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Where Learning Takes Root

Mass Timber Schools That Inspire, Perform, and Endure

school news.

HMC Architects DESIGN FOR GOOD

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HMC Architects DESIGN FOR GOOD

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PHOTO BY ARANISSE SMITH-NJIGBA

By Brian Meyers

PreK-12 Practice Leader, HMC Architects

*As HMC's Pre-K-12 practice leader, **Brian** is responsible for the strategic planning, direction, and management of the firm's PreK-12 practice. He has over 30 years of experience spanning all aspects of educational planning and design.*

This back-to-school issue marks an exciting milestone—our first since HMC Architects joined forces with Bassetti Architects. Together, we've expanded our reach across the West Coast and strengthened our shared commitment to designing learning environments that empower students, educators, and communities.

Our merger isn't just about geography—it's about uniting expertise. Bassetti brings a legacy of thoughtful design and educational planning in the Pacific Northwest, while HMC's deep experience navigating California's complex school systems remains core to who we are. The result is a stronger, more agile team dedicated to delivering even greater value to our clients.

The theme of this issue, Future Facilities / Mass Timber, highlights the growing role of timber in creating sustainable, human-centered schools. But this isn't just about construction—it's about the powerful learning happening inside these spaces. From warm, biophilic environments to innovative CTE programs, the projects featured here reflect a broader shift in how schools support student success.

Our cover story explores mass timber's rise in educational design and invites you to consider its potential for your facilities—especially in California, where evolving codes and sustainability goals are aligning to make it a viable and forward-thinking solution.

We're thrilled to bring you this expanded, future-focused issue of School News—and even more excited about the opportunities ahead as we continue to *Design for Good*, together.

Expanding Impact: HMC + Bassetti Architects

Bringing Together a Shared Mission to Serve Students and Communities Better Than Ever

By Bruce Boul

Communications Director

Bruce *leads public relations and internal communications at HMC Architects, helping shape the firm's messaging and amplify thought leadership across the PreK–12 sector. His efforts support a strong, engaged workplace culture and have earned national media recognition. As a member of the AIA COTE communications committee, he also champions sustainability and environmental stewardship in architecture.*

In a move that signals a bold new chapter for PreK–12 design on the West Coast, HMC Architects has officially acquired Bassetti Architects—a Seattle- and Portland-based firm with a 78-year legacy of educational and civic design. Together, this unified team combines deep expertise, resources, and a shared mission to serve school communities with even greater reach and impact.

For HMC's PreK–12 clients, this partnership means expanded access to innovative thinking, regional insight, and specialized services across the Western U.S. Bassetti's portfolio includes award-winning PreK-12 projects known for their warm, community-centered design, sustainable innovation, and a particular strength in mass timber—a material gaining momentum for its beauty, durability, and low carbon footprint.

"Bassetti shares our commitment to designing spaces that improve lives and elevate learning," said HMC's CEO Brian Staton. "By joining forces, we're better equipped to deliver future-ready schools that foster equity, wellness, and academic success."

Bassetti also brings nationally recognized leadership in sustainable architecture and trauma-informed design—further reinforcing HMC's Design for Good ethos. With this merger, clients can expect the same trusted service and relationships, now backed by even broader knowledge, creative capacity, and technical strength.

From California to the Pacific Northwest, this partnership is about more than growth—it's about expanding the possibilities of what school design can do for students, educators, and entire communities.

PHOTO BY BRAND GRATITUDE

Where Learning Takes Root

Mass Timber Schools That Inspire, Perform, and Endure

PHOTO BY BENJAMIN BENSCHNEIDER

***Van Asselt School** Seattle, Washington*

By Michael Davis

AIA, Principal in Charge

***Michael** has nearly two decades of experience delivering innovative, budget-aligned educational facilities. A strategic problem solver, he partners closely with school districts to guide projects from early concepts through construction, creating adaptable, future-ready learning environments.*

In my work designing schools, I've always believed the environments we create should do more than meet codes or fulfill space requirements—they should inspire. That belief is what draws me to mass timber. At its core, this material offers something rare: the ability to enhance learning, elevate wellness, and address sustainability goals all at once. As school districts across the country rethink their capital improvement plans, mass timber deserves serious consideration not only for its performance, but for the transformative experiences it can offer students and teachers.

