



# Dr. J.P. Lord School

2019 James D. MacConnell Award

June 24, 2019





DR. J.P. LORD SCHOOL  
OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS



## Executive Summary

**Describe the overall goals and outcomes of the project**

### A Source of Joy

The new J.P. Lord School, part of the Omaha Public Schools system, educates students with a variety of complex needs, often multiple cognitive and physical disabilities from throughout metropolitan Omaha.

*"Every child, every person needs to know that they are a source of joy; every child, every person, needs to be celebrated. Only when all our weaknesses are accepted as part of our humanity can our negative, broken self-images be transformed."*

- Jean Vanier, "Becoming Human"

The primary goal of this building project was to create a building that outwardly expresses the love and care of the compassionate and dedicated staff for the students, and lets the students, their parents, and the community that which communicates to J.P. Lord's medically fragile students are valued and loved.





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## Scope of Work and Budget

The \$10 million school was funded with \$3.4 million from Omaha Public School's 2014 bond issue and a \$6.6 million relocation agreement with the University of Nebraska Medical Center and Nebraska Medicine.

### Noteworthy Features:

- An **entry canopy** shelters students from the weather as they arrive and depart.
- **Eight airy classrooms** with large windows allow up to eight students per room to see the trees and blue sky outside.
- Half of the classrooms are designed to serve as **Storm Shelters**.
- Centralized **Health Suite** with satellite **Nursing Stations** in both classroom wings.
- **Wide hallways** for wheelchairs with colored lights along the pathways, stars in the ceiling that **twinkle and glow** and textured wall art for students to **touch and feel**.
- **Bright Colors, patterns** and **variable finish materials** engage students throughout the building.

- **Sensory Room** with interactive, multi-sensory environments to relax, engage, and delight students.
- A **multi-purpose Sensory Gym** with adaptive equipment to aid with motion and stretching.
- **Therapy Pool** with an adjustable floor allowing for a zero-entry point and customizable pool depth.
- **Cafetorium** (Cafeteria/Auditorium), **Media Center** and dedicated **Art and Music rooms**.
- **Patient Lifts** allow staff to safely and comfortably transfer students.
- **Large closets** for storing blankets, toys and medical equipment.





# DR. J.P. LORD SCHOOL

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## School & Community Engagement

### Describe the Community

There are 64 students ranging from 5-to-21 years old.

The Omaha Public School District takes a multi-prong approach to teaching students with severe disabilities. The District utilizes the school-based Alternate Curriculum Programs (ACP) and the Multi-Handicapped Program.

The ACP serves students with cognitive disabilities in grades K-12 who require instruction focused on functional academic, social and vocational training. Students participate in this program because of the severity of their disabilities and the amount of support required to meet their individual needs. Students also participate in integrative classes and activities with their general education peers as appropriate. This program is provided in 16 elementary schools, 11 middle and 6 high schools.

The Multi-Handicapped Program serves students with multiple disabilities, ages 5-21 years, in an environment that supports students' medical and sensory needs. The average age of their cognitive abilities is about 30 months. The instructional program addresses the cognitive, communication, community, motor, self-help and social skills and prevocational domains. Opportunities are provided to participate in activities with non-disabled peers. This program is located at J.P. Lord School.

Because of the multi-prong approach, the school district is able to manage the total student population at J.P. Lord School which historically has included 64 students. This translates into (8) classrooms of (8) students.

The new J.P. Lord School, educates students with a variety of complex needs, often multiple cognitive and physical disabilities, from throughout metropolitan Omaha.



When an entire group of people are sheltered away from the community at-large, we suffer from not being exposed to the full spectrum of humanity. This new facility reflects the values of the Omaha Public School District and Omaha community at large – values which inspired the creation of a school that is unique to the nation, a school where all persons – no matter their physical or mental state – are loved and their dignity held high.

### Identify stakeholders

The stakeholders were comprised of the school's Principal, Staff, Students, Parents, Volunteers, Community Members and District Representatives.

### Name challenges

Few if any models exist (both nationally and internationally) of new buildings designed to serve students with multiple handicaps like J.P. Lord. The Committee was challenged with establishing the appropriate vision for a facility to best serve this program today and into the future.

