FACILITIES FOR 21ST CENTURY LEARNING

Ideas for 21st Century Facilities

Community Use
It is assumed that the schools are used for a variety of community uses. Community involvement in education can take a variety of forms before, during, and after the school day. Additionally, the school will not have to pay for space elsewhere for banquets, PTA events, retirement events, and student recognition events, if community spaces are available.

Generally in planning schools, designers think of “Community in the School” but in considering all the community resources designers should also consider opportunities for “School in the Community” especially since these schools are located on military installations. The following is a partial list of potential community uses:

- Adult training
- Computer access
- College/graduate courses
- Dance recitals
- Public meetings
- Banquets
- Dances/proms
- Alumni reunions
- Professional development
- Clubs and organizational meetings
- Intramural sports
- Summer programs
  ◦ Music
  ◦ Athletics
  ◦ Academics
  ◦ Outside agencies

The areas that have the greatest possibility for community usage include:

- Gymnasiums
- Commons
- Multipurpose Space
- Performance Space
- Information Centers
- Conference rooms
- Foyer/entrance
- Playing fields
- Parking lots

Special considerations include:

- Disaster and emergency use
- Access to restrooms
- Design of the facility and site to enhance parking and circulation, security, and energy conservation

- Space for churches, arts groups, and sport events

- Adequate signage to assist community members
- Layout of community use areas in a "user friendly" design
- Storage for community functions – gym; performance spaces; community use
- After-hours lighting for parking areas
- Extended hours – (6 am – 3pm typical day vs. 7 am – 11pm for community use)
- Separate “Public” entrances for after school activities – access to Gym, Commons, Multipurpose and Performance spaces. These spaces shall be able to be secured from the rest of the school after normal school hours and have access to restrooms.

Community Support
Many schools rely on volunteers to participate in tutoring and mentoring programs that take place in the school facility. Tutoring space can be provided through Group Learning or One to One spaces provided within the Neighborhood. Adequate parking spaces should be provided for volunteers in the visitor parking lot.

School in the Community
The DoDEA schools are unique in that they are located on military installations. The military base has the potential of providing auxiliary facilities that are seldom available to schools located elsewhere. For example, a military base includes extensive physical training facilities. Military installations also include various laboratories, research facilities, and sophisticated technical equipment. This provides the opportunity for rich internship/mentorship programs and for individual student projects and class visitations.
At the high school level there is a desire for Junior ROTC programs. Military installations provide an opportunity for real life ROTC experiences.

Many of the DoDEA schools are located in foreign countries. Through partnerships with host nation schools, museums, government, business and cultural organizations, rich educational experiences can be provided.

Community involvement should be taken into consideration in the initial planning of the building and not treated as an afterthought. Creating this synergy requires a great deal of initial planning and can significantly affect the layout and organization of the building and site.