 allow for collaborative learning.

Labs are provided in every Fort.

Why rotate classrooms? To help drive instruction; to increase collaboration among students; to allow for 21st Century introduction and learning; so "labs" belong to the students, not teachers.

No Cells, No Bells | Just a Community of Learners

Educational Environment

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Spatial Agility | Small Learning Communities: Easily Configurable

The Forts

The District defined a vision that would "blur the lines between ages and abilities to foster authentic learning and curricular exploration. Aligned with that vision for learning as a continuum, the Forts are suites of interconnected spaces serving to simulate the unlimited capacity for imagination. Teachers and students have the ability to tap into spaces designed to suit the learning of the moment and to be able to adjust easily as the moment changes or shifts. The high degree of spatial agility along with the thoughtful combination of resources, tools, and flexible furniture – makes the Fort a showcase for an ecosystem of mobility with enhanced resource availability for direct application to teaching and learning. Students are afforded the opportunity to maximize content mastery through hands-on exploration, developing skills for success in life, by engaging in their social networks. Individual studio ownership has been transferred to the whole school community as an asset, giving students even greater freedom to explore and teachers even greater freedom to individualize learning. "Forts," are suites of spaces served to simulate the unlimited capacity for imagination reminiscent of a childhood activity of building forts of chairs and sheets.
Learning of the Moment Supports a Student-Centric Focus

“It’s the small details. The colors of the forts increase the creativity and your mindset of thinking.”  
– Tony A., Freshman
The Teaching and Learning Accelerator is an open-source incubator for the art of teaching and learning. Faculty from around the District come to develop and practice, partner and explore the teacher-student, teacher-teacher, student-student, and student-teacher curriculum. Business partners will also be encouraged to use this facility for corporate engagements to shape college and career-ready curriculum. Already, the Teaching and Learning Accelerator, an open-source incubator for the art of teaching and learning has been showcased at an international conference on "Innovative Learning Environments and Teacher Change." This teaching space is already embodying its design to be utilized by faculty and visiting speakers to share knowledge with students and the greater community in a large, open flexible space.
Operable door connects the "White Box" with the Agora / Learning Stair.

The "White Box" has been used to host state-wide robotics & 4H competitions, as well as an international conference!
Physical Environment
Agua Fria Union High School District and the Design Team based the design on an innovative process that included Community and District collaborative-labs resulting in three bold ideas: catalyst for change, spatial agility and partnerships/community access balanced with the realities of scope and budget.

Nestled within the West Valley adjacent to the White Tank Mountains, the architectural design was purposefully conceived to be “of the earth” while also being a celebration of innovation and change. The Canyon View High School campus reflects a design that seamlessly connects the natural to the built environments. Building materials were carefully chosen to withstand the harsh desert elements.

The overall master planning for the site integrates both passive and active performance strategies. The north-south building orientation maximizes daylighting into the learning spaces, while the building’s narrow sides are oriented east-west to minimize the west elevation, where exposure is severe. The architecture/engineering team used local climatic responses to design passive cooling that extends the comfort zone of outdoor spaces throughout the school year, allowing the interior learning environments to extend outside. Extensive photovoltaic shade canopies, that can not only be efficient, but also can be used as a teaching tool were designed to temper adjacent outdoor environments.

Outdoor learning was further enhanced through views to the surrounding mountains, shade and protection from natural elements, and comfortable furniture to create a space that’s flexible, safe and sustainable with a light footprint on the environment. Furthermore, the facility embraces the surrounding physical context with its use of indigenous and low-water use plants which were incorporated into the landscape to harmonize with the site context.
Education Can Occur Anywhere | Tying the Campus Together

Fort | Agora | Accelerator Tying the campus together is an outdoor central spine where the southwest climate was leveraged in providing this 102,835 sf of outdoor space, aptly named the Agora, or Marketplace for Learning, between buildings that includes outdoor project rooms, a learning stair, student dining, an athletic training corridor, and more.
The confluence of the Learning Stair, the Accelerator, and the Agora create the heart of the campus. Learning space from small group to full grade level is provided here.

Shaded space and furniture become classrooms as teachers rotate teaching areas throughout the day.

Students are found outdoors, even on 116 degree days — they just gravitate here!
The South Buildings are scaled to public use and are predominately load-bearing masonry whose materiality reflect the White Tank Mountains beyond.

The North Buildings are scaled to the student with steel frames and plaster exteriors.
Physical Environment

Learning on Display Everywhere

Students gravitate naturally to outdoor seating and eating options instead of the indoor cafeteria.
Engineering the Desert Climate

**Below 85 degrees 75% of the time**

Through a holistic analysis, the final design outcome achieves Thermal Nirvana. Applying the concept of thermal Thermal Nirvana, comfortable outdoor environments are designed to extend occupant satisfaction throughout the year in a harsh desert climate.

Covering 4% with green wall surfaces reduces temperature through evapotranspiration.

An open roof structure with solar panels allows night heat to re-radiation to the atmosphere.

Low velocity, high volume fans provide a constant, pleasant breeze.

The team used local climatic responses and Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) modeling to design passive cooling that extends the comfort zone of the Agora throughout the school year, allowing the interior learning environments to extend outside.

The shape of the Agora provides air movement and shade while the classrooms feature 100% naturally-lit glare-free learning spaces.
“It is one thing to develop superior spaces that enable educators to prepare students for the 21st Century. We reached a whole new level when the architectural team facilitated our staff to allow space to support learning approaches. Through the team’s superior professional development, our staff grew into the mission and acquired the necessary mindset and skills to use the building environments as designed. There is total alignment between the intent of the building design and instructional delivery to support teaching and learning. Well done and thank you!

