

School news.

Back to
School
Issue

Revolutionizing Education

A New School Design Transforms
Kern High School District



Fall 2023

DESIGN
FOR
GOOD
HMC
Architects

PreK-12 Practice Leader
Brian Meyers LEED AP, BD+C

**PreK-12 Market Leader/
Director, School
Advisors**
Julie Strauss ALEP

**Communications
Director**
Bruce Boul

**Senior Marketing
Manager**
Justin Panson

Senior Art Director
Steve Potter

**Senior Graphic
Designer/Photographer**
David Fennema

**Senior Graphic
Designer**
Jillian Melgosa

Contributing Writers
Bruce Boul
Angel Hosband
James Krueger
Adrienne Luce
Jeffrey Lenox
Justin Panson
Sherry Sajadpour
Kathleen Stanton
Julie Strauss
Steve Wilkerson



Strategies for Local Bond Elections 3

By Julie Strauss



Revolutionizing Education 6

By James Krueger & Angel Hosband



Live from San Jacinto High School 12

By Steve Wilkerson & Jeffrey Lenox



Designing Safer and More Secure Schools 14

By Sherry Sajadpour



Meet HMC's PreK-12 Practice Leader Brian Meyers 16

By Kathleen Stanton

ENR CA's Design Firm of the Year	19
Project Spotlight	20
Designing Futures Foundation	22
Events	23
Rankings	24

Strategies for Local Bond Elections

*The 2024 State School Bond
Will Drive a Wave of Local Measures*



By Julie
Strauss

ALEP



Julie is the director of HMC's School Advisors and has 15 years of experience assisting PreK-12 districts throughout California to maximize and secure state funding. She is active in the CASH organization, having served on the Legislative Advisory Committee, completed the CASH Leadership Academy, and most recently received her ALEP designation with A4LE.

PHOTO: In Sacramento, AB 247 is currently making its way through the legislative process.

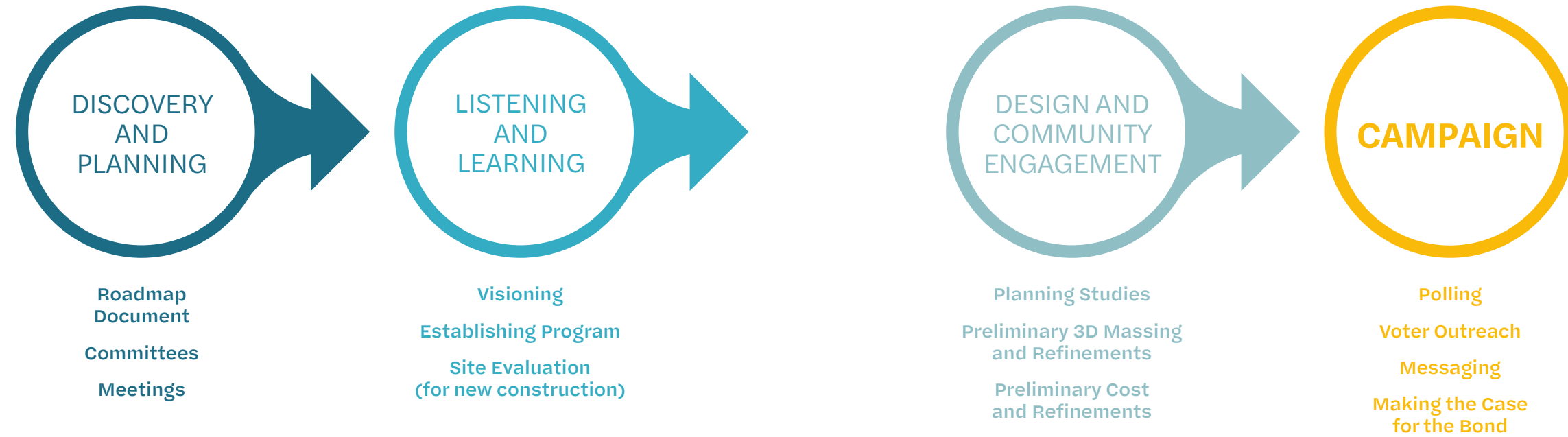
This summer, the Public Education Bond Act (AB 247) has cleared two key California Senate committees with strong support, making it highly likely it will appear on the statewide ballot in the fall of 2024. The estimated \$14 billion bond will fund a wide range of critical facilities needs across the state, including transitional kindergarten (TK) and career technical education (CTE), an increasingly popular type of programming.

School district officials and facility directors have been tracking the state bond for months because it could set in motion a large number of coinciding local bonds.

PLANNING AND COST CHALLENGES

The more you understand the bond process the more you appreciate the difficult work district leaders are engaged in. Calculating the size of bonds is an exercise in trying to understand and predict the future.

Consultants and developers help districts determine the assessed valuation that may be captured as well as the number of housing starts and the District's generation rate.



In the run-up, timing is critical — a ballot measure must be announced 89 days before election day.

