

The image shows the exterior of Ina Arbuckle Elementary school at dusk. The building features a modern design with large windows and stone-clad walls. The courtyard is paved with light-colored concrete and contains several colorful, modular seating blocks in shades of purple, blue, and yellow. Small trees and plants are planted in the courtyard, and the building's interior lights are visible through the windows.

Ina Arbuckle Elementary

Status: Completed June 2019

Location: Jurupa Valley, CA

Program: 29,000 SF Modernization/Additions

Budget: 8.4 Million



Above. The new Student Resource Center at Ina Arbuckle is a center for learning and community connection.

PLANNING WITHOUT LIMITS

Ina Arbuckle Elementary School is located in Jurupa Valley, an underserved city in Riverside County California. After community members rallied to pass Measure EE to provide much needed upgrades to its schools, the District hired us to undertake the modernization at Ina Arbuckle Elementary, one of its oldest campuses.

The original scope of work for the modernization focused primarily on frontage renovations to make the campus safer, more beautiful, and to update it to meet current code requirements. During initial site visits, we identified other opportunities for improvement, and rather than just working as service providers, we worked as advisors to the District and advocates for the students. We found ways to reorganize the school program to provide better access to resources, to keep students safe, and to fulfill the District's vision of Learning without Limits. The modernization project includes a relocated and reconfigured Administration Office, an expanded Kindergarten program with a new playground, a new Student Resource Center/Library and a completely improved frontage.

Additionally, scope that is not visible to the eye is a complete overhaul of aging infrastructure from providing a new Electrical Service to the replacement of plumbing piping throughout the campus, all while school remained operational.

BACKGROUND

Can renovating schools help transform a neighborhood? That’s what an economically disadvantaged community in the Inland Empire wanted to find out when they mobilized to pass Measure EE, a bond which allocated tax funds to help make schools safer and repair aging infrastructure. Residents in the rural community of Jurupa Valley knew that providing their children with access education could empower them to break the cycle of poverty and create a healthier, happier community. “We don’t have big businesses here,” said the Superintendent. “Just a lot of people who care.”

The bond passed with strong community support and the arrival of the funds could not have been more timely for Ina Arbuckle Elementary, one of the oldest schools in Jurupa Valley. With nearly forty years since its last modernization, the facilities were past their useful life, presented various safety concerns, and were no longer meeting the needs of 21st century learners. The Jurupa Unified School District connected with us so we could explore how a well-designed learning environment could make a positive impact in the community.

We facilitated dialogues with parents, neighbors, educators and stakeholders to discover their needs and desires. Aside from cosmetic, structural, utility, and safety updates, there was a strong desire for a facility that could be welcoming to the community and inspire lifelong learning. Another recurring theme? They wanted a campus they could be proud of. It became clear to us that in order to foster the community’s long-term success, we would have to find opportunities to connect students, educators, and the community at large.

Students on Free/Reduced Lunch

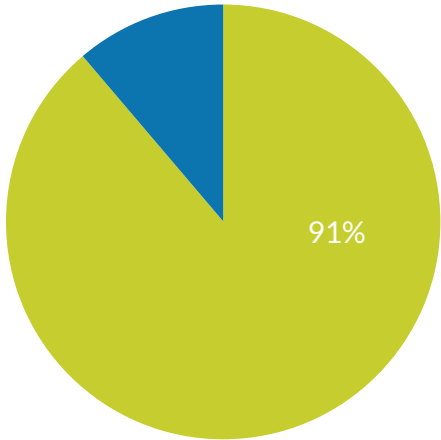


Figure 1: 91% of Ina Arbuckle students qualify for free or reduced lunch, pointing to the socioeconomic challenges of the region.

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We don’t have big businesses here. Just a lot of people who care.

- Superintendent Elliott Duchon

Contextual View



Challenges. During our initial site visit, we were able to get a better understanding of the campus and its context.

