Portfolio Assessment For

MARGARET (MEG) S. PARSONS, AIA FOR ACCREDITED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT PLANNER (ALEP) DESIGNATION
August 01, 2018

Dear A4LE Colleagues,

It is with great pleasure I submit a portfolio of my work for your review for the ALEP designation. I have worked in educational facility planning and design since I started at Cuningham Group Architecture in 1989. My passion is to provide communities, students and staff innovative learning environments that allow flexibility and adaptability for the future through authentic community engagement.

Highlights of my 29-year career include being the educational facility planner and project manager for Crosswinds Arts and Science Middle School, the 2002 MacConnell Award winner and having a second school as a finalist for the award in 2015 (Alexandria Area High School). I also taught the eight-week Community Engagement and Master Planning course as a part of the CEFPI/SDSU Educational Facility Planning Certificate Program from its inception in 2009 until 2013, and through the years I have done numerous presentations on education facility planning and design. Throughout my career I have valued my membership with A4LE (CEFPI) and believe that this portfolio will demonstrate my competency in the seven categories below.

» Educational Visioning & Community Engagement: At Cuningham Group we design with, not for. As part of our process, we work with community groups including students, staff, community members and administrators to develop a common facility vision that becomes a road map for the design. Over the past 12 years I have worked to refine our facilitation process of these charrettes and workshops. My work on Alexandria Area High School, St. Cloud New High School, St. Paul Public Schools and Pathways Innovation Center/Roosevelt High School all illustrate this work.

» Educational Facility Pre-Design Planning & Design of Learning Environments: Over the years, I have worked on many district-wide Master Plans, most recently in 2015 for the St. Paul Public Schools’ 72 schools. Along with a district facilities vision statement, we worked with the facility master plan Committee of 60+ members to define facility principles and standards. These can be found on their website: https://www.spps.org/fmp. I have also served as the educational facility planner consultant to Jacobs Engineering on five DoDEA school design charrettes in Germany, Japan, and Fort Campbell in the US.

» Educational Facility Implementation/Project Management/Project Delivery: Throughout my career I have worked on all project phases, from pre-referendum planning through construction. I am a LEED BD+C professional, and sustainability and maintainability are a part of every project I work on.

» Assessment of the Learning Environment: In 2009, I led the largest assessment our office has worked on. Teamed with DeJong and Magellan, we assessed all the buildings in the St. Paul Public Schools District, over 7.3 million square feet. This assessment included both facility and educational assessments of the space.

» Ethics/Professionalism: As is illustrated through my transparent and inclusive community engagement work, helping communities realize their vision and make decisions for the future is my passion. I am also the Vice Chair on the State of Minnesota’s licensing board, whose mission is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the community.

Please do not hesitate to ask if you have questions about my portfolio.

Sincerely,

Margaret (Meg) S. Parsons, AIA, NCARB, LEED BD+C, REFP
Executive Summary

Margaret S. Parsons, AIA, NCARB, REFP, LEED® BD+C

Margaret (Meg) Parsons, AIA, NCARB, REFP, LEED® AP BD+C, is a licensed Architect and Principal at Cuningham Group, recipient of the 2013 AIA Minnesota Firm Award and Outstanding IDP Firm 2013-2015 and 2015-2017.

Since 1989, Meg has specialized in educational projects, with a focus on innovative learning environments. She has been active in a wide range of projects, from high schools to elementary schools, from pre-referendum planning through construction. Her expertise and experience is in assisting schools and districts in their facility planning and community engagement.

Meg is a recognized educational facility planner through the Association for Learning Environments (A4LE) and was the project manager and facilitator for the Crosswinds Arts and Science Middle School, the CEFPI 2002 MacConnell Award winner. Meg also has a commitment to sustainability and is a LEED® BD+C Accredited Professional through the U.S. Green Building Council.

Meg earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Columbia University (1985) and her Master of Architecture from the University of Minnesota (2006). She shares her stories and professional experience on a national level by speaking at various conferences. Meg was a guest lecturer at San Diego State University (SDSU) from 2009 to 2013, teaching a class titled Community Engagement and Master Planning as a part of the CEFPI/SDSU Educational Facility Planning Certificate Program.