WELLNESS AND LEARNING: DESIGNING FOR CALM, FOCUS, AND BELONGING

Many of today's schools are designed with efficiency and durability in mind—but those priorities sometimes come at the expense of atmosphere. Double-loaded corridors, drop ceilings, and neutral finishes are common across many campuses. While these elements serve important functional roles, they don't always support the sensory and emotional needs of students. Mass timber offers a complementary approach—spaces filled with natural warmth, daylight, and breathable materials that can reduce stress and improve focus.

"At its core, this material offers something rare: the ability to enhance learning, elevate wellness, and address sustainability goals all at once."

There's a growing body of research showing that biophilic design, connecting people with nature, can positively impact student concentration and mental health. As someone who has always found it challenging to sit still and stay focused in traditional learning environments, I know firsthand how important restorative spaces can be. Mass timber creates a natural sense of calm. It supports attention restoration, reduces stress, and, most importantly, makes school a place where kids want to be. In many ways, it transforms a classroom into a second home.

Teachers and staff also experience improved indoor environmental quality through reduced VOCs (Volatile Organic Compounds) and better acoustics. When everyone in the building feels better, they perform better. This is especially relevant as we work to address trauma-informed design and the needs of neurodiverse learners. Mass timber's warm, natural aesthetics paired with good sightlines and daylighting can help reduce overstimulation and support emotional regulation in the classroom.

But creating spaces that feel good isn't enough—we also must consider how responsibly they're built and how they perform over time. That's where mass timber's sustainability advantages truly stand out.

SUSTAINABILITY AND LIFECYCLE VALUE

Mass timber significantly reduces embodied carbon compared to steel or concrete. At Van Asselt School, one of our PreK-12 projects in Seattle, we achieved a 51 percent reduction by using cross-laminated timber (CLT), low-carbon concrete, and efficient systems like one-way beam spans.

But sustainability extends beyond materials—it's also about long-term performance. Mass timber buildings offer adaptable layouts and are easier to modify or deconstruct than traditional structures, allowing schools to evolve with community needs over decades.

Deconstructability is another advantage. Unlike conventional construction, mass timber can be disassembled and reused, supporting circularity and reducing landfill waste. For districts focused on lifecycle value, that flexibility is a major asset.

Many timber suppliers we work with also prioritize sustainable forestry. While not all pursue FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certification, many follow responsible practices—replanting, thinning, and harvesting in ways that protect long-term forest health and renewability.

Of course, one of the first questions we hear is: Can districts afford it? The answer lies in how early we integrate sustainability into the design process.

THE COST CONVERSATION: HONEST, NUANCED, AND MANAGEABLE

Mass timber is not automatically cheaper than traditional systems. While mass timber can approach cost neutrality in many cases when designed with rigor and intention, not every space type will achieve it. Large-span areas like gyms may carry cost premiums, and owners may need to embrace certain design choices—such as exposed mechanical and electrical systems—that help keep budgets in balance. It requires a shift in thinking—designing to the logic of the structural system, rather than forcing the structure to conform to an inefficient layout. Simple, repetitive grids are key. Reusing the same beam 100 times is more efficient than designing 30 variations.

PHOTOS BY MORIS MORENO

***Fairview Middle School**, Bremerton, Washington*

Construction can also be faster. Smaller crews, quicker erection times, and reduced finish work help save time and money. For instance, with mass timber, we often reach dry-in two weeks faster than steel, which accelerates the entire schedule. For a 50,000 SF school, that can mean opening weeks earlier and reducing labor and carrying costs. And when you design with exposed structure, you don't need to spend extra on expensive interior finishes to achieve warmth.

Of course, cost neutrality also depends on smart decisions—lowering floor-to-floor heights, limiting exterior envelope area, and carefully managing acoustics. With the right team and plan, you can deliver a high-performance mass timber school within a competitive budget.

That said, we must acknowledge that regional supply chains and contractor experience still create challenges. In the Pacific Northwest, we benefit from proximity to manufacturers and timber suppliers. But as the market grows—with new facilities like TimberLab's plant in Millersburg, Oregon—access and affordability will continue to improve nationwide.

Beyond dollars and timelines, though, is something even more powerful—how a building communicates value to the people it serves. That's where mass timber can play a transformative role in advancing educational equity.

EQUITY AND IDENTITY: RAISING THE BAR FOR EVERY STUDENT

One of the most powerful aspects of mass timber is its ability to bring dignity to every school community. Too often, our most underserved students are placed in buildings that feel more like warehouses than places of possibility. Exposed concrete block, limited daylight, and generic finishes don't reflect the potential we see in our students.