An IBM Training Manual stated that "For people without disabilities, technology makes things easier. For people with disabilities, technology makes things possible." With the technology that is currently available, the new J.P. Lord School has the exciting potential to make a whole new realm of possibilities a reality for its students.

Because of the fragile condition of its students, the educational process at J.P. Lord School is intertwined with their medical care. The majority of J.P. Lord students utilize wheelchairs. As part of their medical treatment and physical therapy, they utilize other devices as well (e.g. standers, walkers, bikes, strollers, mobile lifts, etc.). One student could require (4) different pieces of equipment. Quite a bit of the equipment is fitted to the student which makes it difficult to share with other students. This results in



a lot of equipment that has to be stored in close proximity to the classrooms since it will be used at various times over the course of the school day.

Previously, this excess equipment was stored in the main corridor (hallway) of the school. This created an unsightly and cluttered image to people in the school which was especially overwhelming to the parents of students new to J.P. Lord School. The existing classrooms were cluttered with all of the educational supplies needed to effectively educate the students, as well as the medical equipment and supplies needed for their care. This created a cluttered, institutional environment that was not welcoming nor conducive to maximizing the students learning and care.

### **Describe available assets**

The design team led a “virtual tour” with plans and photographs of the recently constructed Children’s Respite Care Center located near 138th and Q Streets. From this “tour” there was general discussion about lessons which could be learned from the facility and how the concepts could impact the development of the new J.P. Lord building.

Tour of Fremont Public School’s Sensory Garden.

- The Ed Spec Committee was able to spend a morning at the recently constructed Sensory Gardens at Fremont Public Schools. Mary Robinson (the program’s director) led a tour of the space and explained how each component was designed and how these elements are utilized by students with varying developmental issues.

### **Describe value of process and project to community at large**

#### **Sharing Life Together**

Jean Vanier, founder of the worldwide movement L’Arche (the Arc), discovered that people with developmental disabilities whom he befriended had much to give him and to teach him about life. This awareness of the mutuality of relationships and the humanizing contribution of people promoted a transformative experience of sharing life together in L’Arche communities.

This concept is very familiar to the J.P. Lord School community of students, parents and teachers - all part of the life-transforming relationships that are shared and nurtured here together.

Here is a letter to OPS Board of Education from Laura Mac-Holmes (Program Director and Principal for Dr. J.P. Lord School)

Dearest Omaha Public Schools Board of Education,

It is with great joy that I support the document that is Dr. J.P. Lord Schools Educational Specifications Program Summary. Our Educational Specifications Committee made up of parents, staff and community members worked together, cooperatively with a mission of building the best school for students who face great challenges every day.

Over many months our team researched and gathered much information about other facilities what served children who have severe physical and cognitive challenges. Our findings left us without a similar environment for them to learn in. Much of what our team has done is to create an optimal educational environment to meet the physical, cognitive and medical challenges of our students.

We have brought to you the specific needs of our students in the new design for the replacement of the Dr. J. P. Lord School. We have used the most current data for these recommendations and will create a school that is a national model. This new school will serve very special students and their families well.

Most thoughtfully,  
Mrs. Laura Mac-Holmes Program Director (Principal)





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## Educational Environment

### Explain the educational vision and goals of the school

*"It's all about the sensory curriculum - what we see, what we hear, what we smell, what we taste, what we feel."*

- Laura Mac-Holmes, Principal



The staff at J.P. Lord School is very compassionate, caring and totally dedicated to the teaching and care of their students. The primary goal of this building project was to create a building that outwardly expressed the love and care that the staff have for the students and lets the students, their parents, and the community know that the J.P. Lord students are valued and loved.

To create a building that is fully immersive as far as sensory experiences, so that each student is able to maximize their full learning and developmental potential. Ideally, every student will be able to have experiences throughout the building where they will employ all five senses.

To declutter the hallways and classrooms so that the students are taught and cared for in a calm, peaceful environment that is more home-like.

### Describe & illustrate how the environment supports the curriculum.

The student population is comprised of cognitively and physically challenged students with an average developmental age between two and three years old. Each student utilizes a wheelchair and has visual and auditory impairments. The students are medically fragile – thus, education and medical care are interwoven in one environment.

The planning process included extensive observation of students and activities and, in fact, enlisted three students as “co-designers” of the school due to their involvement.