Educational Facility Presentations and Publications:


» Facilities That Fit All Students, Minnesota Administrators for Special Education, 2006 Fall Leadership Conference

» Eat to Learn, Learn to Eat: Creating Environments that Improve Children’s Health – Hopkins Public Schools Royal Cuisine
CEFPI International Conference, Phoenix, 2006

» What is Kindergarten? Facility Implications in a New Era, CEFPI International Conference, San Antonio, 2005

» Planning the Middle School of the Future: Crosswinds Arts and Science Middle School, CEFPI International Conference, 2004 & BASA (Buckeye Association of School Administrators) / TRIAD School Facility Conference, Columbus, 2005

» Head, Heart, and Hands: What Waldorf Schools Can Teach Us About Learning and Learning Environments
CEFPI International Conference, Atlanta, 2004

» Elements of Excellence: MacConnell Award Winners, Interdistict Downtown School, 2000, Crosswinds Arts and Science Middle School, 2002; Pacific Northwest Regional Conference, CEFPI, Girdwood, AK, 2004

» Schools That Fit, Aligning Architecture and Education, Contributor

» Planning Cutting Edge Schools in Rural Communities
CEFPI International Conference, Denver, 2001

Employment:

» Cuningham Group Architecture, Inc.
  Joined 1989
  Associate 2003
  Associate Principal 2006
  Principal 2007
  Board Member 2016
Executive Summary

Architectural Licenses:
» Minnesota, Louisiana, Maryland, Texas, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Colorado

Education:
» Master of Architecture, University of Minnesota
» Master of Architecture Curriculum, University of Pennsylvania
» Studio Ahmedabad, India, Summer
» Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, Columbia University

Professional Service Positions:
» Cuningham Group Board Member, 2016 - Present
» MN AELSLAGID Board, Vice Chair 2018
» NCARB Interior Architecture Workgroup 2017 - 2018
» MN AELSLAGID Board, Architect Member 2016 - Present
» NCARB Think Tank Juror 2016
» NCARB ARE 5.0 Test Prep Advisory Group 2016
» NCARB Intern Advisory Committee 2015 - 2016
» AIA MN State Architect Licensing Advisor, 2007 - 2016
» AIA Minneapolis Board, Secretary 2015
» AIA MN Board, AIA Minneapolis Director 2014
» AIA Minneapolis Board, Director 2012 - 2013
» U of M School of Architecture Centennial Committee Member 2013
» AIA MN IDP/ARE Committee, Co-Chair 2007 - 2014
» University of MN College of Design, Design Student and Alumni Board (DSAB) 2007 - 2013
» University of MN College of Design, Mentor, 2007 - Present

Speaking Engagements/Publications/Teaching:
» Presentation: Insights into the ARE 5.0, Moderator
  AIA MN Conference, Minneapolis, Minnesota, November 2017
» Presentation: Building Community to Support the Path to Licensure
  With DJ Heinle, Jim Lutz, Kyle Palzer, Kyle Burr
  NCARB Architect Licensing Summit, Chicago, Illinois, August 2016
» Presentation: Connecting Education and the Profession Through Research
  With Renee Cheng (U of M), Amy Douma (HGA), Chris Wingate (MSR)
  AIA National Convention, Atlanta, Georgia, May 2015
» Presentation: Connecting Education and the Profession Through Research: Consortium for Research Practices
  With Renee Cheng (U of M), Tom Meyer (MSR), Amy Douma (HGA), Meredith Hayes (P&W), Derek Cunz (Mortenson), Griff Davenport (DLR); AIA MN Convention, Minneapolis, Minnesota, November 2014
» Presentation: Supporting the Path to Licensure in Minnesota
  NCARB Region 4 Educators and Members Symposium, U of M, October 2013
» Presentation: Intern Development Program and the Path to Licensure
  College of Design, MArch Pro-Practice Class
  University of Minnesota, Fall 2008 – 2015 (8 years)
» Presentation: Intern Development Program and the Path to Licensure
  AIAS, University of Minnesota, various years 2008 – 2015 (8 years)
» Presentation: Intern Development Program and the Path to Licensure
  AIA MN, Firm visits and AIA MN, Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area, Minnesota 2007 – 2016
» Guest Lecturer, San Diego State University (SDSU) from 2009 to 2013 (5 years) teaching an 8- week online class entitled Community Engagement and Master Planning as a part of the CEFPI/SDSU Educational Facility Planning Certificate Program San Diego State University, San Diego, California
Executive Summary