– Mary K., Governing Board Member

Results of the Process & Project. Student Engagement Index (SEI)/Teacher Engagement Index (TEI): Evidence suggests that individual and group engagement factors, such as active learning, are critical predictors for a student’s academic success. An online survey tool developed by the architectural team, and consistent with primary research protocols, was used in a self-reporting structure to analyze both students’ and teachers’ perception of how their built space impacts student engagement in a Post Occupancy Evaluation. The post-occupancy study was completed in Spring of 2019. After a year of occupancy, almost every question asked indicated that their “world of learning and teaching” has improved; at times dramatically. This research is part of a larger effort to bridge the connection between design and performance.

Results of Project and Process. Student Engagement Index (SEI)/Teacher Engagement Index (TEI): Evidence suggests that individual and group engagement factors, such as active learning, are critical predictors for a student’s academic success. An online survey tool developed by the architectural team, and consistent with primary research protocols, was used in a self-reporting structure to analyze both students’ and teachers’ perception of how their built space impacts student engagement in a Post Occupancy Evaluation. The post-occupancy study was completed in Spring of 2019. After a year of occupancy, almost every question asked indicated that their “world of learning and teaching” has improved; at times dramatically. This research is part of a larger effort to bridge the connection between design and performance.

Based on the design, what do you think your school values?

For the faculty, testing went from most important to least, while collaboration now tops the list!
An Activity-Based Program

Programmatic Utilization Variables drive the spatial outcomes. These are global program factors, or factors that apply to each space in the program.

Utilization Variables ultimately control the master plan program’s size. The core team discussed the effect that adjusting the variables would have on the final design solution based upon the forecast instructional approach, flexibility, movement and student choice (scheduling). Those variables are further defined as follows:

Student Population is the planned enrollment or the ideal number of students that the facility is designed to accommodate in an educationally adequate manner in keeping with design parameters described within this book.

Planned Room Utilization is a measurement of time. With six school periods per day, the agreed upon 83% utilization signifies that every room would be available at least one period per day outside of planned or assigned uses. As a global program factor, the significance of this is twofold, as it affords future flexibility in master scheduling as well as the ability to adjust course offerings over time.

Scheduling/Course Offering Factor is a measurement of a single room’s occupancy rate. The closer the number is to 1.0, the program model anticipates that each seat is full leaving less freedom for students to enroll in electives like Art, Music or CTE courses.

Class Size Variables are also global program factors. Canyon View High School’s design various Class Sizes were input into the program model. Each class size is then applied to a space type and then to a course. Courses can be divided, on a percentage of time basis, into multiple sizes to simulate class activities and both student and teacher movement throughout the day. For this purpose, a wide variety of sizes are input.

Class Size (Students)
- 38 General Instruction: Max Enrollment
- 12 Large Group
- 6 Small Group
- 75 Teams (2x General Instruction)
- 50 PE/Wellness Section Size
- 18 Special Services

3 BOLD Ideas...

The facility solution designed for Canyon View High School stands for the next generations of learners. This is the time to be bold.

If I Only Knew Then What I Know Now...

For this exercise, we sought perspective from stakeholders on what they would go back and “tell” the high school versions of themselves: Take Risk. It is Okay to Fail.
Creating a Culture of Success | B.O.L.D.

"...you can build a school, but without intentional planning of how you want to use that space and how you want to intentionally be innovative, it's not going to happen."

~ Lynn R., AP

Aligning Culture, Values, and Mission. Seeking to have a community of learners engaging and thriving within the new innovative environment, the District approach to change management was to work with the interdisciplinary design team. Together, through a B.O.L.D. [Bridging Organization, Learning and Design] process, new school faculty engaged in professional development to align the school's culture and values to the physical environment to further the mission and allow intended partnerships and relationships to **Be BOLD. Accept risk.**

**A school with neither cells nor bells**
- There are no bells; everyone is treated as a young adult and expected to manage their own time
- Teachers rotate learning labs, allowing for a variety of learning opportunities
- Furniture is all on wheels to easily create the space needed for learning
- Spaces can be used for more than one purpose
- Cross-collaboration between classes, large presentations, small presentations

**A school that is centered around the learner**
- Students can seek to work together in multiple spaces, but there are also quiet areas to work alone
- Teacher Faculty spaces are used to discuss learning, teachers no longer live in silos and can focus on students in teams
- Classrooms are open, light and airy with all learning on display
- Teachers can adapt and adjust for student needs

**A place that is safe for failure and fosters success**
- The Jaguar Success hour for re-teaching and acceleration
- Strong culture and climate
- Sense of community
- The Jaguar Way: Innovation, Diversity, Character, Community, Pride

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**Clarifying the district goals, and how that is driven down to our campus was so worthwhile. Every campus should do this.**

~ Phillip N, Principal

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**I am ready to celebrate! We just received our freshman year’s AZMerit test scores and they were phenomenal! 100% of our “Baby Jags” passed geometry! 100%!**

~ Phillip N, Principal
Everyone who visits is inspired by this design!
– Paul B., Director of the State School Facilities Board

In this timeless space [without bells] you have all the time you want to finish the work you have to do, instead of thinking when will class end as I see the clock ticking. Instead, I have all the time I need to get this, which lets me focus on learning.
– Aretha, Freshman Principal's Advisory Group