With average cost-per-square-foot going from \$400-500 just a few years ago to now upwards of \$700-1,000, escalation is a real challenge for planners. Consultant Bill Savidge is a licensed architect with 25 years of school facilities experience, including several district leadership positions and an executive role at the State Allocation Board. Since 2018, he has helped Davis Joint Unified School District implement its successful \$150 million Measure M bond. That bond funded several recent HMC-designed projects—CTE spaces and multi-purpose rooms on four campuses. “Measure M was based on the master plan. We used preliminary construction estimates with contingency line items based on the mid-point of construction cost, assuming a 5.5 percent escalation.

“We also set aside a 5 percent program reserve of the total and included an additional soft-cost contingency. Through these set-asides, we were able to get to realistic budgets and, so far, we have returned a significant contingency to the district. Our success relied on the lease-leaseback delivery method to partner with a builder early in the process so we could be proactive on cost.”

STRATEGIES FOR BOND CAMPAIGN SUCCESS

A needs assessment is where the whole process starts, engaging an architect and engineers to review district facilities and develop a master plan that outlines needs and priorities. This information will be used not only to determine the size of the bond but to help inform voters. Additionally, it is important to understand your district’s state matching eligibility. For new construction, this formula involves enrollment and growth. Modernization eligibility is based on the age of permanent and modular buildings.

In the run-up to an election, timing is critical. A political campaign consultant will often be hired to poll potential voters to determine viability and bond size. They will run the outreach and communication efforts, making the case to the voters and determining areas of the district where outreach is most needed. In voter communication you have to make the case that a district is getting academic results—voters are more likely to give money if they know it will be well spent toward results. A ballot measure must be announced no later than 89 days before election day. A financial consultant helps structure the bond and navigates the regulations around how and when you can draw against bond proceeds.

A MEASURE FOR A NEW HIGH SCHOOL IN SAN BENITO USD HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

The county of San Benito and city of Hollister in particular, with its proximity to the Silicon Valley, is experiencing the type of growth that will soon require a second high school. HMC Principal Architect Sherry Sajadpour is assisting the San Benito HSD in visioning and master planning ahead of a likely bond measure in the fall of 2024. She explains the approach “begins by creating a customized plan, a roadmap that actively involves the community throughout the process, this ensures that their perspectives and concerns are considered at every stage, resulting in a stronger sense of ownership and commitment to the vision, leading to a more successful master plan which is reflective of their communities’ unique needs and aspirations.

Our approach involves collaborating with various stakeholder groups actively listening, learning, and gathering local knowledge and data. Subsequently, we will utilize this information to develop design concepts and budgets. As we progress towards the 2024 bond, the designs and costs will be refined, and priorities will be established. This comprehensive journey spans at least 18 months, followed by the bond approval process, design, and construction phases, culminating in the opening of a new high school in the fall of 2028.”

The project in Hollister is just one example of the tremendous amount of time and careful consideration that happens in advance of a bond measure. And that is as it should be, as these elections are a crucial part of delivering the educational mission of California’s public schools. ●

Revolutionizing Education



DEL ORO HIGH SCHOOL

CAMPUS CENTER

**Del Oro High School Redefines
Learning in Kern County**

PHOTO: Students collaborate and study in the school's library and innovation space.

By James Krueger
AIA, NCARB
& Angel Hosband
Assoc., AIA



As HMC's director of design, **James** oversees design and leads strategies to improve the impact of HMC's work. **Krueger's** creative approach emphasizes the firm's purpose of "design for good" to support clients with high-performance solutions that aim to have a positive impact.

With nearly three decades of architectural experience in the planning, design, and construction of education projects, **Angel** oversees school projects with a unique ability to guide teams in translating client priorities, expectations, and requirements into functional, efficient, and buildable design solutions.



PHOTOS BY LAWRENCE ANDERSON

In a display of innovation and dedication, Kern High School District (KHSD) is reshaping the future of education with the recent completion and opening of its new Del Oro High School project. Collaborating with HMC Architects, the district has created a cutting-edge high school experience like no other. This visionary endeavor, which began with a series of immersive design workshops, witnessed the tireless efforts of a committed design team, working day and night to breathe life into a revolutionary concept in record time. The team translated the district's goals into detailed schematics, laying the foundation for a groundbreaking institution that promises to redefine the educational landscape in Kern County.

While this concept was entirely novel for KHSD, its model draws inspiration from a junior college. The new high school is organized similarly and has no bell system allowing students to navigate their educational journey with a newfound sense of autonomy and self-direction. Emulating the college experience, students can rotate between classes, exposing them to diverse subjects and fostering a holistic approach to learning. By seamlessly blending a college-preparatory curriculum with dual enrollment and Career Technical Education (CTE) offerings, the school aims to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and versatility required for success in the rapidly evolving twenty-first-century landscape.