We utilized local educational and medical experts, an assistive technology executive from APPLE computing, thorough staff and family input, including input sessions with parents and families.

The process led to unique strategies to produce the sensory, medical and educational outcomes desired and to improve the cognitive, communication, community, motor, self-help and social skills of the students.

For example, the classrooms are designed with teaching zones, care zones with therapy tables, and separate toilet areas with Hoyer lifts to preserve the dignity of the students. Main classroom lifts also provide more and better mobility and flexibility, with movement from wheelchairs to therapy platforms (with medical privacy curtains). Kitchenettes in each classroom provide for activities such as baking cookies – further stimulating taste and smell. A variety of animations excite the environment, from ceilings with twinkling stars to tactile hallway chair rail designs and materials with color and texture – all allowing students to recognize when they have arrived at a certain place.

The overall goal of the facility is an improved sensory experience. Utilizing sight, sound, taste, touch and smell – together – the senses provide stimulation, allowing students to first be motivated, then take another step in their development with opportunities for improvement.

### Describe & illustrate how the environment supports a variety of learning & teaching styles.

The pre-existing facility which dated to the polio-era in the U.S., held small classrooms and insufficient storage. It was dark, dull and non-stimulating and provided daily mobility and logistical challenges.

The new environment allows for multiple activity zones – large specialized classrooms with kitchen areas and touch screen televisions, platforms and therapy tables and swings among them. This variety of activity,







some educational, some medical was enhanced by corridor nodes for additional activities, a specialized sensory room, therapy pool and outdoor activity area.

**Describe & illustrate how the environment is adaptable and flexible.**

The stimulatory environment is enhanced with large open rooms for specialized configurations with abundant daylight and bright, vibrant animated themes and colors.

Customized student engagement is advocated with tailored technology, sensory zones and sensory rooms.

In this region, we have a storm and tornado shelter requirement. Thus, 50% of the J.P. Lord School classrooms meet storm shelter criteria. Also, ceiling-mounted power drops allow for the re-charging of medical equipment, when batteries fail or run out.



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## Physical Environment

**Describe & illustrate the physical attributes of the environment.**



The approximately 8 acre site is expansive for this facility, allowing the design team to include all programmatically-desired interior and exterior activity, plus adequate parking and ADA needs fulfillment, including an extensive bus drop-off area with canopied shelter – a boon to a medically fragile community of students, typically arriving four-students-per bus (thus 15-20 buses per session!).

The site also accommodates an outdoor play area/adaptive playground area, which addresses our student's high degree of sun sensitivity with multiple shaded areas. The buildings wings appear to "open wide to" and "wrap their arms around" the students in protective fashion, providing a pleasing backdrop and keeping the student community open to the surrounding community and adjacent church (which has already embraced the students through church body engagement).

**Describe & illustrate how the facility fits within the larger context of the community.**

The J.P. Lord School was previously hidden (within the context of an academic medical center campus). The community lost sight of it and, outside of the affected parties, people did not know of it.

The new school site - across the street from a middle school, in the community – allows the public-at-large to know what it is, understand and interact with students. These students, too, are part of the city. When hidden away, all of us have a poorer experience.

Now, already, a church across the street, high school students from a nearby prep school and the local middle school students are engaged with the J.P. Lord students, opening up new possibilities of learning and discovery.

**Describe & illustrate how the project inspires and motivates.**

The program director has noticed physical differences in the students because of these interactions above. There are more expressions and more smiles!

*"Our daughter attends J.P. Lord School...We had **tears in our eyes** on multiple occasions (during our first tour). It (is) very evident that this school was made **specifically for our children**. We are in awe."*

-Current parent

We've shared the educational specifications with others. And now, a Texas school district has been inspired by The Dr. J.P. Lord School to construct a new building for their students. This has been extremely gratifying to our design team as the word spreads.





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## Results of the Process & Project

**Explain how the project achieves educational goals and objectives.**



The original facility had extensive clutter, and inadequate storage. Now - a cleaner more organized learning environment exists, where the focus is on education and medical care. It is bright, colorful and stimulating. Students are more engaged in the learning process. There is more space for more activities.

We've placed the students in more control. Specialized "large button" switches allow students to perform otherwise impossible tasks – starting a computer program, baking a cake, turning on lights and sounds and more.