Mass timber changes that. It communicates care, investment, and inspiration. It makes a statement: "You matter. Your education matters."

When we brought mass timber to Van Asselt—a transitional school site serving over 1,000 students while their permanent schools were rebuilt—it brought a sense of beauty and place to an otherwise chaotic setting. That kind of impact shouldn't be limited to affluent neighborhoods. Every student deserves a school that nurtures their well-being and reflects their worth.

This is where architecture can serve as a tool for equity. Beautiful, sustainable design should not be reserved for high-income areas. Mass timber gives us a way to bring thoughtful, biophilic design into all neighborhoods—and in doing so, raise expectations for what public education facilities can be.

In addition to supporting dignity and belonging, mass timber schools also create opportunities for learning through the building itself—transforming the structure into a dynamic teaching tool.

"Mass timber gives us a way to bring thoughtful, biophilic design into all neighborhoods—and in doing so, raise expectations for what public education facilities can be."

Van Asselt School *Seattle, Washington*

TEACHING THROUGH DESIGN: MASS TIMBER AS A LEARNING TOOL

Schools should teach in every dimension—even through their design. Mass timber buildings expose structure, mechanical systems, and assembly logic in a way that encourages curiosity. For Career Technical Education (CTE) programs in construction, engineering, and the trades, these environments double as living textbooks.

At our West Sound Technical Skills Center project in Bremerton, Washington, we used a mix of systems—including cross-laminated timber (CLT), custom trusses, steel-braced frames, low-carbon concrete, and efficient one-way beam spans to bring students closer to the materials of their future professions. These spaces foster inspiration. They showcase craftsmanship. They hint at the career paths students might one day pursue—not only in construction or engineering, but in sustainable forestry, design, and more.

We've even seen students engage with these buildings like giant Lincoln Logs—visually unpacking how the connections work, how systems are exposed, and how buildings are assembled. And that's the point. These schools aren't just vessels—they're tools to spark imagination and provide a gateway into the built environment.

Simple moves like including relights into mechanical rooms or using environmental graphics to explain how HVAC systems function can make buildings part of the curriculum. These strategies cost very little but deliver huge educational returns.

As more districts embrace these benefits, it's helpful to look at what's working in regions where mass timber is gaining momentum—and how those lessons can translate across the country.

LOOKING AHEAD: REGIONAL LESSONS AND THE ROAD TO ADOPTION

In the Pacific Northwest, our proximity to Canadian suppliers and growing local manufacturing has given us a head start with mass timber. But similar momentum is achievable in California and beyond. The key is knowledge sharing—especially around fire performance, moisture mitigation, regulatory strategies, and mixed structural systems.

California's stricter codes and DSA requirements currently limit mass timber's use. But with greater education and collaboration among architects, engineers, and authorities, we can build trust in the material's proven performance. Mass timber chars predictably in fire scenarios, creating a protective layer that helps preserve its structural integrity for longer periods.

Moisture control is also critical. In the Pacific Northwest's rainy climate, we've learned the importance of sequencing and protecting wood during construction—lessons that apply anywhere weather is a factor.

The case for mass timber is clear. The opportunity now lies in how we act—redefining what's possible in PreK-12 learning environments by thinking holistically about value.

THIS IS A MOMENT OF OPPORTUNITY

Mass timber isn't a passing trend. It's a long-term, strategic solution that aligns with our highest goals as school designers and district leaders: to support student health, foster academic excellence, and steward environmental responsibility.

For districts preparing their next bond or facilities master plan, I encourage you to consider not just the cost per square foot, but the value per student. Mass timber offers something few materials can: a learning environment that inspires, performs, and endures.

Let's root our future schools in that potential.

"The case for mass timber is clear. The opportunity now lies in how we act—redefining what's possible in PreK-12 learning environments by thinking holistically about value."

PHOTO BY BENJAMIN BENSCHNEIDER

But Why Mass Timber?