This groundbreaking endeavor was realized through the community's unwavering support, as it was funded by the visionary bond Measure K. As part of its commitment to sustainability, the new high school is incorporating a leading-edge solar farm, propelling the project toward achieving net-zero energy consumption. Notably, this achievement will mark the first high school in Kern County to reach such an ambitious milestone, setting a shining example for educational institutions nationwide.

Beyond the realm of academia and sustainability, the challenges faced by this community are many. The district grapples with numerous gangs within its vicinity, creating an unstable environment for vulnerable students. To address this pressing issue, the new high school serves as a beacon of inspiration and hope, instilling within its students a profound belief in their ability to overcome adversity and achieve their dreams. The campus center building sits at the heart of the site design and houses the library and the cafeteria, where students are offered three meals daily. In some cases, these are the only meals they receive. By providing these at-risk youth with sustenance, and a safe space to do homework and share ideas, this campus ensures that students can focus on their education in an environment free from fear and intimidation.

PHOTO: STEM Lab with versatile furniture, adaptable walls, indoor-outdoor access via glass roll-up door, and exposed high ceilings showcasing construction.



"When I got the plans for this school and viewed it through the eyes of someone who thought they knew what education was all about, I quickly realized this place was different. The whole design of the facility was meant to inspire learning."

-Gail Bentley
principal
Del Oro High School

A QUILTED LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING

One of the most remarkable aspects of this project lies in its unique context. Nestled amidst farmland, the site presented an unconventional canvas for design. Surrounded by a veil of fog created by the dust from agricultural activities, the local mountains, which would typically provide a picturesque backdrop, remained obscured. HMC's design team, undeterred by the lack of traditional contextual cues, ventured to reimagine the notion of context from an aerial perspective.

The design of the new campus seamlessly weaves together the rich tapestry of educational subjects, much like the patchwork of farms visible from a bird's-eye view. Each subject, akin to an individual farm, possesses its unique value. However, when combined, they create something extraordinary. This concept of a quilted landscape is brought to life through the blending and site planning of architecture at varying scales, aligning with the specific needs of the learning environment. Inspired by mid-century modernism, the design employs light, texture, color, and scale to celebrate its presence and sense of place within the school campus and the surrounding community. From the moment the doors opened, the new campus has become a catalyst for positive change, igniting a wave of energy among students, staff, and the broader district.

A BEACON OF ENERGY AND INSPIRATION

Under the visionary leadership of Principal Gail Bentley, the new campus has created an atmosphere brimming with vitality. The design has become a source of inspiration, radiating its energy throughout the district and the community. Teachers have embraced this renewed spirit, exploring innovative ways to inspire their students and nurture their talents. Students have undergone a remarkable transformation, embracing diversity and fostering a culture of collaboration and support. Instead of competing, they now join hands to uplift one another. The impact of this positive environment has extended beyond the school gates, with parents becoming more involved in their children's education, forging a stronger connection between home and school. Such is the allure of the new campus that teachers from other schools are now eager to be part of this extraordinary journey.

Scan the QR code to unlock an inspiring short film showcasing how Del Oro is igniting a passion for learning.



REACHING OUT TO THE COMMUNITY

The new campus goes above and beyond its educational mandate, extending a helping hand to those in need within the community. Principal Bentley shared a heartwarming story of a homeless mother and her high school daughter, living blocks away from the school in a tent. The campus security team ensures the student's access to education by picking her up daily, providing her with necessary facilities, and even breakfast from the cafeteria. To support families facing hardships, the campus established the "Sun Pantry," a community donation room brimming with food and clothes distributed to families in the neighborhood. This compassionate outreach has become a shining example of the positive impact schools can have on the lives of their students and the broader community.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND STATISTICAL TRIUMPHS

Beyond the remarkable atmosphere and community engagement, the new campus has also yielded outstanding academic achievements. Principal Bentley shared a startling statistic that underscores the transformative power of this educational environment. In her previous high school, the failure rate for each grade stood at 12 percent. In contrast, the first year at the new campus saw this figure reduced to seven percent.

The number of students achieving a perfect 4.0 GPA experienced an exponential surge, skyrocketing from a mere seven at her previous school to an astonishing 63 at the new campus. These achievements are a testament to the nurturing environment provided by the new campus, where students can flourish academically and reach their full potential.

CAMPUS SPACES AND NEXTGEN LEARNING

The new campus encompasses 200,000 SF of innovative student instruction spaces and services, supporting the growth and development of 2,500 students. Every aspect of student life has been thoughtfully considered, from administration and counseling to food service, performing arts, and athletic programs. The campus center building is a vibrant hub, housing the library and cafeteria while facilitating community engagement. The performing arts center, with its 600-seat theater, sits proudly at the public-facing corner, serving as a beacon of light, engaging the public to participate in captivating performances and events. The shared athletics complex offers modern facilities, including a three-court gym, locker rooms, sports fields, and a future-planned aquatic center.