Professional Awards:

» AIA Minneapolis Award of Recognition – “For keeping the AIA Minneapolis Board organized and on-track with thorough records and diligent attention to detail” 2015
» AIA MN Presidential Citation – “For passionate advocacy on behalf of students, graduates and young professionals by promoting rapid inclusion in the profession” 2014
» San Diego State University – Certificate of Appreciation – “In recognition of service as an inaugural Faculty Member for the Advanced Certificate Program in Educational Facility Planning” 2014
» University of Minnesota Architecture, 1913 – 2013 A Century of Building recognition for work on committee.

Notable Educational Project Awards:

» LEsolutions Awards, Project of Distinction, 2017, Pathways Innovation Center/Roosevelt High School, Casper, Wyoming
» School Planning & Management and Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI), Impact on Learning Award, 2009, Washington Technology Magnet Middle School, Saint Paul, Minnesota
» Council of Educational Facility Planners International Midwest Great Lakes Region, John N. Shaw Award, 2009, Watertown-Mayer Elementary School Watertown, Minnesota
» American Association of School Administrators/American Institute of Architects/Council of Educational Facility Planners International, Shirley Cooper and Walter Taylor Awards Program Citation, 2008, Watertown-Mayer Elementary School, Watertown, Minnesota
» Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI), Lighthouse Award, 2006, Kotzebue K-12 School Expansion and Renovation, Anchorage, Alaska
» School Planning & Management and Council of Educational Facility Planners International, Impact on Learning Award, 2004, Metropolitan Learning Alliance at the Mall of America, Bloomington, Minnesota
» American Institute of Architects Committee on Architecture for Education, Merit Award, 2003, Crosswinds Arts and Science Middle School, Woodbury, Minnesota
» Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI) James D. MacConnell Award & Project of Distinction, 2002 Crosswinds Arts and Science Middle School Woodbury, Minnesota
» Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI) Exhibition of School Architecture, Project of Distinction, 2000, Heinävaara Elementary School, Heinävaara, Finland
» Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI), James D. MacConnell Award & Project of Distinction, 2000, WMEP Interdistrict Downtown School, Minneapolis, Minnesota
» Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI) Exhibition of School Architecture, Project of Distinction, 1995, Oak Point Intermediate School, Eden Prairie, Minnesota
» Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI) Exhibition of School Architecture, Project of Distinction, 1995, Mille Lacs Upper and Lower Schools, Vineland, Minnesota

See appendix for a comprehensive awards list.
## Educational Projects (Past 5 years)

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*See appendix for a comprehensive project list beyond the past five years.*
Pathways Innovation Center / Roosevelt High School
Casper, Wyoming

Cunningham Group, in collaboration with MOA Architecture as the team’s local partner, designed a new high school campus in Casper, Wyoming for Natrona County School District.

Pathways Innovation Center and Roosevelt High School are transforming the traditional high school learning experience. While the two schools share one building, both were designed to engage students and provide innovative, personalized learning opportunities that will prepare them for success beyond high school — whether it’s moving on to college or high-skilled trade careers.

Pathways is a state-of-the-art academy that connects academics with real world experiences in a wide range of fields, including engineering, arts and media, health science and business. The district’s goal is to provide spaces for advanced technology to help “prepare children for success in a world we cannot yet imagine.”

Meg's Role: Educational Facility Planner and Managing Principal
Meg was involved in Pathways Innovation Center and Roosevelt High School from its inception. She planned the community engagement process that included a ‘movie night’ where the team shared short provocations around 21st Century learning. The project included a community-wide charrette/workshop that set the vision for high school learning in the district and created the colocation of Pathways Innovation Center with Roosevelt High School. She also worked extensively with the district to create educational specifications for the new educational model and programs.