1. One point of vehicular egress from the site

2. One point of vehicular ingress onto the site

3. Campus entry not well-defined or secure

4. Kinder classrooms did not meet CDE standards

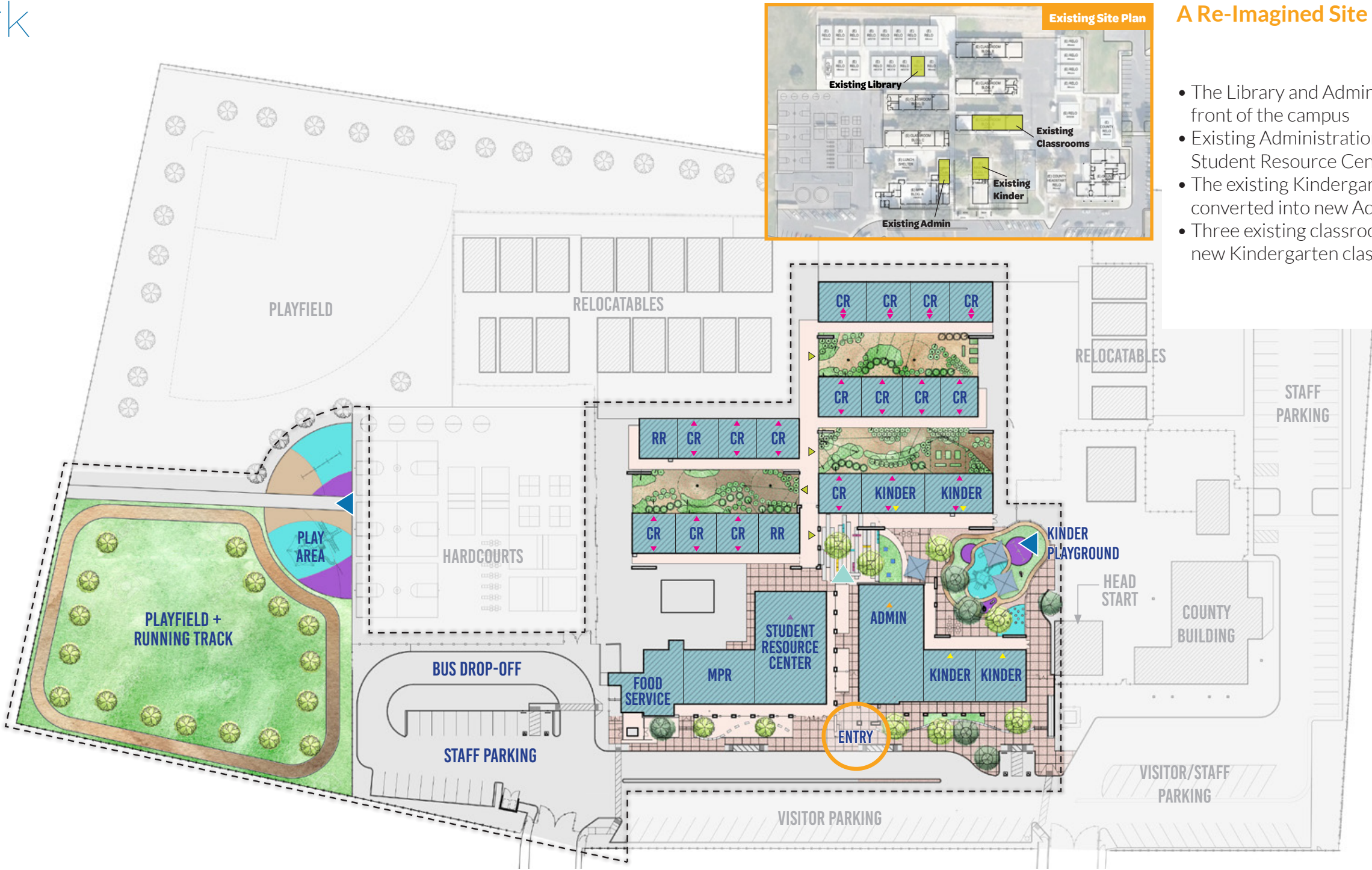
5. Library was in a relocatable and not centrally located on the site
6. Staff room was a significant distance from administration and in a relocatable