As a testament to sustainability and environmental consciousness, a cluster of trees at the center of the quad has been meticulously curated to represent Del Oro High School's commitment to nurturing academic growth. These well-designed spaces foster collaboration, creativity, and student pride.

NEXTGEN FLEXIBLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

At the core of the new campus's design philosophy lies the concept of NextGen learning environments. The goal was to create fluid learning spaces that adapt to different educational delivery methods, group sizes, and technology integration. Flexible interior and exterior spaces provide opportunities for collaboration and accommodate diverse learning styles and programs. Maker spaces and collaboration areas are incubators for creativity and innovation, empowering students to think critically and problem-solve. The use of glass walls in the flexible interior space not only incites curiosity in passing students but also promotes an open and transparent learning environment that fosters a sense of interconnectedness and collaboration within the school community.



PHOTO BY LAWRENCE ANDERSON

IMMERSIVE DESIGN PROCESS AND COST EFFICIENCY

The success of the new campus project can be attributed to an immersive design process prioritizing collaboration and transparency. Through active involvement and immediate feedback implementation, trust between the district and HMC's design team deepened. This collaborative approach fostered a quicker design process while building consensus among stakeholders. The project was delivered on time and within a shoestring budget (less than \$500 per SF), demonstrating HMC's commitment to cost-efficient solutions without compromising quality.

As the vision for this groundbreaking high school thrives, KHSD stands at the precipice of a transformative era in education. Through an unparalleled dedication to innovation, sustainability, and the well-being of its students, this new facility promises to be a catalyst for change, empowering a generation of learners to rise above their circumstances and seize their full potential. The journey has just begun, and as the foundations of this revolutionary school are laid, a beacon of inspiration awaits, ready to illuminate the path toward a brighter future for the district and community. ●

“Going back to this campus after it opened was an amazing experience. We spent a lot of time working with district leadership, stakeholders, and students to tailor this campus to their specific needs. To see it in action and to hear the success stories makes the whole team feel like we made a huge difference.”

-James Krueger
director of design
HMC Architects

Live from San Jacinto High School

New cutting edge CTE studio facility supports student-run media and broadcasts to the school and neighboring community

By **Steve Wilkerson**

AIA

& **Jeffrey Lenox**

NCARB



Steve leads master planning, new construction, modernizations, and remodels for education facilities, with specialized expertise in the pressing design issues facing districts and campuses. He is an excellent communicator with the ability to build consensus with diverse groups.

Jeffrey's design approach for PreK-12 projects is driven by innovation, safety, sustainability, and fostering outdoor connections. He strives to craft conducive learning spaces that empower students and staff, ultimately unlocking students' academic potential.

Located in vibrant San Jacinto, California, San Jacinto High School (SJHS) has prepared students for successful futures since 1910. San Jacinto Unified School District (SJUSD) aims to prepare all students to be “college and career ready,” and in 2017, a Career Technical Education (CTE) Incentive Grant gave them the opportunity to enhance their CTE programs in culinary arts, welding, woodshop, and arts, media, and entertainment. Collaborating with HMC Architects, the district and SJHS transformed the high school’s arts, media, and entertainment pathway space into a modern and professional studio to inspire and empower students and foster their career aspirations.

In the spring of 2021, students in the arts, media, and entertainment pathway developed the school’s Tiger Media Network. Run by students, the network runs live streams of school events, manages a website and social media channels, and broadcasts a news program to share news and information with the school and the neighboring community. Since inception, they’ve done so in an earnest but limited space.

The team worked in two disconnected classrooms, and a makeshift studio set in a storage area lacked essential acoustics and production control rooms, hindering students’ ability to work together efficiently. HMC and SJHS sought to redefine their environment and provide students with cutting-edge facilities fit for future broadcasters.

The collaboration between the school and HMC began with the school’s initial sketch, which served as the foundation for the design’s vision. We shifted the center dividing wall between the previously disconnected classrooms and created an access point for better collaboration and connection. These two spaces serve as visual and audio control rooms, looking out onto a large new studio space. We worked closely with TV Set Designs in North Carolina to create a professional, well-equipped studio with cameras, a news desk, and space to do weather reports. By repurposing an existing space and using TV Set Design’s modular systems, we successfully created a professional-grade environment that facilitates immersive learning and equips students for future careers; for \$800,000. By thinking outside the box, the redesigned facilities provide students with professional technology and production equipment, ample collaboration spaces, and a professional environment that mirrors real-world industry standards.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SJUSD



PHOTO: Students utilize professional technology and production equipment, ample collaboration spaces, and a professional environment that mirrors real-world industry standards.

“The program’s advisor is really passionate about helping students learn about this industry. And he was able to make some incredible things happen given his previous space. But this new space has allowed both him and his students to grow.”

-Jeffrey Lenox

The new studio at SJHS has revolutionized the learning experience for students and staff. Once housed in a small workroom, the program now offers students an authentic environment to develop their skills and provides opportunities for real-world experience and the development of industry connections, providing them with the confidence to further their skills and careers after high school.

