

RENOVATION OF WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



RENOVATION OF WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Renovation of Washington Elementary School for Pomona Unified School District is a story which begins with the Campus Principal, Alan Pantanini.

Alan, affectionately called Mr. P, has spent his entire career in Pomona USD. His first Principalship was at an affluent elementary school which was performing very well. It was a campus where Mr. P was very comfortable. About 5-years ago, the District's Superintendent, Richard Martinez, moved Mr. P to Washington ES. At the time, **Washington ES was the lowest performing elementary school in the District.** Mr. P's challenges were compounded by the fact that his new student population was 97% Spanish speaking, and Mr. P did not speak Spanish.

His biggest challenge at Washington ES was that he inherited a staff and a student body who were disengaged from the learning process.

In 2016, our firm conducted a series of Workshops for school districts to present integrated concepts of transforming educational environments through a combination of Transformational Facilities + Flexible Furniture + Teacher Training. We call it **Immersive LearningScapes**.

Original Reception



Reception



RENOVATION OF WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY...continued

Mr. P attended one of our Workshops. He heard not just the “what” behind these concepts but he also heard the “why.” And he saw the nexus between Facilities, Furniture, and Teacher Training as being the key to success. This became an **“ah-ha” moment** for Mr. P. He immediately saw how this multi-faceted approach could transform his campus at Washington ES.

This understanding occurred right at the start of the planning for his campus Renovation project.

To Mr. P, this meant that he became the “trail blazer” for the District relative to implementing Immersive LearningScapes and that:

1. He had a better understanding of the **“why”** when initial design concepts were being discussed.
2. He immediately began to **test furniture options** that would best fit his PK-5 student population.
3. He began to put together the funding to pay for teacher training as he understood the need to **retrain his staff to teach differently** in order to achieve **different educational outcomes**.

Original Library



Library



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY...continued

As the Planning Process began, the following five Goals were identified and began to shape the design solutions:

1. Working within a **Transformational Renovation**,
1. Create an environment which would **foster student and staff engagement**,
2. Support **Project Based Immersive Learning**,
3. Where **learning takes place everywhere**,
4. By addressing **21st Century Facilities + Flexible Furniture + Teacher Training** leading to new outcomes and results.

These concepts are narrated more fully in the following sections titled:

1. Scope of Work and Budget
2. School & Community Engagement
3. Educational Environment
4. Physical Environment
5. Results of the Process & Project.

The Renovation effort was fully completed in August 2018. The results scorecard?

1. **Students, staff, and parents are fully engaged.**
2. **Test scores have already risen.**
3. **The District is proceeding with these same concepts on the Renovation of their second lowest performing elementary school.**



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SCOPE OF WORK AND BUDGET

The Renovation is a Phase of a campus-wide Transformation project. That larger project includes separate phases to replace all portable classrooms with new 2-story permanent buildings along with redevelopment of the site playgrounds and parking areas.

The Renovation Phase is the focus of this submittal.

The Renovation encompasses the original classroom building, constructed in 1949, plus an attached addition which was added in 1979. The total area of this building is approximately 27,000 GSF.

The original functions in this building included:

1. Campus Administrative Offices.
2. Library
3. Kitchen/dining
4. 14 Classrooms
5. Staff Lounge

The Renovated building now houses:

1. Relocated campus administrative offices
2. Library commons and librarian support spaces
3. Kitchen/dining plus food storage room
4. 11 Classrooms with connected pull-out rooms
5. 2 Maker Space rooms
6. 2 Small group presentation rooms.

Most of the original construction was window-less CMU construction. It was not affordable to add exterior windows. Extensive amounts of skylights were added to bring in natural daylighting as part of the Wellness Strategy.

Other construction included a near total demolition of the interiors with all new replacements, including a new HVAC system throughout.

The total cost of the Renovation was approximately \$6.3M (approximately \$235/ GSF).



GOAL

TRANSFORMATIONAL
RENOVATION

RENOVATION OF WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

DESCRIBE THE COMMUNITY

Washington ES serves a student population of approximately 600 in grades PK-5th. The primary natural language for 97% is Spanish.

Pomona is an urbanized community at its core and transitions to suburban at the southern edge. The Washington ES Campus is near that core.

The District, as a whole, has been in declining enrollment for many years. The Washington ES Campus has been declining at above average rates, in part, mirroring its standing relative to academic performance.

The Washington ES Campus is surrounded on three sides by residential streets and on the fourth by residences. Residences are primarily single-story bungalow homes. It has historically been a high crime area, which is why the 1979 addition was built without exterior windows.