A therapy pool allows extended time and activity in the water. The community was heavily engaged with a local non-profit providing additional funds for the pool to supplement the district budget.

The physical therapy and occupational therapy staffs now have more opportunities to improve individual lives.

**Explain how the project achieves school district goals.**

The District desires equal opportunity and care for students of all abilities. This particular community – which has not had an equitable experience in the past - is now well-served. The facility finally reflects the values of the community.

**Explain how the project achieves community goals.**

See above.

**Explain any unintended results and achievements of the process & project.**

### A Reflection of our Community

When an entire group of people are sheltered away from the community at-large we suffer from not being exposed to the full spectrum of humanity.

This new facility reflects the values of the Omaha Public School District and Omaha community at large - values which inspired the creation of a school that is unique to the nation, a school where all persons - no matter their physical or mental state - are loved and their dignity held high.

From a parent's point of view, this school is unique. It serves students from kindergarten through age 21. Thus, the community becomes "tight," with long-term shared experience due to the long-term connection with the school. Indeed, school social events may be the only social events some families participate in due to the nature of the students' abilities and required care. The school ministers to these families.

We had a preconceived notion that staff burnout and turnover would be high in a specialized facility like this. We found the opposite.

In fact, such a rich individual and community experience has led the staff to stay through retirement age. Amazing. And one of our goals has been to take care of the staff within the facility, thus, visitors will see generous and well-appointed staff work areas, adequate staff restrooms and extensive use of Hoyer lifts (to prevent injuries to staff).



Below is an article from the Omaha World Herald on Dr. J.P. Lord School.

**J.P. LORD SCHOOL**

# New design is compassionate

**T**he impressively transformed J.P. Lord School deserves our community's applause. This project, serving Omaha-area students with complex needs, has moved from a decades-old institutional setting to an exceptionally well-designed facility.

Children at J.P. Lord go through life with lessened abilities that most of us too often take for granted — mobility, sight or cognitive reach. ██████████ Architects of Omaha took great care to design the new school with thoughtful features that offer ease of access and positive visual stimulation.

“██████████ spent weeks with the staff and observing the kids to find out what would make an environment that's enriching,” said Principal Laura Mac-Holmes. “This man created this building with love.”

Wide hallways accommodate students in wheelchairs; large windows bring in light; a sensory room provides pleasant visual and aural stimulation; a therapy pool (built with funds donated by the Omaha Volunteers for Handicapped Children) allows children to stretch and work their muscles.

The \$10 million school was funded with \$3.4 million from OPS's 2014 bond issue and a \$6.6 million relocation agreement with the University of Nebraska Medical Center and Nebraska Medicine.

Congratulations are due for all parties involved in the development of this laudable project. It will enrich young lives for many years to come.

Omaha World Herald - May 25, 2018



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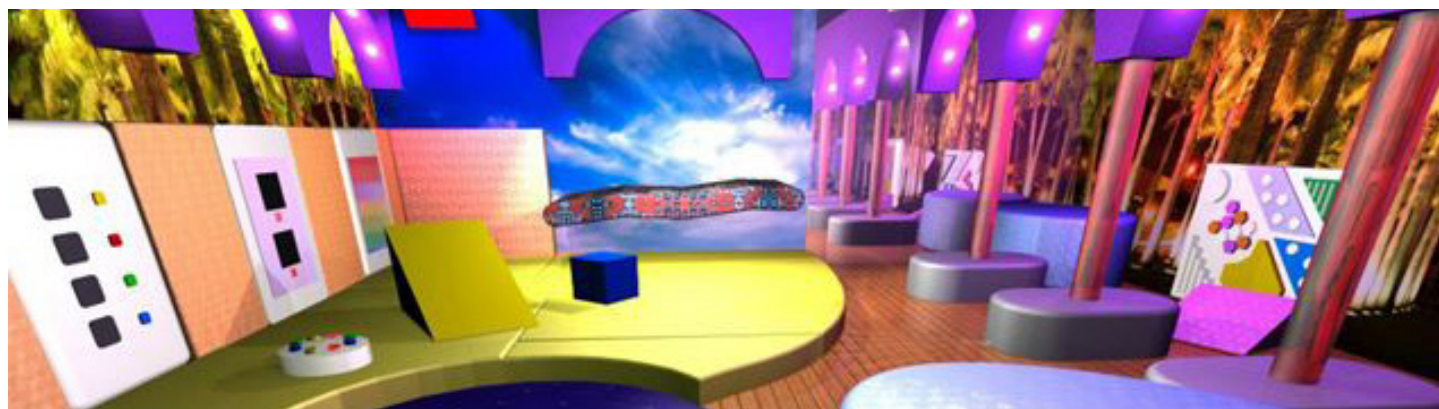