By investing in this program, the district and the high school have demonstrated a commitment to empowering students and have successfully transformed SJHS into a hub for innovation and excellence, positively impacting the community and its future generations.

The new studio was recently profiled on Fox 11 Los Angeles; [click here](#) to learn more about the program and hear how students use the new facilities to develop their careers. ●

Designing Safer and More Secure Schools

A Guide for Educational Facility Planning

By Sherry Sajadpour

AIA, ALEP



Sherry is an experienced senior PreK-12 architect, planner, and mentor who brings over 20 years of educational design expertise and unique skillsets. As an accredited learning environment planner (ALEP), Sherry is committed to presenting design challenges with clear explanations. Her genuine passion lies in making a positive impact in the lives of students and educators, aiming to create inspiring spaces that cater to their needs.

As the back-to-school season approaches, ensuring the safety and security of students and staff is a top priority for school districts nationwide. The unfortunate rise in school-related incidents serves as a stark reminder of the critical importance of meticulous planning and design of educational facilities. At HMC Architects, we are optimistic about the difference we can make with our clients to reinforce our momentum toward safe, resilient learning environments that enhance student success, wellness, and community. While there is no ‘one size fits all’ approach, we worked with trusted advisors and security solutions experts Protective Technologies to develop some best practices from which all PreK-12 schools can learn.

SCHOOL DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Addressing this complex issue requires engaging in deep conversations with the stakeholders to define appropriate strategies tailored to the specific needs of each community. The first essential step is to actively listen and learn, enabling us to consider suitable safety measures that create a secure environment for students, teachers, and staff. One critical aspect of this process is to include our community first responders in the steering and stakeholder committees. At HMC, we have achieved significant success by organizing community workshops with the County Sheriff’s office, local police, and fire officials. Their active involvement in leading these conversations helps establish essential ground rules for designing safe and secure facilities.

A thoughtful approach to school design can significantly enhance safety and security. Our philosophy embraces the Curb to Core approach, a layered security strategy that maximizes protection by addressing concerns from the outer perimeters, such as the street or curb, and moving inward towards the buildings and classrooms. This approach involves a thorough examination of the three layers of defense required to effectively delay and mitigate potential threats. A few key considerations include:

- 1. Access Control Points:** Limiting (ideally one) and securing access points such as entrances and exits to deter unauthorized entry and maintain a controlled environment within the school. Optimal strategies usually involve natural control, utilizing walkways, fences, lighting, signage, and landscape to clearly guide and control access to and from the proper entrances and restricts access to improper entrances and unwanted activity.
- 2. Surveillance:** or the idea of “see and be seen” to inhibit acts of vandalism. Designing buildings and landscapes to maximize visibility especially at administrative entry points, can enable staff to monitor activities effectively, enhancing overall safety.
- 3. Zoning Security:** As we extend into the interior of the school campus allowing zones of the school to be quickly and independently shuttered while providing spaces for students to seek refuge. Systems such as automatic door locking, and mass notification are just some of the best practices. Regular maintenance ensures that safety features and systems remain effective and reliable.



SAFETY, SECURITY, AND AESTHETICS

While prioritizing safety, it’s important not to compromise the learning environment’s aesthetics. We follow and incorporate into our designs CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles. Balancing passive protection with a welcoming atmosphere allows students to focus on education without feeling like they are in a prison.

Some beautifying and practical measures that we consider in perimeter design include:

- 1. Incorporating decorative site features with heavy-duty construction materials,** such as concrete creating active barriers, and enhancing security without sacrificing aesthetics.
- 2. Integrating security features into public art,** such as murals, sculptures, and metalwork, meets security requirements while maintaining a non-threatening appearance. Involving the community in the design process through media surveys, community ideas, art contests, and group art projects fosters a sense of ownership and pride in the school’s appearance.

Creating safer and more secure schools demands a comprehensive approach. In addition to the points mentioned earlier, it’s essential to recognize that good design can significantly impact mental health and well-being, ultimately reducing threat risks. Incorporating specific design features, such as daylighting and ventilation, fostering tranquil spaces for individual mindfulness, and developing areas that cater to diverse learning styles and promote interpersonal interactions, can play a crucial role.

Especially in the post-pandemic world, there is a heightened focus on wellness. By investing in meticulous planning and implementing appropriate measures, we have the opportunity to establish educational environments where students can thrive without compromising their safety and overall well-being.

As we look ahead to the upcoming school year, let us remember that the collective efforts of educators, administrators, security professionals, and the community are essential in creating educational spaces where every student can learn and grow with peace of mind. ●

“We follow and incorporate into our designs CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles. Balancing passive protection with a welcoming atmosphere allows students to focus on education without feeling like they are in a prison.”