District
Natrona County School District

Scope of Services
Planning
Architecture
Interior Design

Project Size
38 Acre Campus
125,316 Square Feet
720 Students

Construction Cost
$36 Million

Completion
2016

Awards
A4LE LEsolutions Planning and Design Awards, Project of Distinction 2017

Reference
Shawna Trujillo, Principal
Roosevelt High School,
Natrona County School District
Shawna_trujillo@natronaschools.org
The educational program called for a comprehensive high school supporting an enrollment of 1,400 students in grades 9-12. The bulk of the academic programming is offered in four ‘academies’ that are housed in a pair of nearly identical three-story academic wings, small learning environments that feature a vast array of flexible learning spaces bathed in natural light and integrated with technology, along with a variety of specialized, hands-on learning labs. A day-lit, three-story Community Commons serves as the heart of the school and as an informal gathering space that connects students and community.

The School Board worked with the Design Team to create a process focused on engaging and listening to input from members of the greater community. The Design Team held “Opportunity Forums” centered on themes that the School Board had identified as important: Performing Arts, Activities, Sustainability and Community Partnerships. All members of the community were invited to participate in the process and share their desires for incorporating these themes into the new school.

In addition to the Opportunity Forums, the Design Team led two, multi-day design charrettes with participation by more than 100 members of the community, including students, parents, teachers, business partners and district leadership. The purpose of these workshops was to co-create a clear and compelling vision for the new school and to align the educational program and learning environment with this vision. Each community member that participated in the workshops became personally invested in the success of the project which helped to build trust and support for the new facility throughout the life of the project and beyond.

Meg’s Role: Educational Facility Planner and Managing Principal
Meg’s involvement in this project started at the beginning. She planned the community engagement process that included the ‘Opportunity Forums’ and design charrettes described above. She also worked with the district to write the space program for the school and managed the project through construction.
Saint Paul Public Schools developed a 10-year Facilities Master Plan (FMP) with Cuningham Group’s guidance to ensure their buildings are able to meet the 21st century learning needs of students. The Facilities Master Plan process took place from May 2014 to December 2015, and built on the Facility Assessment of all SPPS facilities in 2009.

The district’s strategic plan, Strong Schools, Strong Communities 2.0, was a key organizer of the FMP with its goals of Achievement, Alignment, and Sustainability. The FMP is key to proactively managing the District’s assets and driving the transformation of the district’s learning environments for students and staff. The FMP includes all 72 district facilities and cover 7.3 million square feet of space and 465 acres of land. Over 47 percent of the buildings in the District are older than 50 years and 11 percent are over 90-years-old.

Cuningham Group was involved in phases 1, 2 and 4 and oversaw the efforts of partnering architects in phase 3. In phase 2, Cuningham Group facilitated a series of community workshops that set the Facility Vision, Facility Principals, and Facility Standards that were the framework for the assessment of all the district’s schools.

**Meg’s Role: Principal in Charge**

Meg has worked with SPPS since the mid 1990s. She led the SPPS Facility Assessment in 2009 and worked with Facility Director Tom Parent to develop the facility master plan process for the district. She facilitated the community workshops that developed the vision, principles, and standards.
The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) sought out progressive expertise to incorporate concepts of future technology, the growing need for sustainability and the requirement for innovation in both education curriculum and facilities, thereby developing updated design guidance for DoDEA’s NEXT Century schools.

Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc. teamed with Cuningham Group to provide NEXT Century Learning concepts and design for Department of Defense schools serving children of U.S. military personnel all over the country and internationally. The team first developed NEXT Century education specifications for DoDEA and was then asked to provide conceptual designs as one of seven teams to do so for more than 180 schools.