7. Classrooms had minimal daylighting

8. Site infrastructure was aged and failing consistently

Scope of Work

-  A **Welcoming, Secure Entry** for parents, students and the community with large dedicated waiting areas for student drop-off & pick-up
-  Circulation improvements within **Administration**
-  New **Student Resource Center** that supports a 21st century learning environment allowing for hands-on activities and 360 degrees of project instruction
-  Improved campus **Central Core**
-  Removed boarding from windows and increased storefronts for **Natural Daylighting** using advanced low-e coated glazing
-  Adequate **Kindergarten Classrooms** per CDE Standards and increased capacity
-  Enhanced exterior landscape between classroom buildings to promote **Outdoor Learning** experiences
-  New **Play Areas** for Kindergarten and grades 1-6



A Re-Imagined Site

- The Library and Administration moved to the front of the campus
- Existing Administration converted into new Student Resource Center
- The existing Kindergarten building to be converted into new Administration
- Three existing classrooms converted into two new Kindergarten classrooms

Challenges



SITE CHALLENGES

Although the scope of work outlined in the RFP focused on safety and visual upgrades, we noted during our site visit that there were other opportunities to improve the overall learning environment and to create spaces that would encourage students to flourish. After learning more about the District's vision, while also considering their tight budget for this campus, we proposed some cost-effective solutions that would have lasting positive impacts and that re-imagined the existing campus to better support their curricular needs. This way, the modernization would go beyond beautification and provide more long-term value for the school and the community. Some of the challenges we noted:

- The location of the library: The library was in a relocatable building at the back of the campus. Without a central presence or inviting facilities, students had limited access to a welcoming environment for support resources, reading or using technology.
- The aged and failing utility infrastructure meant we needed to perform a complete overhaul of utilities and phase the project so as not to disturb students during learning hours.
- The existing Administration was not adequately sized for the site's needs. The spatial organization was not conducive to receiving parents and visitors in a welcoming manner nor to facilitate any discussions regarding parent/student concerns.
- There was a shortage of kindergarten classrooms and the existing ones did not meet Title 5 requirements.
- Neither the administration building nor the main campus entry were well articulated or distinguishable from any of the other buildings

Educational Environment

LEARNING WITHOUT LIMITS

Inspired by the community's passion for their children's future, we worked to re-configure the existing campus to not only be beautiful, safer, and more relevant, but also to engage students, teachers, and parents. The District's vision of "Learning Without Limits" oriented our design to inspire learning beyond the classroom, connecting students with the outdoors and facilitating opportunities for both formal and informal ways of learning. We primarily accomplished this with:

- **Outdoor Learning Areas:** To support a diversity of teaching methods and learning styles, we created outdoor opportunities for collaborative learning, with colorful and flexible outdoor shaded sitting areas.
- **Opportunities for Connection:** Research has shown that parent involvement in education positively impacts school attendance, academic performance, and social skills. We elaborated spaces throughout the newly redesigned campus that will not only foster stronger connections with parents and neighbors, but invite them to be active participants in their students' education.

- **Interior Architecture and Environmental Graphic Design:** We used vivid colors, environmental graphics, and other interior details to engage and inspire students.
- **Increased daylighting:** We removed boarding from many of the existing windows and installed new windows in the renovated spaces. The increased daylighting isn't only energy efficient, it also boosts happiness, engages users, and visually opens space.
- **Upgraded utility infrastructure:** We upgraded mechanical, plumbing and electrical infrastructure throughout the campus, phasing it so major construction happened during the summer and sometimes during weekends in order to minimize disruption.



EDUCATIONAL VISION

To design a more purposeful space to support the school and community's goals, we worked with various stakeholders to understand their vision and goals.

INA ARBUCKLE ELEMENTARY'S GOALS

The mission of Ina Arbuckle Elementary School is to foster the successful educational and social development of our students.

1

Inspiring a love of life-long learning

2

Preparing students to be college and career ready

3

Have a safe, orderly, and inviting learning environment

4

Engaging and sustaining the trust and involvement of parents and community

Various Learning Styles

To help the District meet their educational goals, we included design features throughout the campus that would accommodate diverse learning and teaching styles.