-Sherry Sajadpour

Q+A

Meet HMC's PreK-12 Practice Leader Brian Meyers

Brian Meyers, LEED AP BD+C, leads the HMC PreK-12 practice, one of California's largest and most successful. He has spent 20 years specializing in PreK-12 planning and design, partnering with clients across the state to deliver future-focused learning environments and facilities. His educational planning style focuses on consensus building, facilitating community partnerships, and leading stakeholders toward successful project outcomes on time and within budget. Brian's leadership is instrumental in developing educational specifications, programming, planning, and award-winning architectural design.

Q Describe your educational background and how you got into architecture?

A Like many people in our industry, I grew up with a passion for building things and for playing with Legos, so I guess it started there. I was fortunate enough to get into the architecture program at Penn State University and after graduation started my career at a large national firm in the Midwest. I could have landed in any one of a variety of studios, but I happened to land in a studio specializing in education. My career has been engaged and specialized in educational design from the beginning, nearly 30 years ago.

I have always been a curious person and love talking to people, learning and listening. In addition to the technical rigors of architecture, we are all people working together in various groups to deliver great projects.

I was always drawn to the people side of the business. I joined HMC in 2007, starting in a senior project management role. I worked my way up to principal in 2015 and then practice leader in 2019.

Q Describe your current role at HMC and the hats you wear as PreK-12 Practice Leader?

A I view my role as trying to find ways to support our clients throughout each of the six studios: Sacramento, San Francisco, San Jose, Los Angeles, Ontario, and San Diego, each of which has significant books of work in the PreK-12 practice. I work closely with the principals and lead the strategic direction of the practice to find opportunities to differentiate ourselves and our services.

Being one of the largest PreK-12 design firms in the state allows us to invest a little differently and provide services that other firms can't, like school advisors (funding and entitlement specialty) and DSA closeout specialists. These differentiating factors will guide us as we move forward. We view ourselves as strategic partners with our clients. So, to that end, I provide leadership and guidance to our teams to help everybody become better advisors to our clients through the complex delivery of PreK-12 educational facilities through the state school building program.

I also still enjoy the work of architecture and design. I continue to work with clients, administrators, teachers and communities throughout the design and construction process to deliver great projects.

I provide leadership and guidance to our teams to help everybody become better advisors to our clients through the complex delivery of PreK-12 educational facilities.



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

A A shining star in my portfolio is one of the smallest ones: the John Morse Therapeutic Center (JMTC) Modernization for Sacramento City Unified in 2014. This was a modest \$2.5 million modernization of an existing K-8 school which supports students diagnosed with severe emotional disturbances. The modernization was to address student safety and security and improve learning outcomes with an intensive program using small class sizes, individual behavioral support plans, and focused collaboration with community service providers to address students' individual learning and emotional needs. This project is why I believe design matters. Teachers and administrators would spend more time dealing with escalating behaviors, including writing police reports for kids who would "escape" the campus throughout the day – sadly a common occurrence.

We were tasked with designing a facility that could work educationally, programmatically, and physically to keep the kids on campus. We converted an old dining commons into a relaxation and reset room where kids could go to cool off, to get out of the environment that they're in. This space was essential to reduce anxiety and lessen the impacts of other students' escalating behaviors.

The highlight of the project is the community garden, created to support the therapeutic learning environment. When the garden first opened, students could only gain access to it when they demonstrated exemplary behaviors, a true motivation for the students at JMTC. That policy has changed since the opening and now the garden is used for more therapeutic purposes in addition to classroom projects. According to Principal Susan Higgins, "Students are allowed to work in the garden or take a 'sensory diet' break to get their wiggles out. A ten-minute break often provides an hour of good work."

The story of the success at Morse was not the fact that we kept kids confined but that the kids didn't want to leave. It was because of the programmatic and design changes, because of the spaces we created to support the whole child that made a difference and potentially changed the trajectory of students for years to come.

Q What are your passions outside of architecture?

A I have a supportive family, and my wife Amanda is a huge reason I can do what I do—her support and our relationship are essential for me to succeed in my work. We love to golf and my whole family is obsessed with sports, primarily the Sacramento Kings and the Kansas City Chiefs.

My son, Chris, plays college soccer on one of the top-ranked teams in the country, and I love to watch him play. That's a passion of mine. I am a family-driven person. I believe in balancing my work in my life, I love spending time with my kids, helping them, and watching them grow.

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

A The pandemic has changed the landscape of everything we do, pushing us into a realm of uncertainty. We've seen it hit us in our projects with supply chain issues and delays and a myriad of other building industry challenges that have an effect on the bottom line and the cost of projects. Managing that has been especially difficult.

But I think the bigger societal issues are the impact of the pandemic on the social and emotional well-being of our kids and trying to serve them after they've lost some really big years. My daughter Kalia missed out on her entire middle school years. What is the impact of that on these tremendous growing years? Kids were going through kindergarten online—the first school experience for many of our children was in front of a computer screen.

How is this going to ripple through the landscape? There are tremendous stresses and challenges on the facility and educational sides as teachers try to find ways to support kids.