Meg’s Role: Educational Facility Planner
Meg was involved in five design charrettes with Jacobs Engineering, serving as their education facility planner and specialist. The charrettes, organized by DoDEA and Jacobs Engineering were five-day interdisciplinary efforts that included all stakeholders. Meg’s role in these charrettes was programming and design focused. The charrettes she was been involved in are:

- Fort Campbell New High School - Fort Campbell, Kentucky
- Fort Campbell New Elementary School (Marshall Elementary School) - Fort Campbell, Kentucky
- Sembach Elementary/Middle School - Sembach, Germany
- Killin Elementary School - Okinawa, Japan
- Robinson Barracks Elementary School - Stuttgart, Germany

**Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA)**

**International Locations**

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- Killin Elementary School - Okinawa, Japan
- Robinson Barracks Elementary School - Stuttgart, Germany

**Client**
Department of Defense

**Scope of Services**
Master Planning and Design

**Project Size**
181 Locations Worldwide serving 78,000 students of Military families

**Completion**
Ongoing
Cuningham Group, in collaboration with IIW-Minnesota, is designing a new 320,000-square-foot high school in St. Cloud, Minnesota to replace the existing 100-year-old Tech High School. The decision to build a new school on a new site came out of a six-month comprehensive community engagement process with over 100 district and community members.

The school will be divided into six integrated learning communities on two levels that will feature a combination of flexible learning spaces, group collaboration spaces, project and science labs, and collaborative teaching spaces. The design is intended to be adaptable for the future, support a variety of learning styles and foster global preparedness.

Sustainable building design and the incorporation of an extensive environmental curriculum were significant principles that came out of the visioning process. Special attention was paid to providing dedicated outdoor learning spaces and a healthy learning environment, including maximizing daylight and views of the surrounding landscape, air quality, and energy-efficient building systems.

**Meg’s Role: Educational Facility Planner and Managing Principal**
Meg was involved in this project from its inception. She planned the community engagement process that included initial work on the decision to build new or remodel, which then continued with the design charrette. She also worked with the district to write the space program for the school and managed the project through design development.
St. Anthony Park Elementary School
Saint Paul, Minnesota

The design transformation of St. Anthony Park Elementary School is being driven by a series of community workshops. It will have a new secure and welcoming entry featuring large windows with views of the adjacent park. The nearby cafeteria will also be transformed with daylight, views and a variety of seating.

Remodeled classrooms are clustered by grade level, maximizing daylight and featuring glass folding walls that provide flexible learning and collaborative teaching. Dispersed small and medium-size group rooms create opportunities for specialty instruction and private meetings.

The new light and colorful media center will have a variety of learning spaces. It will feature a two-story “Discovery Wall” with reading nooks, an integrated staircase that extends the collection and mobile checkout. The project will be completed by Fall 2018.

Meg’s Role: Principal in Charge
Meg is the Principal in Charge (PIC) of the work resulting from the SPPS FMP that Cuningham Group has been involved with. She has led the community engagement at each site and oversees the process of design and the development of the documentation. As PIC, she is responsible for the work, signed the construction documents and attended all code and city meetings, as well as many of the consultant meetings.

Client
Saint Paul Public Schools

Scope of Services
Architecture
Interior Design
Landscape Architecture

Project Size
77,240 Square Feet

Construction Cost
$17.5 Million

Completion
2019

Reference
Tom Parent, Director of Facilities
Saint Paul Public Schools
Tom.parent@spps.org
Humboldt High School Addition and Remodel
Saint Paul, Minnesota

Saint Paul Public Schools commissioned Cuningham Group to transform Humboldt High School, a remodel that includes the educational wing and several additions to right-size classrooms, as well as creating a 6th-8th grade area within the existing high school.

Humboldt is an environmental school as well as deaf and hard-of-hearing magnet school. A new welding, woods and agricultural lab, a shared maker space and digital commons maker lab, and a new premiere culinary arts lab will provide a variety of hands-on learning opportunities for the students. Learning neighborhoods, which include small and medium group rooms and informal learning areas, are placed strategically throughout the school for collaboration. The restrooms are also redesigned to match Saint Paul Public School’s all-inclusive model and are located to enhance safety and security. The project is expected to be completed in 2020.