Aural

Aural learners prefer opportunities to listen and speak. These include lectures, stories, class discussions, and even conversations. Some features for aural learners include:

- Areas for story time and small lessons in the Student Resource Center
- Sound systems in the classrooms
- Noise attenuating materials to minimize distracting background noise



Naturalistic

Naturalistic learners are in tune with their surroundings and enjoy nature and the outdoors. Design features that support naturalistic learners include:

- Windows for increased daylighting and outdoor views
- Outdoor learning spaces
- Enhanced landscaping
- Natural materials



Reading / Writing

Learners with preferences for reading and writing enjoy text, taking notes, and making lists. Design features that support reading/writing learners include:

- Technology devices for online research
- Student resource center with computer stations
- Comfortable seating areas for reading and writing



Visual

Visual learners learn through sight and observation and tend to prefer colors, images, and visual aids. Design features that support visual learners include:

- Color graphics and vivid paint
- Inspirational and educational graphics
- Marker Boards
- Interactive TV's and Projectors



Individual and Group/Social

We sought out flexible furniture and multi-purpose spaces that can be used for focused solo projects or reconfigured for small and large groups during breakout sessions.



Kinesthetic

Kinesthetic learners learn through their bodies, and may sometimes be misunderstood as restless. Design features that support kinesthetic learners include:

- Thoughtful use of interesting textures and materials
- Flexible space to act things out, play, and move around
- Learning environments outside of the classroom
- Makerspaces
- Fidget stools and flexible seating options

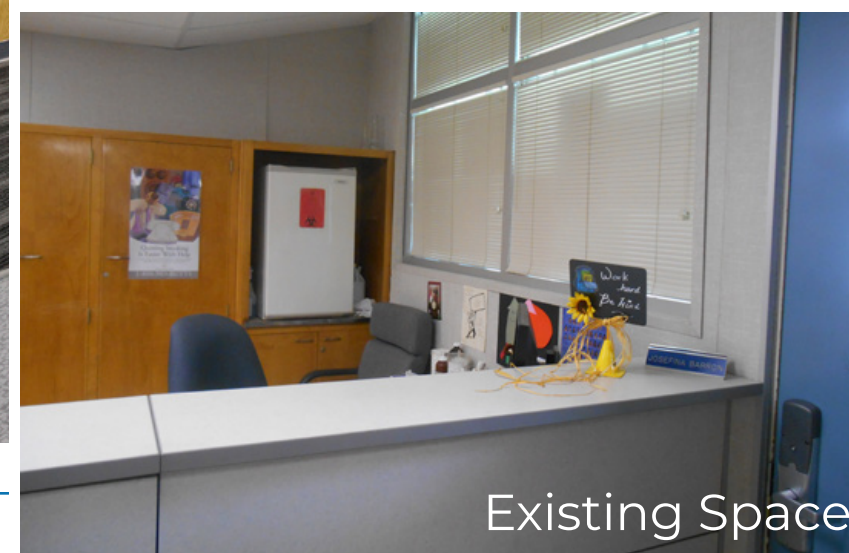
Educational Environment



NEW ADMINISTRATION

Research has shown that strong bonds between educators and the families of their students is an indicator of future success. To help foster a strong parent-school connection, we designed the administration building to be open and inviting.

- The layout has been reconfigured with a front desk where a receptionist welcomes visitors in an open environment.
- Large indoor windows in the new administration building create a feeling of transparency and openness
- Wood finishes in casework, ceilings, and furniture add warmth, balance, and a calming connection to nature.
- There is sufficient space to accommodate waiting visitors
- Registration kiosk for parents to enroll their students for the upcoming school year



Existing Space



The newly articulated front of Ina Arbuckle provides curb appeal, welcomes the community, and creates a sense of pride for staff, parents and students

Educational Environment



AN EXPANDED KINDERGARTEN CAMPUS

The overall campus had outgrown its aging facilities, including its ability to accommodate a growing kindergarten enrollment. We took the opportunity to not only update the area to comply with new standards but to increase its capacity to house students.