The Science and Environmental Imperative Behind this Emerging Construction Material and Methodology

By Kristian Kicinski

AIA, LFA, LEED AP BD+C, Principal Architect

Jennifer Wehling

AIA, LEED AP BD+C, ID+C, WELL AP, Director of Sustainability

Kristian *helps shape the strategic direction of HMC's sustainability efforts, bringing a deep commitment to innovation, pragmatic solutions, and progressive PreK–12 educational design. As principal architect, he works with clients and project teams to establish clear sustainability goals and performance targets from project inception through construction.*

With over 20 years of experience as a licensed architect, ***Jennifer*** *is dedicated to delivering the most sustainable projects possible without negatively impacting budget, scope, and schedule. Her passion for sustainability drives her to continually research the latest strategies and design methods in green building, providing real solutions to clients.*

As school districts look to design and construct healthier, more sustainable learning environments, mass timber is emerging as a compelling alternative to steel and concrete. Its aesthetic warmth, renewable nature, and reduced environmental footprint make it an increasingly attractive choice for public projects—especially in regions close to lumber production. Adopting mass timber is not without challenges. From sourcing responsibly harvested wood to overcoming insurance barriers and cost premiums, the path to truly sustainable timber buildings demands thoughtful navigation. With HMC's recent acquisition of Bassetti Architects, we are excited about the prospect of integrating mass timber methodology into our California projects.

UNDERSTANDING EMBODIED CARBON

The primary environmental case for mass timber lies in its reduced embodied carbon—the sum of greenhouse gas emissions associated with extracting, processing, transporting, and installing building materials. Compared to conventional steel or concrete structures, mass timber systems like CLT (cross-laminated timber) can cut a building's embodied carbon by 20–30 percent.

In recent projects, we've seen embodied carbon numbers drop from 32–36 kg CO_2 per square foot down to 24–28 using mass timber. That's a meaningful impact, especially when you consider the size of a typical PreK–12 building.

One of the other ways that mass timber reduces embodied carbon emissions is by reducing the amount of concrete required for the building foundations. Because wood is lighter weight than a steel structure, the sizes of footings (especially lateral/seismic footings) are greatly reduced. Since concrete, even just foundations and slabs, can account for 30 percent or more of a building's total embodied carbon footprint, the size reductions enabled by mass timber result in significant savings.

Building codes are also starting to acknowledge the importance of reducing embodied carbon by setting carbon limits on certain types of materials, like steel and concrete, or enforcing a whole building life cycle assessment method that allows for an embodied carbon budget. Mass timber could be a great solution to either of these compliance paths.

CONSIDER THE SOURCE

While using mass timber instead of steel and concrete can reduce embodied carbon, it's important to understand where the timber is coming from and how it is harvested. The primary way sustainable forest practices are tracked is through forest certification. The gold standard is FSC (Forest Stewardship Council), which ensures rigorous chain-of-custody tracking from tree to product. However, it comes at a cost: for the softwoods used in mass timber, typically a 20 percent premium over non-certified wood. That premium can be difficult for public agencies with limited capital budgets.

PHOTO BY ARANISSE SMITH-NJIGBA

School districts want responsibly harvested wood, but adding 20 percent to the cost makes mass timber much less competitive with steel.

As an alternative, many projects use wood certified by SFI (Sustainable Forestry Initiative) or its international counterpart, PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification), which has less stringent requirements and is therefore more cost-neutral. Many of the larger CLT producers use SFI lumber as their default. But meeting certification requirements can be difficult for smaller suppliers, making it hard for them to compete for mass timber projects.

CREATING NEW PATHWAYS FOR ETHICAL SOURCING

To address this gap, Bassetti Architects collaborated with Sustainable Northwest Wood, a nonprofit focused on ecological forestry, to create a third option: a custom specification that allows for verified, responsibly harvested timber from forest restoration work. This includes wood salvaged from thinning operations, beetle-kill zones, and fire-damaged stands. This wood is often overlooked because it doesn't come with a certification label, but it can be just as sustainable—or more so—when sourced from forests undergoing active restoration.

Our strategy has been to provide options to the glulam and CLT subcontractors bidding on a mass timber project: Provide 50 percent FSC-certified lumber, 100 percent SFI-certified lumber, or 100 percent lumber from Restoration Forestry.

Case Study: Working Directly with Timber Suppliers

Kalesnikoff Lumber

The CLT supplier for two of our projects is Kalesnikoff, a company based in British Columbia and founded by Russian immigrants in the 1920s. Kalesnikoff operates two forest licenses on public land and transparently documents their forest management practices, their Forest Stewardship Plan, and their engagement with the public and with indigenous peoples of BC

It's a great example of economic and environmental alignment. They're invested in managing their lands well because it's the foundation of their business. Supporting these types of suppliers also strengthens regional supply chains, a key consideration as the industry seeks resilience in the face of climate, labor, and material volatility.