# J.P. Lord School

## Educational Specifications

### Committee Recommendations



25 January 2016



**This is a short version of the educational specifications. The full version is available upon request.**

## **Recognitions**

### **Board of Education**

- Mrs. Lou Ann Goding, President
- Ms. Yolanda R. Williams, Vice President
- Mrs. Marian Fey
- Ms. Lacey Merica
- Mr. Matt Scanlan
- Mr. Marque A. Snow
- Mrs. Katie Underwood
- Mr. Anthony V. Vargas
- Mr. Justin T. Wayne

### **District Representatives**

- Mark A. Evans, Superintendent
- Antoinette E. Turnquist, Chief Operations Officer, District Operations
- Kara Saldierna - Director of Special Education
- Rob Dickson - Executive Director of Information Management Services
- Mark Warneke, Director of Buildings and Grounds
- Kim Thompson, Supervisor of Schoolhouse Planning

### **Program Manager**

Jacobs  
4041 North 72nd Street  
Omaha, NE 68134-2334  
Phone: 402.557.2800  
Mark Sommer  
Steve Selting  
Barbara Ingram

### **Architect**

### **Mechanical/ Electrical Engineer**

### **Civil Engineer**

## **About the Educational Specification Committee**

The Educational Specification Committee was formed to plan and provide input to the Architects and Engineers of the Design Team during the early stages of the planning and design of the new J.P. Lord School. Comprised of the school's Principal, Staff, Parents, Volunteers, Community Members, District Representatives and members of the design and program management staff, the meeting served as an opportunity to develop an understanding of the unique needs the J.P. Lord program. Because few if any models exist (both nationally and internationally) of new buildings designed to serve students with multi-handicaps like J.P. Lord, the Committee was challenged with establishing the appropriate vision for a facility to best serve this program today and into the future.

### **J.P. Lord School**

Laura Mac-Holmes  
Sarah Monzu  
Kristina Berzina  
Kelly Braak  
Joe Gregory  
Corliss Moore  
Cindy Irby

### **J.P. Lord Parents**

Tony & Theresa Petersen  
Renee Thompson  
Jennifer and Bob Thompson  
Marc Bowman  
Marcella Jimenez

### **Community Members**

Mike Dotson

### **OVHC Members**

Richard Galusha  
Jo McCarthy  
Patti Kelling  
Barb Hopkins

### **OPS Staff**

Kara Saldierna  
Rob Dickson  
Mark Warneke  
Kim Thompson

### **Jacobs Staff**

Mark Sommer  
Steve Selting



## Educational Specification Committee Schedule

### Educational Specifications Committee Meetings and Break-Out Session Schedule

#### August 27, 2015 - Project Kick Off with Ed. Spec. Committee

The initial Educational Specifications Committee meeting included introductions of the parents, staff and community members who would make up the J.P. Lord Educational Specifications Committee. In addition, representatives from OPS Administration, Jacobs and the Design Team were also introduced with a brief overview of their roles and responsibilities. Mark Warneke provided an overview of how the Ed. Spec. process is envisioned to unfold and asked the committee to dream as they embarked upon the process of defining what should be included within the new home of the J.P. Lord program.



#### September 3, 2015 - Parents Night Presentation / Interaction

At a Back-To-School Parents Night event, the Design Team gave a short presentation about the Ed. Spec. process then opened the floor to the audience for a general discussion of goals and aspirations for the project. These discussions also included a "Dot Analysis" where each person was given a handful of small stickers and was asked to review several words, room functions, project features and concepts placed on large boards at the front of the room. Each person could then place their dots adjacent to the words, room functions, project features and concepts that he or she felt were the most critical to the future success of the J.P. Lord program. Once complete, the Design Team lead a short summary review with the group looking for themes and similarities.