As architects and planners, we are leaning into this and trying to understand the impacts and how we can support the whole child through the design of spaces. Mental and physical wellness are at the forefront and the real challenge facing us as we move into the future.

And then, from a structural standpoint, adding a grade level to the state of California with the transitional kindergarten mandate, will tax our clients significantly. We are helping them to solve that and find additional capacity.

There's certainly a lot on the plates of our clients but having creative partners like HMC to help guide and support them through some of these challenges is crucial. I'm up for the challenges, and so is HMC! ●



HMC Architects Named 2023 Design Firm of the Year by ENR California

We are thrilled to announce that *Engineering News-Record (ENR) California* has awarded HMC Architects the prestigious Design Firm of the Year title for 2023. This remarkable recognition is a testament to our employees' hard work and dedication and our unwavering commitment to our Design for Good purpose.

We want to extend our sincerest gratitude to all our school district clients for trusting us. Through collaboration and partnership with all of you, we have been able to deliver projects that make a meaningful difference in the lives of students, teachers, and the community at large. We invite you to read the full story on ENR's website for more details on this achievement. ●



MANTECA HIGH SCHOOL / MANTECA, CA

A Campus Reimagined

BY KATHLEEN STANTON

Established in 1920, Manteca High School in Manteca, California, supports students in becoming productive citizens in a rapidly changing global society. The new \$30 million, 42,750 SF modernization project honors the school's 100-year history while bringing it into the current age to provide students with a safe environment to explore and thrive. The comprehensive transformation includes a new 27,000 SF gym and pool, 13,250 SF classroom building, and 2,500 SF of renovation and modernizations that balance a modern, timeless look to campus with an established historical identity.

This project was the third increment of a plan to reconfigure the south end of the Manteca HS campus. Though the reconfiguration took many forms during design and included much-needed facilities upgrades, the main goal was always to unite the two halves of campus, once divided by a public road, in the interest of student safety and supervision. We closed off the road and designed a quad to unite the two halves of the campus.

This made the campus safer with more usable space for students. We opened the area between the gym and classrooms to create a new student drop off and entry area. With 10 new classrooms and room for 350 students, the new classroom building added capacity to the campus and is a shining example of a flexible teaching environment, a critical component of MUSD's educational specifications. The new gym and pool replaced an aging, smaller facility to give the campus a more collegiate feel. The gym, with room for 1600 spectators, lets fans feel part of the action and allows the district to host tournaments and meets on the campus.

Taking inspiration from the existing campus materiality, the design team chose materials that tied into the existing conditions without replicating them. Dark grey CMU blocks with a high concentration of exposed red/orange aggregate visually link to the existing brick of the surrounding buildings.

Not wanting to exclude brick in our design fully, we used it within site elements such as the pool wall and fencing. A Basalite concrete color palette gives textural interest and a high level of finish. The material is perceived differently at different distances— from far away, it appears one-dimensional, but you see the texture and the multitude of aggregate colors at closer distances. The district wanted to add a defining feature to the buildings to update the campus identity, foster campus pride, and be applied to future campus projects. Our solution was a series of custom perforated metal screens on and around the classroom building and the gym, which not only serve the campus aesthetically but also shade and screen the building, hiding rooftop HVAC units and back-of-house operations.

While the panels on the classroom building are perforated, the screens elsewhere on site were used as a branding opportunity, proudly displaying "Home of the Buffaloes" on over 115 feet of the metal panel. The same panel language was used within the gym's sports storage area. This feature will continue in the next phase of the campus, taking it to new heights on two two-story classroom buildings.

project spotlight



PHOTOS BY DAVID FENNEMA

"The Buffalo community could not be happier with the results of Phase One of the modernization on campus. The classrooms are not only aesthetically gorgeous, but they are functionally outstanding. The comments from our community have been incredibly positive, and we are excited to see what is coming in the future to Manteca High."

-The Manteca High Administrative Team



Arquitina Receives HMC Designing Futures Foundation Grant

Helping Empower Latinas in the Architecture Profession

By **Adrienne Luce**



*As the vice president of diversity, inclusion, and social impact and executive director of HMC's Designing Futures Foundation, **Adrienne** leads HMC's justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion council and oversees its charitable giving and community engagement initiatives. Adrienne leverages HMC's resources to strengthen our communities and build a better world.*

HMC's Designing Futures Foundation (DFF) recently awarded a grant to Arquitina, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting Latinas in architecture. The grant will help foster diversity and equity within the architecture profession. The award coincided with Women's History Month in March. Arquitina's mission is to provide professional leadership and licensure initiatives for Latinas pursuing careers in architecture. The organization was established in response to the significant underrepresentation of Latinas in Architecture Engineering Construction (AEC) fields—less than 1 percent of licensed architects in the U.S. are Latina. In comparison, women make up 20 percent of architects nationwide.