Vaagen Brothers Lumber

Another family-owned business, Vaagen Brothers, specializes in lumber from small-diameter logs and has done extensive work in forest thinning and restoration. They are one of the small suppliers we worked with in creating our Restoration Wood Specification. They reviewed and offered recommendations on the draft specification.

BENEFITS OF MASS TIMBER

- Renewable Resource
- Reduced Embodied Carbon
- Faster Construction Schedule
- Lighter Weight Material
- Thermal Performance
- Local Resources
- Biophilic Design

By codifying this approach into project specifications, we enabled smaller timber suppliers to compete for public contracts. It was important to us to support these businesses and give clients a way to meet their sustainability goals without pricing themselves out.

THERMAL BENEFITS WITHOUT ENERGY CREDITS

One surprising benefit of mass timber is its thermal comfort. Wood's low conductivity means it doesn't conduct heat like steel, making buildings easier to warm during construction and occupancy, particularly in cooler climates. General contractors have reported that temporary heating performs more effectively on timber builds compared to steel-frame jobs. However, this advantage isn't currently reflected in energy modeling or certification systems like LEED.

In terms of operational energy, we haven't been able to draw a direct line between using mass timber and achieving Net-Zero Energy status. What drives energy use is the envelope design and mechanical systems, not the structure. Still, we believe the sensory and comfort benefits of timber are real and meaningful, even if they aren't fully quantifiable.

LEED'S NEXT CHAPTER: A FOCUS ON CARBON

While LEED v4 offers limited credits tied to timber (mainly through FSC-certified materials), the upcoming LEED v5 shifts focus from energy to carbon impact—particularly embodied carbon.

Energy was always a stand-in for carbon, but now that our energy grids are cleaner and our buildings more efficient, we're getting more direct about addressing carbon itself.

Mass timber stands to benefit. Under LEED v5, embodied carbon reduction is more heavily weighted, potentially making timber a more valuable contributor toward certification goals.

It's still early, but we believe we'll see timber playing a bigger role in LEED moving forward.

BUILDING WITH REGIONAL IDENTITY

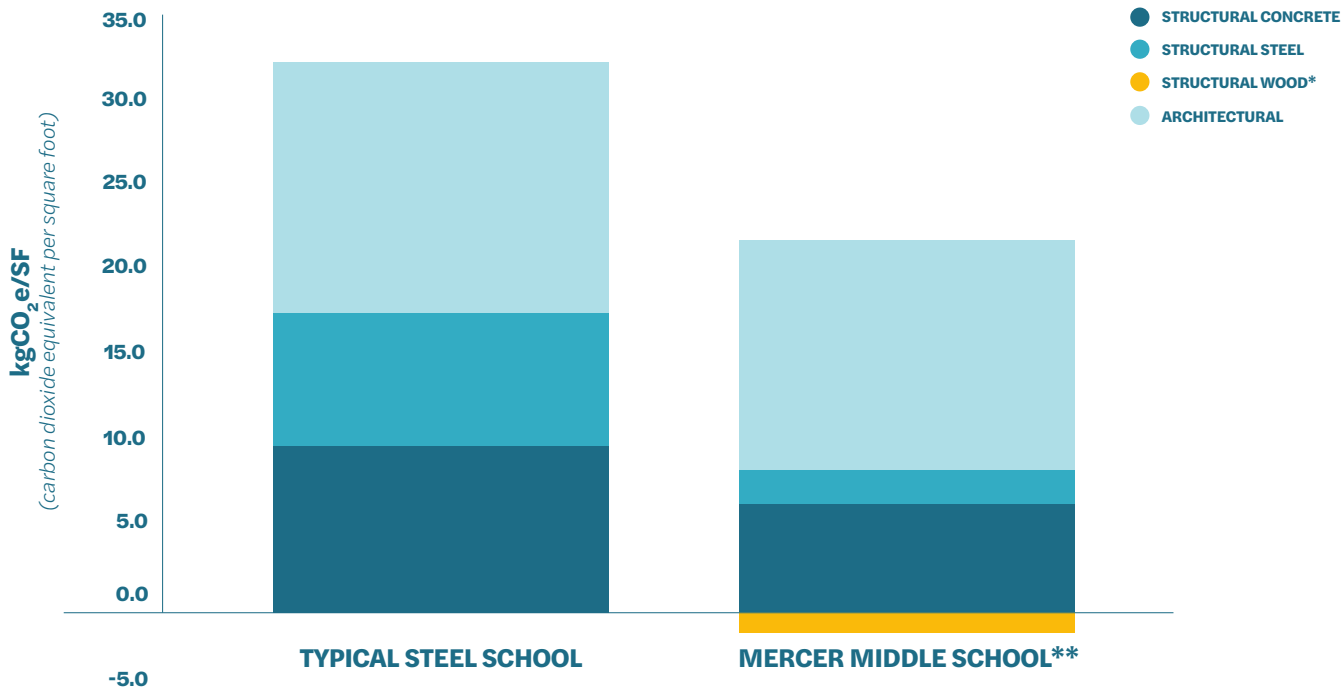
For schools and other public facilities, mass timber offers a chance to connect buildings with place. Sourcing wood from regional forests and mills supports the local economy and reflects the cultural identity of the area. Timber aligns with the climate and the architectural heritage in Washington, Oregon, and Northern California. It's more than a material choice—it's a story about place and responsibility. This sense of connection extends to the users themselves. Exposed wood interiors in classrooms, corridors, and commons create a tactile, biophilic experience that resonates with students and staff alike.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE OF SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION