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Cuningham Group was selected by Saint Paul Public Schools to assist in the design of Como Senior High School’s new addition and remodel. The original building, built in the 1950s, is being renovated to introduce a 43,000-square-foot classroom addition. The classroom addition will include modern classrooms and flexible learning spaces for both students and staff. Small and medium group rooms will be placed throughout the high school’s classroom wing to allow for collaboration space. Large, open spaces including the “Junction,” “Commons” and “Forum” will be added to support informal student gathering. Additionally, all-inclusive restrooms are being designed throughout the school to accommodate all students and staff.

In order to keep the school operational, the design team has broken up the work into nine phases. The project is expected to be completed in 2020.

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Core Competencies

She [Meg] ...comes across as really understanding the industry, the K-12 sector...she gets kids, she gets schools and she gets what’s important in a school building and what isn’t.

Joe Raasch, former Deputy Chief Operations Officer, SPPS

In the next pages you will find illustrations of Meg’s work specific to the core competencies outlined in the ALEP Portfolio Description. Meg’s passion is providing innovative learning environments for communities, students, and educators. As such, she has been instrumental in creating the community engagement processes used at Cuningham Group that creates trust and buy-in. These inclusive and transparent processes share common elements across projects and these elements are often a part of more than one of the core competencies listed here. You will see overlap in the educational visioning and the community engagement competencies, and community engagement with the design competencies, for example. Together, these core competencies tell the story of Meg’s work over the past five years, as well as over the course of her 29-year career.

Meg is a licensed architect in Minnesota, Colorado, Wyoming, Louisiana, Texas, Wisconsin and Maryland. She is involved in all aspects of educational facility work including interviews, setting fees, planning the work, working with clients and user groups, facilitating community workshops and meetings, designing, working with municipalities and code compliance, working with our internal team and external consultants, overseeing the documentation of the work and signing the construction documents. She also oversees construction administration and works with the general contractor or construction manager on many of her projects. As a principal at Cuningham Group, she has responsibility for happy clients, great team relationships, excellent design, technically thorough documentation and for creating a fun and supportive work environment. This is what energizes her and creates the next best project.
Educational Visioning

Educational visioning is a part of the community engagement process that Meg has helped develop at Cuningham Group. Please see the Community Engagement section on Pages 17-18 for more information. Educational visioning is the initial process of imagining the future of innovative learning environments and how it will meet the needs of students and the community into the future.

Meg has facilitated the translation of districts’ visions into educational facility programs for over 29 years. Below are projects that illustrate some of the ways she has worked with districts to make their visions a reality.

Creating a Shared Vision
Creating a vision statement is a critical piece of the design process and requires active engagement from the community. The vision statement helps set a framework for the decisions that will be made as a project develops. During the charrette process, we use an “I See, We See” exercise that helps identify the participant’s hopes for when the project is complete. These statements are crafted into an official vision statement and agreed upon by the larger group. The vision statement serves as a filter through which decisions are made by the group.

“Vision is the art of seeing the invisible.”
Jonathan Swift

Educational Parameters
Meg also works with educators to create parameters around what they see as critical in creating a new learning environment. In Alexandria, what was critical was the organization of resources and creating flexible learning environments.
Educational Visioning Cont.

**Envisioning the Future**
Meg believes that part of envisioning the future is to help people think beyond what they know.

> You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete. 

Buckminster Fuller

Some of the ways Meg does this is through the use of exercises and provocations that allow a group to come to identify forces of change and limiting beliefs in the community workshops. She also works with educators to define belief statements that can be directly translated to the learning environment.

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**Core Competencies**

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**Communication – Program and Ed Specs**
The results of this process include a written program that details the vision and intent of the participants. Meg typically creates drafts that are then reviewed by educators.
Community Engagement

We at Cuningham Group design with, not for. This means that all our educational projects involve community members, teachers, administrators, staff, parents, students and business leaders in the design process. Meg has been instrumental in leading, developing, and tailoring this process for each of the school districts she has worked with.

Meg believes that each community is unique and the process of engagement needs to reflect their needs. We initially work with a community group over a couple days in a workshop setting and then throughout the project in regular meetings.