#### September 10, 2015 – Areas of Input / Children's Respite Care Study

The full Ed. Spec. Committee met to review the details of the "Dot Analysis" completed at the previous week's Parent's Night Presentation. In addition, there was a general brainstorming session among the Committee with the goal of identifying the many different areas of study and focus which would need to be developed as a part of the Ed. Spec. Process. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Design Team led a "virtual tour" with plans and photographs of the recently constructed Children's Respite Care Center located near 138th and Q Streets. There was a general discussion about lessons which could be learned from this facility and how these concepts may impact the development of the new J.P. Lord building.



#### September 23, 2015 - Design Team Shadowing J.P. Lord Staff

Members of the Design Team spent a full day at J.P. Lord shadowing the staff in an attempt to better understand the day-to-day activities and demands of the J.P. Lord program. Through dialog and interaction, this effort was meant to more fully immerse the Design Team into the needs and requirements of students, staff and visitors.

## **Educational Specification Committee Schedule**

### **October 1, 2015 - Case Studies and Discussions**

In the Ed. Spec. process for a more traditional building (with many similar built examples), the Committee would jointly visit other facilities in an effort to discuss the pros and cons of what they see and experience. Unfortunately, similar facilities are not as easily found for programs like that of J.P. Lord. As a result, the full Ed. Spec. Committee met to review their "homework" where each person was asked bring back examples (small and large) of buildings or pieces of buildings which may give the Committee better insights into what might already be built. The images and snippets from facilities across the world were then presented and discussed among the group to better define known options and strategies.

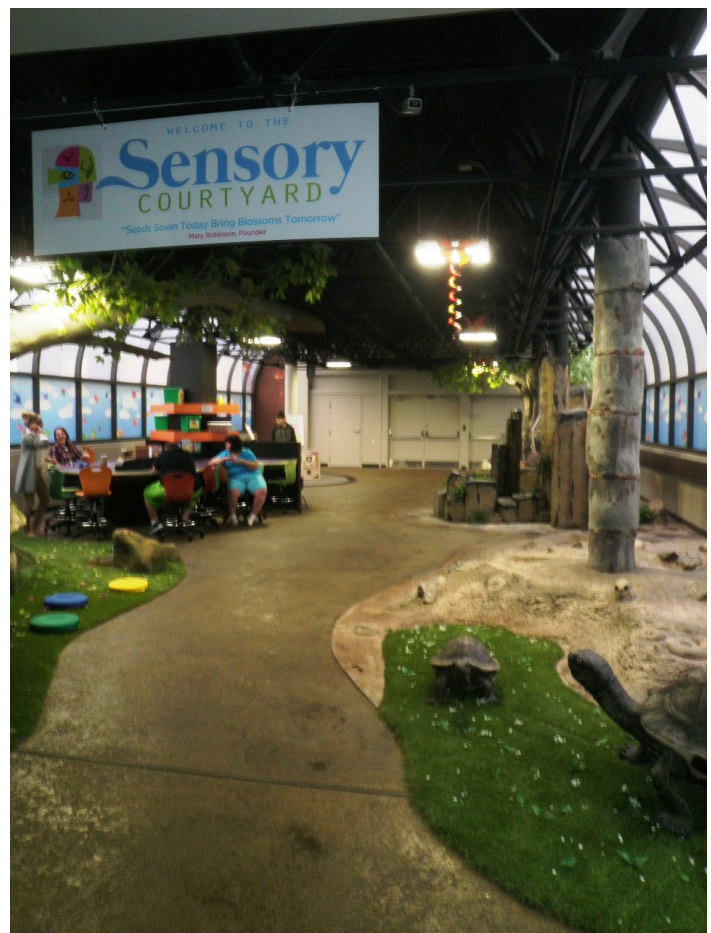


### **October 8, 2015 - Mechanical and Electrical Systems**

The full Ed. Spec. Committee met to review and discuss how the Mechanical and Electrical Systems of the new building could be designed to better facilitate the unique requirements of the students within the J.P. Lord Program. After listening to the overall needs expressed by the Committee, mechanical and electrical engineers from the Design Team led a high-level overview of potential ideas and systems to meet these needs.