As embodied carbon emerges as the next frontier in climate-conscious design, mass timber is well-positioned to lead. But getting there requires a thoughtful, systems-based approach—one that considers certification, supply chain equity, policy barriers, and long-term environmental stewardship.

For firms like HMC, it's about more than just using wood—it's about reshaping how we think about sustainability, transparency, and collaboration in the built environment.

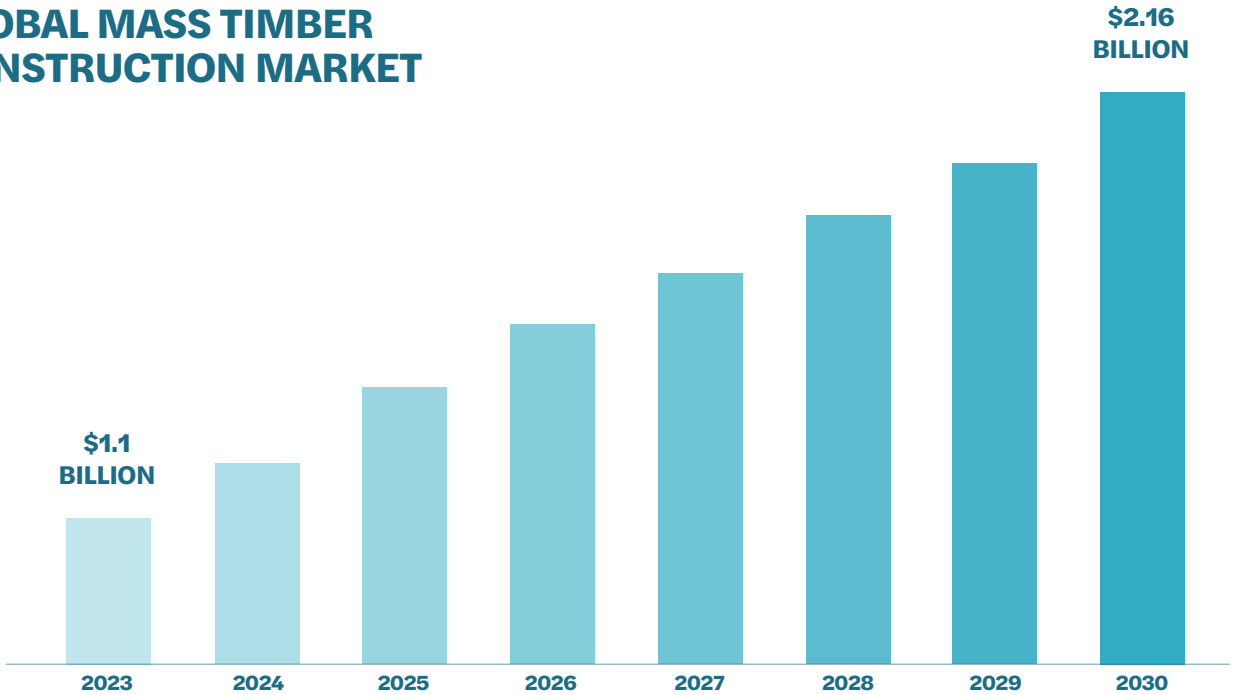
STEEL VS. MASS TIMBER



**This chart includes biogenic carbon and therefore treats the wood as carbon negative. Biogenic carbon originates from living or recently living organisms (biomass)—a part of the natural carbon cycle that is constantly being recycled within the Earth's ecosystems.*