IDENTIFY THE STAKEHOLDERS

The Stakeholder Group includes disengaged students and staff along with a frustrated and disenfranchised Community.

NAME CHALLENGES

When Mr. P arrived, in his new role as Principal of Washington ES, he faced a demoralized collective of students, staff, and parents.

His first action was to physically clean the campus to signal that change was occurring. He also set about to redefine and enforce rules of conduct. Then he turned his attention to recrafting the campus environments via the Renovation project, along with the other Phases of new buildings and renovated exterior spaces.



GOAL

FOSTER STUDENT & TEACHER ENGAGEMENT

RENOVATION OF WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT...continued

Mr. P became the Champion to drive change at all levels and all aspects of the Washington ES environment.

Mr. P also recognized that for Transformational change to become sustainable, he needed to develop a leadership team to carry his approach forward for years to come.

DESCRIBE AVAILABLE ASSETS

The available assets included:

1. Mr. P, the Campus Principal with his infectious personality and vision for change.
2. A District Board and Administrative Leadership Team who were supportive and backed-up their support with funding for implementation.
3. Buildings that were moldable enough to create new environments in.

DESCRIBE THE VALUE OF THE PROCESS AND THE PROJECT TO THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE

The design team developed a 3-D model “fly-through” which was a valuable tool to show the community what the Renovated spaces would look like and better envision the final outcome of the process.

Furniture options were set up in an open classroom for students and teachers to test and understand what options might occur within classrooms to accommodate differentiated learning styles.

Teacher training began a year prior to occupancy to prepare and train teachers to work differently and be able to develop new lesson plans in support of that. This way their improved teaching styles could be implemented as soon as the new space opened.

All of these steps, **combined**, led to a successful outcome which has met the goals for students, teachers, and the parents. **The involved process was of essential value to making that outcome happen.**



GOAL

FOSTER STUDENT
& TEACHER
ENGAGEMENT

RENOVATION OF WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

EXPLAIN THE EDUCATIONAL VISION AND GOALS OF THE SCHOOL

Previously, the teaching staff were very traditional in their approach to delivering education. Static classrooms with desks lined up in rows...students listening to lectures...by a teacher standing in front of the classroom...the proverbial “sage on the stage.” It was a combination which resulted in disengaged staff and students. That disengagement was the root cause of the low academic performance and test scores.

The vision was to move away from that static educational environment. Instead, the desire was to implement a dynamic Project Based Learning approach where the teacher became a mentor rather than a lecturer, creating an educational environment where students took on a degree of responsibility for their learning and for helping their fellow students.

Their goals were:

1. To increase student and teacher engagement substantially.
2. To support Project Based Immersive Learning so students are learning “how to learn” and not just memorizing facts.
3. To have learning take place everywhere, not just within the classroom.
4. To elevate academic results in a sustainable manner.

It is a common philosophy that changes in pedagogy should be piloted by a core group and then implemented over a multi-year period. Mr. P did not do that. His entire staff went through a thorough multi-step retraining process to learn how to teach differently. Part of this training was not just the “what” but also the “why” behind doing that. They also developed a new curriculum and support materials to prepare for their new environments. This retraining has evolved to post occupancy coaching to make sure that everyone is continuing to implement the goals to achieve the overall vision.



GOAL

SUPPORT PROJECT
BASED IMMERSIVE
LEARNING

RENOVATION OF WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT...continued

DESCRIBE & ILLUSTRATE HOW THE ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTS THE CURRICULUM

The environment supports the curriculum by allowing for learning to take place everywhere.

As expected, learning takes place in classrooms. But there are far more learning opportunities including:

1. Small group pull-out spaces adjacent to each classroom
2. Small group presentation areas where students can make “formal” presentations
3. A green screen room where students can give announcements and can be recorded as part of the presentation learning process
4. Areas for casual seating are provided throughout the Library Commons for individual reading and learning
5. TLC classrooms are dedicated to after school learning
6. Paired Maker Space Labs allow for special projects including robotics to take place



GOAL

SUPPORT PROJECT
BASED IMMERSIVE
LEARNING

RENOVATION OF WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT...continued

DESCRIBE & ILLUSTRATE HOW THE ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTS A VARIETY OF LEARNING & TEACHING STYLES

A variety of learning and teaching styles are supported by having both varied and flexible spaces. This is evident in the following physical solutions:

1. Classrooms are designed with no fixed furniture or cabinets. Everything is movable and is on wheels (except for the bean bag chairs!). There is a variety of furniture types in the classrooms so that students can determine what makes them most comfortable and engaged. This came about by extensive testing of furniture and storage options. A test lab was set up for students and teachers to come in and utilize...and provide feedback. Furniture pieces were changed out multiple times to eventually settle on a combination of best fits for Washington ES.
2. The teacher does not have a desk to sit at. Instead he or she has a rolling lectern. The idea is to have them up and mentoring students, not sitting at a desk. Some teachers have chosen to place this lectern in the center of the classroom. Others have chosen to place the lectern on an edge...almost as though it is a useless element which needs to stay out of the way.



