

Benjamin Franklin's quote, "Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn," encapsulates the philosophy behind Link Academy. At the heart of this innovative educational institution lies a deep commitment to involving students in their learning journey, bridging the gap between classroom instruction and real-world experiences. Located in the vibrant community of Lake Havasu, Arizona, Link Academy stands as a beacon of collaboration, innovation, and empowerment.

In our proposed learning environment, we seamlessly integrate academic learning with community engagement, celebrating the unique spirit of Lake Havasu and its surroundings. The bustling atmosphere of the city, with its year-round nice weather and scenic views of the Colorado River, serves as an inspiring backdrop for our campus. Moreover, our strategic partnerships with local businesses and organizations not only enrich the learning experience for students but also play a vital role in boosting the local economy. By providing students with internships and hands-on experiences in these businesses, we are not only equipping them with valuable skills but also bringing jobs into the community and creating a stronger workforce. This symbiotic relationship benefits both students and the community as a whole, fostering economic growth and prosperity.

Students at Link Academy have the opportunity to engage directly with businesses connected to our campus, immersing themselves in real-world professions and contributing to the local economy. Through internships, students gain hands-on experience in various industries, putting their academic skills to the test and making meaningful contributions to businesses' operations. This not only enhances students' learning but also fosters a sense of responsibility and pride in their community.

A typical day in the life of a student at Link Academy is dynamic and enriching. As the sun rises, students begin their day with academic instruction, collaborating with peers and teachers to tackle challenging subjects. As the day progresses, students transition into the businesses connected to our building, where they engage in office tasks, complete projects, and interact with professionals in the field. This immersive approach to learning allows students to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations, making learning more meaningful and memorable. It also provides students with the opportunity to discover and develop their strengths and interests, ultimately contributing to a lower rate of undeclared college graduates and career changers who must return for additional degrees. Through hands-on experiences and real-world applications, students gain valuable insights into their potential career paths, equipping them with the skills and confidence needed to succeed in their chosen fields.

The learning environment at Link Academy is designed to optimize student learning and engagement. With its active layout and engaging spaces, our campus fosters an optimal learning experience for students. Natural light floods the space through ample windows, creating a bright and welcoming atmosphere. Colors are carefully selected to promote focus and school spirit, with shades of green and blue complementing neutral tones. Soft carpeting, comfortable lounge areas, and natural textures like wood and stone enhance the tactile experience for students.

Transportation to our school is convenient, with options including cars, buses, and walking, thanks to our accessible location. Situated on a sprawling campus, our school offers separate entrances for different purposes. The west side of the building provides access to the business hub, where community members can engage with various businesses and organizations. Meanwhile, the east side of the building is designated for school access only, ensuring the safety and security of students, teachers, and personnel. The main building is seamlessly connected to the fine arts building and the athletics building by glass skywalks, facilitating easy movement between different areas of the campus.

The physical environment of our campus reflects our commitment to environmental preservation, with sustainable features such as solar panels, a rainwater collection system for the community garden, and food waste composting in the cafeteria. By minimizing our impact on existing green spaces and promoting eco-friendly practices, we strive to create a healthy and comfortable learning environment for students while preserving the natural beauty of Lake Havasu.

Our planning process for Link Academy was meticulous and collaborative, guided by the expertise of Gina Rush and Alison Lemon from Hollis + Miller. Together, we embarked on a journey of research, conducting surveys and interviews to gather valuable insights from stakeholders. We employed various techniques such as bubble plot diagrams, paper doll exercises, and blueprints to visualize and refine our ideas. From initial paper layout sketches to detailed floorplans and elevations, every aspect of the design was carefully considered and iterated upon. Additionally, with the guidance of our partners, we transitioned our concepts into digital renderings using SketchUp, allowing us to create immersive virtual models of our campus. Through this comprehensive planning process, we were able to translate our vision into reality, creating a learning environment that is both functional and inspiring.

In conclusion, Link Academy represents a paradigm shift in education, where learning is not confined to the walls of a classroom but extends into the community and beyond. Through our collaborative approach to education, we empower students to become active participants in

their learning journey, preparing them for success in both academics and their communities. With its innovative learning environment, strategic partnerships, and commitment to sustainability, Link Academy is poised to shape the leaders of tomorrow and contribute to the growth and prosperity of Lake Havasu.