### **October 15, 2015 – Transportation and Exterior Site Development**

The full Ed. Spec. Committee met to review and discuss the needs of Transportation associated with the new building and also how these needs would interface with Norris Middle School which is located just south of the new home for J.P. Lord. Representatives from both Norris Middle School and OPS Transportation offered insights into the historical and projected needs as they relate to traffic flow, drop-off/pick-up and parking. Civil engineers from the Design Team also offered additional insights into potential site developments issues like grades, screening and storm water mitigation.



### **October 22, 2015 – Tour of Fremont Public School's Sensory Garden**

Taking advantage of a staff development day, a good portion of the Ed. Specs Committee was able to spend a morning at the recently constructed Sensory Gardens at Fremont Public Schools. Mary Robinson (the program's director) lead a tour of the space and explained not only how each component was designed, but also how these elements are utilized by students with varying developmental issues.



## **Educational Specification Committee Schedule**

### **October 29, 2015 – Technology**

The full Ed. Spec. Committee met to discuss the incredible impact that Technology will have on the design of the new J.P. Lord facility. To spark the conversation, Rob Dickson invited Mark Billington with Apple to lead the Committee through the various tools Apple has already developed and is continuing to refine related to Assistive Technologies.

### **November 5, 2015 – Small Group Break Out (Kitchen, Custodial and Therapy Pool)**

A smaller group met to review the detailed needs of the service area of building, including food service and custodial functions. As a part of this discussion, the group also toured the Monroe-Meyer therapy pool which once served the J.P. Lord student population. It was concluded that the Monroe-Meyer model of a larger pool was not as useful to the J.P. Lord program as a smaller, more adaptable therapy pool like one might find in a rehab facility.



### **November 12, 2015 - Small Group Break Out (Defining Classroom Needs)**

As the individual classrooms will be the heart of the J.P. Lord program, the Design Team led a smaller group through several potential models of the classroom and its supporting rooms might be configured to better serve the unique needs of the J.P. Lord students. By studying these layouts, the group was better able to envision the amount of space which would be necessary to accommodate their individual programs and requirements.

### **December 3, 2015– Review of Rough Draft of Ed. Spec. Composite Data and Space Program**

A final comprehensive Ed. Spec. Summary document (59 pages of text, photos and diagrams) was created by the Design Team in order to document the detailed input which the Committee had conveyed and discussed throughout the Ed. Spec. process. This document and the related Space Program Summary was distributed to the Full Committee for them to review and offer comments so that we could be sure that the Design Team had captured everything that each Committee Member deemed critical.



### **December 4, 2015 – Field Trip to Westroads Mall (J.P. Lord Students, Staff and Design Team)**

Approximately a dozen members of the Design Team met the J.P. Lord students and Staff at Westroads Mall and had the unique privilege of assisting them as they held their annual Holiday field trip. This offered the entire Design Team the chance to interact with both students and staff on a one-on-one basis and offered incredible insight into the day-to-day challenges which they encounter through the built environment.

## **Educational Specification Committee Schedule**



### **January 21, 2016 – Reviewed the Final Space Program with the Ed. Spec. Committee**

The full Ed. Spec. Committee met to review the line-by-line reductions to the Proposed Space Program identified by the small group on 1/13/16. These reductions were discussed among the Committee so that everyone could understand the proposal and agree that the revised document still captured their ultimate vision for J.P. Lord. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the changes.

### **December 10, 2015 - Received Comments on Rough Draft from Ed Specs Committee**

The comprehensive document (originally shared on 12/3/15) was reviewed in detail with the full committee and was edited and amended to insure that it completely captured the Ed. Spec Committee's master vision of what the new J.P. Lord facility should entail.

### **January 13, 2016 – Small Group Break Out (Working the Dream back to the Budget)**

Having now accomplished the task of defining the complete "wish list" for J.P. Lord, a small group of the Ed. Spec. Committee met to discuss how to bring the Dream back into alignment with the project budget. Through this exercise of analyzing the Space Program Summary some spaces were combined together for better efficiency, others were reduced in size and a few were deemed unnecessary and eliminated all together.



## **Project Description**

### **Overview of the Project**

The Omaha Public School District takes a multi-prong approach to teaching students with severe disabilities. They utilize the school-based Alternate Curriculum Programs (ACP) and the Multi-Handicapped Program.