With a clear mission to surpass the 1 percent benchmark and create equitable and inclusive opportunities for Latinas in architecture, Arquitina's dedication and strong programming have earned the continuing support of DFF. In 2022, HMC sponsored an event hosted by Arquitina at the AIA Women's Leadership Summit, supporting HMC's commitment to diversifying the AEC industry and expanding opportunities for women, minorities, and underserved students.

HMC established the DFF in 2009 as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, solidifying our commitment to give back to our communities. Since its inception, the DFF has invested over \$1.6 million in transformative nonprofits that serve California communities and beyond, focusing on architecture, STEM / STEAM education, sustainability, and health and human services. By supporting organizations like Arquitina, the DFF contributes to building a better world.

The grant awarded to Arquitina will empower the organization to amplify its efforts in advocating for Latinas in architecture by providing professional leadership development, mentorship programs, and licensure support. The DFF's recognition of Arquitina's impactful work underscores the significance of empowering underrepresented groups in architecture. Through collaborative efforts and continued support from organizations like HMC, the future of architecture promises to be more diverse, equitable, and inclusive. ●

For more information or to support Arquitina, please visit their website.

DAVIS AND NICHOLAS PHOTOS BY JUSTIN PANSON;
RCOE PHOTO BY LAWRENCE ANDERSON



Davis Senior High School Celebrates New CTE Pathways

Davis Joint Unified School District (DJUSD) and Davis Senior High School (DSHS) celebrated the completion of its Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways program enhancements. The HMC design team, General Contractor Roebbelen, DJUSD Superintendent Matt Best, Executive Director of Capital Operations David Burke, Davis Sr. High School Principal Bryce Geigle, Ed.D., CTE students, and faculty gathered to commemorate the occasion and cut the ribbon on the school's engineering/robotics, agriculture, and transportation facilities. DJUSD received \$6.2 million in facility grants from the State of California to improve and expand these three CTE pathways at DSHS and increase student engagement and college/career preparedness. The school's robotics team, the Citrus Circuits 1678, began in 2004 and worked out of a math classroom and shipping container at a nearby school. The Engineering/Robotics Pathway building includes 7,800 SF of additional instructional and new outdoor learning spaces. The Transportation Pathway facility includes an additional vehicle repair bay specific to electric vehicles, a new canopy shade structure in front of vehicle bays, and an additional restroom. The Agriculture Pathway space includes a shade structure and improvements to existing shops, a barn, a greenhouse, and an animal care area.



Nicholas Elementary Breaks Ground in South Sacramento

Sacramento City Unified School District's Nicholas Elementary School in California had a big summer with a community meeting and groundbreaking ceremony for the rebuild of the early-1960s campus. The new 54,784 SF school, designed by HMC Architects, will have a village concept with learning neighborhoods, an open library, a multi-purpose room, gathering plazas, a school garden, and a soccer field.

It aims to be a "Community School" serving 650 students and sharing facilities with the local community during non-school hours. The project is part of SCUSD's \$750 million Measure H bond, focusing on equity. The campus will open in August 2025.



Riverside County Office of Education Celebrates New Conference Center

The Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE) celebrated the new Riverside Conference Center (RCC) opening in California, relieving overcrowding and providing 200 additional parking spaces. The 130,000 SF, four-story center features flexible indoor and outdoor spaces, a ground-floor café, and parking levels to maximize building height and mountain views. It anchors the corner of Thirteenth and Chestnut Streets with retail space. The center's main meeting room accommodates 400 occupants, facilitating regional events and leadership training for school districts. In the future, RCOE plans to close Chestnut Street for a more cohesive campus-like environment and community services. ●

Los Angeles

633 W. 5th Street, Third Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90071
213.542.8300

San Diego

8910 University Center Lane
Studio 650
San Diego, CA 92122
619.744.4077

San Jose

333 W. San Carlos Street
Studio 750
San Jose, CA 95110
408.977.9160

Ontario

3546 Concours Street
Ontario, CA 91764
909.989.9979

Sacramento

2101 Capitol Avenue, Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95816
916.368.7990

San Francisco

388 Market Street, Studio 800
San Francisco, CA 94111
415.915.0759

HMC School Advisors

3546 Concours Street
Ontario, CA 91764
909.989.9979



Founded with the purpose of anticipating community needs, HMC aims to create designs that have a positive impact, now and into the future.

We focus primarily on opportunities to have the most direct contribution to communities — through healthcare, education, and civic spaces.

Learn more at hmcarchitects.com



RANKINGS

HMC ranked #10 in Interior Design Magazine's 2023 Sustainability Giants List.



HMC Architects was once again ranked among the top Architecture and Design firms in Engineering-News Record's (ENR) 2023 Top 500 Design Firms list. Companies were ranked according to revenue for design services performed in 2022 with HMC coming in at number 170 (up 38 spots from 2022's ranking of 208).



HMC was named 2023 Top Giant of Design by Interior Design magazine, ranking #46 overall and #10 in education (PreK-12 and higher education combined)