***Mercer Middle School, a project completed in September 2025 by Bassetti Architects (now a design studio of HMC Architects), is used here as an example of a typical PreK-12 project.*

GLOBAL MASS TIMBER CONSTRUCTION MARKET



Mass Timber Construction Market size was valued at $1.1 Billion in 2023 and is projected to reach $2.16 Billion by 2031, growing at a CAGR of 8.1% (compounded annual growth rate) during the forecast period 2024-2031.

Source: Verified Market Research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Q+A

From Bassetti to HMC, Meet Managing Principal Susan Conway

As a managing principal in the Seattle office of Bassetti Architects, now a design studio of HMC Architects, Susan Conway excels in managing and designing PreK-12 projects, blending technical expertise with a sharp design eye and strong leadership skills. As a project manager, she serves as the primary day-to-day contact for clients and teams, guiding projects toward their goals with clarity and purpose. Susan's service-driven mindset and commitment ensure each project is thoughtfully executed from start to finish.

Q *Describe your educational and professional background, how did you get into architecture?*

A I was an art history major in college and thought the most complete history of a civilization—how they envisioned themselves, what they valued as a society, if they were embattled or flourished—was most accurately assessed through the built environment and architecture.

Over the summer breaks during college, I interned at the National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL) and worked on a project to encourage energy efficiency in schools. We advocated for the use of daylighting to reduce energy costs, but also around this time, studies were emerging which demonstrated better student outcomes were associated with daylighting. This experience had a profound impact because I was able to meet architects, learn a little bit about the profession, and learn about school design, specifically the regional design differences based on what was important to a community.

For example, a school in Washington, D.C. might have a traditional neo classical design, compared to a school in Texas that seemed to be secondary to the football field.

My first architecture job was at a small residential firm outside of Washington, D.C. with only a staff of six. It was a fantastic learning experience because in addition to architecture, I learned to do everything else that is a part of running a business—we did all the marketing, ordered office supplies, reviewed invoices, and were on site at least once a week meeting with owners and contractors—learning what was important to each and how to manage conflict.

I then moved to GWWO Architects in Baltimore, and my first project was comprehensive/CTE high school (Dundalk High School & Sollers Point Technical High School in Dundalk, Maryland). Part of the design was a three-story atrium, which was novel in educational architecture at the time. The project team used precedent imagery from Lynwood High School in Bothell, Washington, (a Bassetti Architects project) to demonstrate the functionality of an atrium as educational space. It was a fantastic building and fantastic luck that Bassetti was hiring when I moved to Seattle a few years later!

Q *Describe your current role as managing principal*

A I am very new to this role, but my goal is to ensure the Seattle studio, and each individual employee owner, has the tools and support needed for success.

Susan's service-driven mindset and commitment ensure each project is thoughtfully executed from start to finish.

PHOTO BY MORIS MORENO

"Currently, I am working on a program for Washington School for the Deaf's Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Youth in Vancouver, Washington, which has been a tremendous experience."

Staff should feel that their projects and their professional development are both equally supported, and I look forward to being a resource to help them grow.

Q *What are some major projects of which you're most proud and that our clients might want to know about?*

A I am fortunate enough to have worked on so many incredible projects and varied project types over the course of my career, it is difficult to pick one. Each project is special, either because of the people I've been able to work with, such as PreK-12 districts and clients who are so inspiringly dedicated to their students or the design of the project.

One project that stands out is The St. Thomas School Center for Leadership and Innovation Gym and Performing Arts building in Medina, Washington (photo above and at right). This project was such a joy because it had an innovative program that resulted in wonderful spaces for students, including a rooftop play area and gym/theater space. The combined gym within a theatre feels like an elevated, multi-functional space-rather than a compromise. A flexible fabrication lab was thoughtfully designed for PreK-8 students but is also sophisticated enough for professional training sessions.