Below are examples from the three-day Alexandria High School Charrette that included more than 100 community members, students, parents, educators and staff.

Highest Hopes
We start with introductions around the room and everyone sharing their “highest hope” for the project. This sets the tone for the project and helps identify what is important to everyone.

Visioning and Provocations
After the highest hopes exercise, we work from a flexible agenda that includes a combination of provocations and activities that engage the group in a transparent process. Together, we discover what is important and what the participants want to see for the future of their school and community. Creation of the shared vision statement is a critical part of this process (see Educational Visioning on Pages 15-16).
Conceptual Design
The block diagrams are reviewed for common themes and presented back to the whole group for discussion, leading to a direction for the design of the project.

Think Outside the Blocks
A culminating exercise during the first day of a typical charrette is one we call “Think Outside the Blocks.” Smaller groups work together to design their ideal school and then come together as a large group to share their concepts. This exercise allows the group to identify what’s important in terms of design, layout and functionality.
Educational Facility Pre-Design Planning

Meg was instrumental in the Saint Paul Public School (SPPS) Facility Master Plan completed in 2015. Working closely with Director of Facilities Tom Parent, she facilitated a process that created a district-wide facility vision, facility principles, and facility standards with a group of 60 educators, parents and community members over the course of a year. This group was called the FMPC (Facility Master Plan Committee). With 72 buildings (7.3 million square feet) and close to 38,000 students, SPPS is the largest district master plan done by Cuningham Group.

The Facility Master Plan followed the facility assessment work completed in 2009 and was led by Meg with support from national consultants, DeJong Inc. and Magellan Consulting Inc. The information from the facility assessment was instrumental for SPPS as it defined the physical condition of each facility. The next steps for the district included looking at their learning environments and understanding how they will meet the needs of their students now and in the future. The Facility Master Plan process helped define their needs by proactively looking at what was important. The work of the Facility Master Plan was performed in four phases and included a demographer, Dr. Hazel Reinhardt (former State of Minnesota demographer) during Phase 1 for data collection and evaluation, and partnering architects during Phase 3 for work with the individual schools.
Facility Vision Statement
The community engagement process that creates the facility vision statement, principles, and standards are critical to creating equity across the district for learning environments. The facility vision statement is the lens through which decisions were made.

Facility Principles
The facility principles are belief or commitment statements. For SPPS, they were created by the FMPC and organized into the strategic goals of the District. Each of the commitments has a series of “this means…” statements that further define how the commitment is shown.

Facility Standards
From the facility vision statement and the facility principles, the FMPC created 47 facility standards for SPPS schools. These standards created a measurable way to assess all 72 buildings and included photos that were self-referential – SPPS had examples of all these standards in their schools.

Below are links to an article about SPPS and to their Facility Master Plan website that further describes the Master Planning effort:
http://www.aia-mn.org/better-schools/
https://www.spps.org/fmp
Design of Learning Environments

In addition to the charrette process outlined in the community engagement section above that includes design, Meg has served as an educational facility specialist on Department of Defense Educational Activities (DoDEA) projects in the United States, Germany and Japan as a part of the Jacobs Engineering team. In 2011, Cuningham Group was involved in the creation of the DoDEA educational specifications and used them as the foundation of design.

From 2013 to 2017, Meg participated in five DoDEA projects: Fort Campbell Elementary School, Fort Campbell High School, Killin Elementary School (Japan), Sembach Elementary/Middle School (Germany) and Robinson Barracks Elementary School (Germany). The process of this work included five-day charrettes onsite with representatives from the base, DoDEA, and the school as well as other stakeholders. The Jacobs teams were inclusive of all disciplines including engineers, cost estimators, architects, interior designers and landscape architects. Meg’s role was to work with the school and help guide the design of these facilities given the DoDEA 21st Century educational specifications.
Design of Learning Environments Cont.