- Moving the Administration building to the former kindergarten building gave us the opportunity to completely reconfigure the Kindergarten campus into an area that not only accommodated their growth in enrollment, but that would be unified by a shared playing area.
- We connected the new kindergarten classrooms to the administration building, in a an “L” shaped layout, which provides a barrier on one side of the Kindergarten area, keeping young students safe from outsiders.
- Just as we did throughout the campus, we opened classrooms with windows and natural daylight to help increase engagement and promote wellness
- The new play area includes shade, outdoor seating, a trike rack, and plentiful play equipment



Existing Space



Educational Environment



Low-E coated glazing in aluminum framed storefronts provide ample daylight in classrooms, the new Media and Activity Center, and the Administration building.



Stone veneer accents add textural depth and enhance adjacent drought resistant landscaping in walkways.

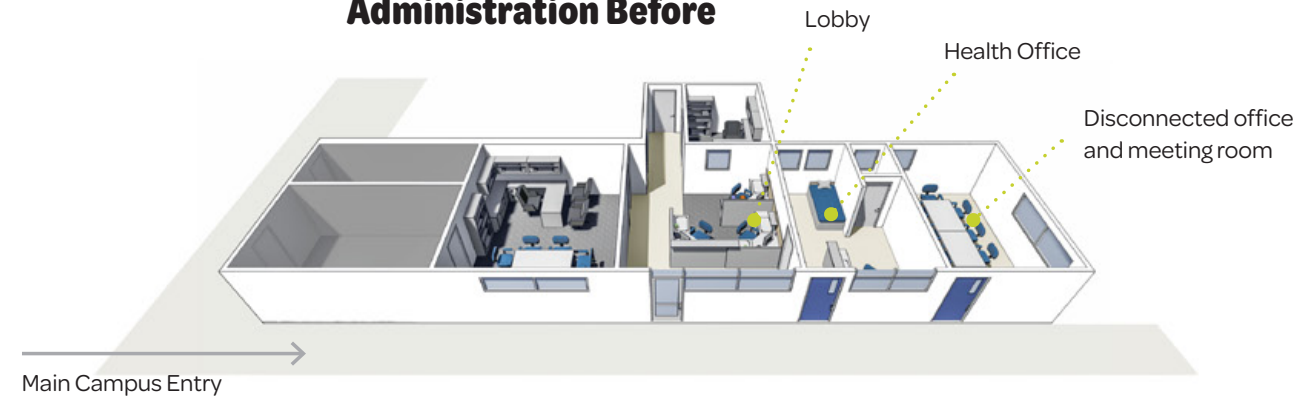


New upper grade playground

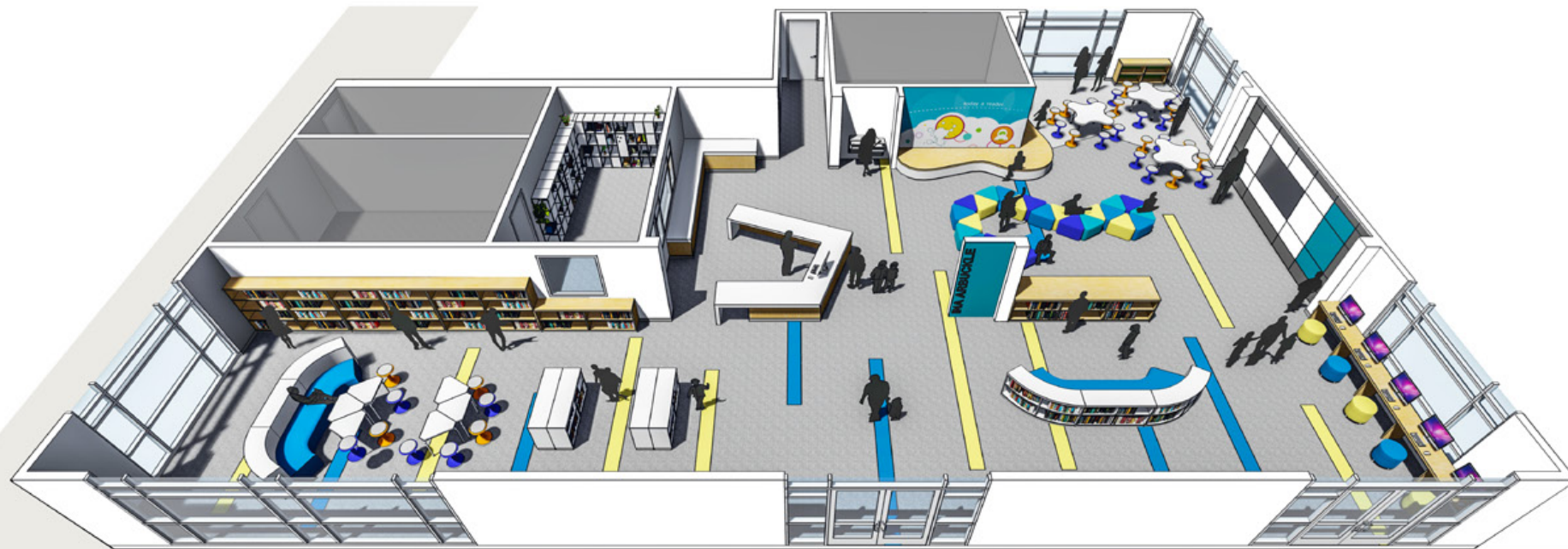


Educational Environment

Administration Before



New Student Resource Center



STUDENT RESOURCE CENTER

Our vision for the Student Resource Center was to create a space that would provide the flexibility and resources for 21st Century learning. The main goal was to relocate the underutilized library from the rear of the school to a dedicated space at the entry that would inspire students and provide them literacy and technology resources. The new Student Resource Center includes:

- A range of spaces to accommodate multiple concurrent activities like story time, an activity area, a quiet reading nook, and access to many resources.
- Brightly colored walls and custom environmental graphics that add visual interest and energize young minds.
- Infrastructure that supports the newest learning technologies which teachers will incorporate into their curriculum
- An energy efficient HVAC system for reduced energy consumption and maximized comfort





STUDENT RESOURCE CENTER

One of our initial goals was to raise the ceiling in the new Student Resource Center to make the space more expansive. However, existing conditions, cost, and other challenges impeded us from doing so. Instead, we opted for more windows to visually expand the space and to make it feel connected to the outdoors.