Currently, I am working on a program for Washington School for the Deaf's Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Youth in Vancouver, Washington, which has been a tremendous experience. The project is a full modernization of the Northrop Building, a historic campus building. One component of the program is a place for parents of deaf children to learn how to communicate with their babies. An essential design consideration is that the building be a warm and welcoming space, not only for the deaf and hard of hearing community but also for those parents for which this program will be their first interaction with the deaf community. Throughout the process we learned about DeafSpace Design, which has concepts that are readily applicable to all projects and is just good design-such as wider corridors so people can walk side by side and communicate and being very conscientious of plane changes in the floors, because students will be looking at who they are talking to not necessarily in front of them. It has been transformative in how I look at spaces. I am really excited to visit the school when it is completed in the Fall of 2026.

Q *What are the biggest challenges facing our PreK-12 clients, and how can we help?*

A A licensed early childhood learning facility in an existing building in Washington state, will typically require significant capital investment.

PHOTO BY MORIS MORENO

Usually we must add sprinklers and upgrade the mechanical system, which can add significant costs to a project.

Clients and designers are currently navigating unprecedented times, and schedule and cost are difficult to establish using previous project experience. Permit review times are long and unpredictable, so projects need to be submitted to permit earlier. Securing materials and equipment is also more expensive or delayed, so project teams have to think outside the box to make a vision come to life. Despite the unpredictability, our teams are experts at thinking creatively and we can meet this moment by focusing documentation on information pertinent to the review. With our GC/CM partner, we can break the project into bid packages, phase a project to begin quickly, or to secure long-lead items such as a mechanical or electrical equipment.

Q *What does the Bassetti/HMC merger mean to you? What's the impact it will have on clients?*

A This new merger is an incredible opportunity for staff growth , the potential to work on a variety of new project types, and the ability to work in a new geographical area if someone chooses to do so. We have been so impressed by HMC's Digital Practice and the tools available for early design.

I'm excited to see how this new resource can improve our projects and professional development.

By becoming part of a larger organization with more structure in place to run a business, we are carving out more time for architecture. The merger means principals will have more time to focus on serving our clients and give them the absolute best.

Q *What are your passions outside of work?*

A Outside of work I love to spend time running, climbing, skiing, and travelling; ideally all in one trip!

Elevating Our Skills for Your Success

Two HMC PreK–12 Leaders Selected for the Prestigious CASH Leadership Academy

Senior Project Manager **Jeffrey Chouinard** graduated from the academy's 2025 class.

Senior Project Architect **Jennifer Huang** was selected to join the class of 2026.

Angel Hosband Earns ALEP Designation

The Accredited Learning Environment Planner (ALEP) certification, awarded by the Association for Learning Environments (A4LE) is held by only approximately 500 individuals nationwide who have completed a rigorous program.

Defining Moments

Chico Unified School District Celebrates Inspire School of Arts and Sciences Groundbreaking.

Chico, California

Western Placer Unified School District's Twelve Bridges High School Celebrates New Athletic Fields.

Lincoln, California

Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District Tops Out Anna Kyle Elementary School.

Fairfield, California

LAUSD New John F. Kennedy High School Classroom Building and Modernization Ribbon Cutting.

Los Angeles, California

Roseville City School District Breaks Ground on New Winding Creek Elementary School.

Roseville, California

DESIGN-BUILD TEAM: BALFOUR BETTY + HMC ARCHITECTS

El Monte Unified School District, El Monte High School Stadium Ribbon Cutting.

El Monte, California

Design Honors

Benson Polytechnic High School *Wins: A4LE Pacific Northwest Region Pinnacle Award*

Del Oro High School *Wins:*

A4LE Southern California Chapter Honor Award

C.A.S.H./AIACC Leroy F. Greene Design and Planning Award of Honor, New Built

Floyd Farms *Wins:*

Society of American Registered Architects (SARA) California Chapter Design Award of Honor

San Benito High School *Wins:*

Society of American Registered Architects (SARA) California Chapter Design Award of Honor

C.A.S.H./AIACC Leroy F. Greene Design and Planning Award of Honor, Project in Design

El Rodeo High School *Wins:*

A4LE Southern California Chapter, Merit Award

Structural Engineering Excellence Merit Award, (Retrofit/Alterations category)

Society of American Registered Architects (SARA) California Chapter Design Award of Merit

California Preservation Design Award, Rehabilitation category

C.A.S.H./AIACC Leroy F. Greene Design and Planning Award of Merit, Modernization

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RANKINGS

Engineering News-Record's (ENR) 2025 Top 500 Design Firms list

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#25
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