Below are outcomes from the DoDEA charrettes:

Core Competencies

### Working Program, Killin Elementary School, Okinawa, Japan, 2014

#### Conceptual Site Plan, Fort Campbell Elementary School, 2013

#### Conceptual Floor Plan, Fort Campbell High School, 2013

#### Robinson Barracks Out Brief Slides, 2017

#### Meg’s Conceptual Design model showing a typical neighborhood, Sembach Elementary/Middle School, Sembach, Germany, 2015
Educational Facility Implementation/Project Management

As an outcome of the SPPS Master Plan work, in 2016 Cuningham Group was awarded three SPPS projects: St. Anthony Park Elementary School, Como Park Senior High School, and Humboldt High School. Meg serves as the principal-in-charge and managing principal on these projects and has been involved in every aspect of their delivery. Currently in construction, the three projects are transformations of existing schools that create flexible, adaptable learning settings.

As the principal-in-charge, Meg attends all city and code meetings and many of the consultant meetings for these projects. She is in charge of the work on these projects and signs the construction documents. Her role also includes staffing, coordinating consultant teams and schedule development.

These projects are delivered with a CMa (Construction Manager Advisor). The construction managers were an integral part of our team as we discussed schedule, constructability, and phasing of these multi-year projects during the development of construction documents. Critical to the phasing discussion is student safety and maintaining spaces for learning. All three projects started construction in 2017 and St. Anthony Park Elementary School will be complete the fall of 2018 and the two high schools will be completed in 2020.

All three of these projects were a part of the local utility’s Energy Design Assistance program that helps design teams make decisions on systems with payback information and rebates. Meg was an integral part of these discussions and helped the owner make selections to best meet their needs.
Core Competencies

Assessment of the Learning Environment

Understanding Existing Utilization
In the planning phase, Meg works with educators to understand existing utilization of buildings. This allows educators to understand how space as a resource is being used efficiently or not and often helps with conversations around shared space and use. In many of the innovative projects Meg has worked on, the shift from ‘my classroom and my students’ to ‘our space and our students’ is a sea change that shifts how teaching and learning take place.

Facility Alignment Analysis
One of the most important tools Meg has helped develop is the Facility Alignment Analysis. Below is an example of this tool as used in Saint Paul Public Schools. Using the district-wide facility standards, each building was analyzed with the 47 standards using a form that allowed assessors to record how the school met the facility standard. This information was then rolled up first at the building level and then across the district to help inform priorities.

Facility Alignment Assessment form for SPPS Standard 17: Safety

Partial roll up of SPPS Facility Alignment Analysis

Meg creating a St. Cloud High School utilization report using the district’s scheduling data.

Meg presenting SPPS Facility Alignment Analysis at a Community Workshop
Core Competencies

Ethics/Professionalism

Please refer back to the Community Engagement core competency on Pages 17 - 18 for the process of designing with, not for. The transparency of the process and the inclusive nature of the stakeholders is critical to the success of any project. The example illustrated in the Community Engagement core competency for Alexandria High School went one step further by involving key community members in what we called “Opportunity Forums” around sustainability, partnerships, activities, and performing arts. Each of these three session forums involved key stakeholders in the community and brought up valuable information that affected the larger group. For example, as we talked about activities, community members noted that having five gym courts would allow the school to host tournaments which would increase the local hotel and restaurant businesses.

As a result of the process, Alexandria business and community leaders contributed to a capital campaign that reduced the referendum tax impact to the community. A “Donors Wall” located in the student commons acknowledges these contributions.
Core Competencies

Ethics/Professionalism Cont.

Sustainability and Stewardship
Meg is a LEED Accredited Professional with a specialty in Building Design and Construction. Regardless of whether a school is seeking LEED recognition, sustainability goals are a part of the community engagement process and often takes the form of good stewardship on the part of the community and school district. In Alexandria, guidance from the sustainability opportunity forum recommended that we pursue a LEED Silver designation, which we reached.

Professional Service
Meg is the vice chair on the State of Minnesota’s licensing board. This board is a multi-disciplinary board of 21 members including public members. Ethics and upholding the health, safety and welfare of the public are critical charges of the work of this board: http://mn.gov/aelslagid/index.html
uplift 50
Celebrating 50 Years