Project Outcome

The modernization of Ina Arbuckle Elementary School not only fulfilled the District's scope of work: it went beyond it, providing a valuable space for the students, the community, and staff, while staying within a tight modernization budget.

- **21st Century Learning Spaces:** The renovated classrooms are not only more beautiful and engaging, they now support new technology that will help students thrive in the 21st Century. Additionally, the new Student Resources Center connects students with technology tools and instructional support space.
- **Stronger Community Connection:** The new site layout and the location of the Administration at the front of the school invites parents to participate in their children's education. The Student Resource Center has separate points of entry, making it available for use after school for volunteers, PTA meetings, and extracurriculars. Parents are also able to visit the Student Resource Center after hours with their children, helping students establish a love for learning and literacy at a young age.
- **Social Skills:** Outdoor learning environments and new playgrounds will create new opportunities for interaction, formal and informal learning, and interpersonal development. Students will be able to practice social and communication skills and reap the physical and social benefits of play.
- **Safer Campus:** By articulating a single point of entry and new key card access control throughout the campus, we helped the school manage and

track visitor access to keep students safe. The overall campus is secured through ornamental fencing that helps keep students safe and deters crime. Upgrades in the Kindergarten area have carved out a safer space for the most vulnerable students.

- **Community Pride:** The new frontage has a stronger presence and brings pride to the neighborhood. One unintended consequence of our modernization was that it created a sense of community pride. Campus administrators told us that soon after the modernizations concluded, many families in the neighborhood felt inspired to upgrade their own homes.

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I have heard several parents and community members comment on how meaningful these changes are for them and their children. They feel welcome, valued and important.

- Roberta Pace, Director of College and Career Readiness