DESCRIBE & ILLUSTRATE HOW THE ENVIRONMENT IS ADAPTABLE AND FLEXIBLE

The environment is adaptable and flexible primarily because there are few fixed elements, not even fixed cabinets. Everything is on wheels or is moveable, including teacher lecterns, student desks, student chairs, and other seating.

The furniture is flexible and changeable.

The Maker Spaces provide flexible learning environments which can be utilized as individual spaces or as a shared space. These spaces are also utilized for adult learning and for community events and meetings.

GOAL

SUPPORT PROJECT
BASED IMMERSIVE
LEARNING

RENOVATION OF WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

DESCRIBE & ILLUSTRATE THE PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT

The original building was a high bay windowless CMU box. There existed a small number of exterior windows at the public entry point and on the rear at the Cafeteria entrance. Interior walls were primarily demountable partitions with poor acoustical properties. T-grid acoustic ceilings with fluorescent lighting was the prevalent ceiling system. Flooring was primarily carpet. Classrooms and the Library had built-in casework. The building had roof-top air-conditioning units that needed to be replaced.



DESCRIBE & ILLUSTRATE HOW THE FACILITY FITS WITHIN THE LARGER CONTEXT OF THE COMMUNITY

The Washington ES Campus is surrounded on three sides by residential streets and on the fourth by residences. Residences on all sides are primarily single-story bungalow homes. The houses have a working class feel and are set within many trees. While most yards are fenced in, the neighborhood has a comfortable feel to it.

The community historically had been a high crime area which is why the 1979 addition was built without exterior windows. In essence, the campus has an inward orientation with the building walls providing a safe and secure environment which turned its back on the neighborhood. Unfortunately, there were not funds available to open up the exterior walls to introduce additional windows to the building.



GOAL

LEARNING TAKES PLACE EVERYWHERE

RENOVATION OF WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT...continued

Instead, the Design Team chose to enhance that inward focus by reflecting the surrounding external neighborhood community. This strategy is reflected in the following design solutions:

1. The Library Commons become an interior street or pathway through the interior “neighborhood”. This pathway is reflected in the carpeted floor which imitates green grass down the center that has worn to dirt along the high traffic edges into and out of the classrooms.
2. This pathway (aka: Library Commons) is flanked by shelving (“book houses”) that store the library books and the instructional materials. These “book houses” reflect the small bungalow houses of the surrounding external neighborhood community.
3. All around these “book houses” are “trees” which also reflect the character of the surrounding external neighborhood community. These “trees” are part of the storefront system that separates Classrooms from the Library Commons. Just as in the surrounding campus community, these “trees” provide a comforting contrast to the built environment while similarly allowing for veiled views into the Classrooms.
4. Larger “house” forms are utilized to mark unique places within this neighborhood community. They include the Administrative Office front desk, the Librarian’s desk, the entry into the enclosed Presentation room, and over the other open Presentation room.
5. Circle forms reflect the circle form that existed near the campus entrance. These forms also provide unique lounging areas for students to recline and read a book.

DESCRIBE & ILLUSTRATE HOW THE PROJECT INSPIRES AND MOTIVATES

The project inspires and motivates in multiple ways:

1. It is a safe and comfortable “neighborhood” which allows students to focus on learning.
2. It is a fun place to be in and it is where the students want to be.
3. There are opportunities everywhere for students to learn individually, in small groups, and in large groups. This freedom has fostered a responsibility for their learning environment.
4. Flexible furniture accommodates differentiated learning styles amongst the students. This motivates them to succeed.
5. Project Based Learning has relevance which inspires greater student success.
6. The teacher acting as a “coach” rather than as a “lecturer” has both inspired and motivated students to learn and be responsible for their own success.