The ACP serves students with cognitive disabilities in grades K-12 who require instruction focused on functional academic, social and vocational training. Students participate in this program because of the severity of their disabilities and the amount of support required to meet their individual needs. Students also participate in integrative classes and activities with their general education peers as appropriate. This program is provided in 16 elementary schools, 11 middle and 6 high schools.

The Multi-handicapped Program serves students with multiple disabilities, ages 5-21 years, in an environment that supports students' medical and sensory needs. The instructional program addresses the cognitive, communication, community, motor, self-help, social skills and prevocational domains. Opportunities are provided to participate in activities with non-disabled peers. This program is located at J.P. Lord School.

Because of the multi-prong approach, the school district is able to manage the total student population at J.P. Lord School which historically has been right at 64 students. This translates into (8) classrooms of (8) students.

The J.P. Lord School is currently located at 330 S. 44th Street on the University of Nebraska

Medical Center Campus. The current structure was originally designed as a medical facility used to treat polio patients and has been adapted to serve the needs of the J.P. Lord program. OPS will vacate the current building by the summer of 2018 and relocate the J.P. Lord program into a new facility at 4444 Miranda Street (just north of Norris Middle School).

### **Unique Challenges**

An IBM Training Manual stated that "For people without disabilities, technology makes things easier. For people with disabilities, technology makes things possible." With the technology that is currently available, the new J.P. Lord School has the exciting potential to make a whole new realm of possibilities a reality for it's students.



Because of the fragile condition of its students, the educational process at J.P. Lord School is intertwined with their medical care. The majority of the J.P. Lord students utilize wheelchairs. As part of their medical treatment and physical therapy, they utilize other devices as well (e.g. standers, walkers, bikes, strollers, mobile lifts, etc.). One student could require (4) different pieces of equipment. Quite a bit of the equipment is fitted to the student which makes it difficult to share with other students. This results in a lot of equipment that has to be stored in close proximity to the classrooms since it will be used at various times over the course of the school day. Currently, this excess equipment is stored in the main corridor (hallway) of the school. This creates an unsightly and cluttered image to people in the school than can be especially overwhelming to the parents of students new to J.P. Lord School. The existing classrooms are also cluttered with all of the educational supplies needed to effectively educate the students as well as the

## **Project Description**

corridor (hallway) of the school. This creates an unsightly and cluttered image to people in the school that can be especially overwhelming to the parents of students new to J.P. Lord School. The existing classrooms are also cluttered with all of the educational supplies needed to effectively educate the students as well as the medical equipment and supplies needed for their care. This creates a cluttered, institutional environment that is not welcoming nor conducive to maximizing the student's learning and care.

### **Project Goals**

The staff at J.P. Lord School is very compassionate, caring and totally dedicated to the teaching and care of their students. The primary goal of this building project is to create a building that outwardly expresses the love and care that the staff have for the students and lets the students, their parents, and the community know that the J.P. Lord students are valued and loved.

To create a building that is fully immersive as far as sensory experiences so that each student is able to maximize their full learning and developmental potential. Ideally, every student will be able to have experiences throughout the building where they will employ all five senses.

To declutter the hallways and classrooms so that the students are taught and cared for in a calm, peaceful environment that is more home like.





## **Project Budget and Planning & Construction Milestone Dates**

### **Project Budget**

|                    |              |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Total Project      | \$10,067,000 |
| Program Allocation | \$ 805,800   |
| Project Budget     | \$ 9,261,200 |

### **Planning & Construction Milestone Dates**

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>September 2015:</b> | Start Educational Specifications                              |
| <b>December 2015:</b>  | Complete Educational Specifications                           |
| <b>February 2016:</b>  | Educational Specifications to Board of Education for Approval |
| <b>April 2016:</b>     | Schematic Design to Board for Approval                        |
| <b>July 2016:</b>      | Construction Documents to Board for Approval                  |
| <b>August 2016:</b>    | Complete Bid and Award Process                                |
| <b>September 2016:</b> | Start Construction Process                                    |
| <b>May 2018:</b>       | Complete Construction   |



# DR. J.P. LORD SCHOOL

## OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS





## **Educational Brief and/or Educational Visioning Documents**

This was not a part of the criteria for the Dr. J.P. Lord School project.