GOAL

LEARNING TAKES PLACE EVERYWHERE

RENOVATION OF WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT...continued

DESCRIBE & DEMONSTRATE THE ROLE OF HIGH PERFORMANCE/ SUSTAINABILITY IN THE PLANNING AND DESIGN OF THE PROJECT AND THE METRICS USED

Both Sustainability and Wellness were integrated into the planning and design of this Renovation. These were manifested in the following solutions:

1. Introduction of daylighting throughout the building. In classrooms, daylighting was captured via Solatubes and delivers enough daylighting to have artificial lighting turned off most times of the day. This reduces energy usage and cost. These light tubes can also be remotely closed to darken the Classrooms if needed. This solution is a part of both the Sustainability and a Wellness strategy.
2. Introduction of daylighting in the Library Commons utilizing Circulite 4' x 4' skylights. These skylights track the sun to maximize daylighting throughout the day. This also reduces energy usage and cost. These skylights can also be remotely partially or fully closed to darken the space if desired. This solution is also a part of the Sustainable and Wellness strategy.
3. Use of LED lighting throughout. This lighting can be color tuned to reflect and mimic the Circadian Rhythm of natural daylight throughout the day. The LED lighting reduces energy usage and cost as a part of the Wellness strategy.
4. Use of high performance energy efficient HVAC equipment.
5. Added building insulation to reduce the need for HVAC cooling load demand.
6. The design of the neighborhood pathway with the "turf" pathways, "book houses", and surrounding "trees" provide visual relief everywhere as a part of the Wellness strategy.

Maker Space Lab



GOAL

LEARNING TAKES PLACE EVERYWHERE

RENOVATION OF WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

RESULTS OF THE PROCESS & PROJECT

EXPLAIN HOW THE PROJECT ACHIEVES EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The project achieves the goal of **fostering student and staff engagement**. Both students and staff are now excited and proud to come to Washington ES. There is an **energy level** that previously did not exist. There is a collective drive to learn and to be successful. And the result is that **test scores are rising dramatically, which in turn fosters a drive for further success**.

EXPLAIN HOW THE PROJECT ACHIEVES SCHOOL DISTRICT GOALS

The District's goal was to invest capital in this campus with the expectation that the **academic performance would improve** for the students attending. As the lowest performing elementary school in the District, the goal was to help these students to become **life-long learners and successful, contributing members of the Community**. The academic improvements and cultural changes are happening. Based on the positive initial results, the District is proceeding to implement this same approach at Roosevelt ES (their second lowest performing elementary school in the District).

EXPLAIN HOW THE PROJECT ACHIEVES COMMUNITY GOALS

The Community felt forgotten and disenfranchised. That has changed with this campus transformation effort. **Parents are excited and proud** of their Washington Elementary School. That is reflected in their **increased participation in and support** of the educational learning process which is now taking place at **"their" school**.



GOAL

21ST CENTURY FACILITIES
+ FLEXIBLE FURNITURE +
TEACHER TRAINING
= TRANSFORMATION

RENOVATION OF WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

RESULTS OF THE PROCESS & PROJECT...continued

EXPLAIN ANY UNINTENDED RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PROCESS AND THE PROJECT

Not necessarily an unintended result...but a hoped-for result...**was the positive impact of training the teachers being trained to work differently.** We have seen and designed similar new 21st Century Immersive Learning environments that were not successful because the teachers did not understand how to use the facilities or furniture and did not understand or buy into why they should teach differently. You go into those flexible facilities with flexible furniture and see teachers doing what they have always done. Rows of desks lined up with them lecturing to students who are mostly bored to be there.

We hoped that would be different with the 3-pronged approach at Washington ES. The 3-prongs being: **21st Century Immersive Learning Environments + Flexible Furniture + Teacher Training = positive results.**

The “hope” has become the new reality.

The teachers have **all** had to learn how to teach differently. They have all shifted from being the “sage on the stage” lecturing to students in rows of desks. They have learned how to become mentors and coaches for those students. They have learned how to develop new lesson plans for a new curriculum based on a Project Based Learning approach.

That hope has been proven and demonstrated in both the teacher and in turn the student engagement demonstrated daily. **The bottom line? ...measurable results of change and improvement are taking place.**

And Mr. P has developed a team supporting him who will sustain this transformative process if he moves on to another assignment.

Facilities + Furniture + Training = Student Success



GOAL

**21ST CENTURY FACILITIES
+ FLEXIBLE FURNITURE +
TEACHER TRAINING
= TRANSFORMATION**

RENOVATION OF WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



GOAL

21ST CENTURY FACILITIES
+ FLEXIBLE FURNITURE
+ TEACHER TRAINING
= TRANSFORMATION

RENOVATION OF WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

RESULTS OF THE PROCESS & PROJECT...continued



Original Classroom

GOAL

21ST CENTURY FACILITIES +
FLEXIBLE FURNITURE + TEACHER
TRAINING = TRANSFORMATION

RENOVATION OF WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

