EDUCATIONAL SPECIFICATIONS
The Planning Process

May, 2013
EDUCATIONAL SPECIFICATIONS

- OUR OPPORTUNITY
- WHAT IS AN ED SPEC?
- WHAT IS IN AN ED SPEC?
- THE PROCESS
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners vision: “In 10 years, all City Schools’ students will learn in buildings that embody 21st-century standards of excellence.”

Give Students the Buildings They Deserve - NOW
THE IAC, MSDE and PSCP Require Educational Specifications for all projects.

The Process must be expedited to insure completion in time for the Year 1 projects to begin.

City Schools has contracted with Grimm & Parker, a national leader in educational concept development, to help us develop standard educational specifications for City Schools.
“An educational specification defines the programmatic, functional, spatial and environmental requirements of the educational facility.” *National School Boards Association*

“Educational specifications serve as the written documentation of the educators’ intent for program delivery and defines the physical parameters of the learning environment, both building and site.” *CEFPI Guide for Educational Facility Planning*

“Educational specifications describe the proposed educational programs, activities, area requirements, and the performance expectations of the proposed capital project.” *IAC Procedures Guide*
WHAT IS AN ED SPEC?

Aligning your values, goals, data and program needs to create a vision for your schools.
WHAT IS IN AN ED SPEC?

- **Educational Philosophy**
  Vision of the school system, educational philosophy, mission statement for the program, expression of values

- **School Data**
  Student population, site information, special provisions, community information, etc.

- **Program Goals**
  Educational goals of each instructional program

- **Specific Program Activities and Relationships**
  Determine and define the functional need of the learning environment

- **General Conditions**
  Internal building functional requirements such as HVAC, technology, windows and daylighting, accessibility, etc.
IAC Requirements (per procedure’s manual):

A. Project Summary
B. Project Background
C. Proposed Educational Programs and Services
D. General Project Design Criteria
E. Existing Site Conditions
F. Proposed Site Requirements
G. Existing Building Systems Conditions
H. Proposed Building Systems Requirements
I. General School Design Criteria
J. Individual Space Descriptions
K. Summary of Spatial Requirements (#’s)

WHAT IS IN AN ED SPEC?

- Educational Philosophy
- School Data
- Program Goals
- Specific Program Activities and Relationships
- General Conditions
What else might be included?

- Sustainable guidelines
- Outdoor learning requirements
- Security guidelines
- Energy use guidelines
- Existing building assessment
- Community use guidelines
- Budget analysis
- Design process
How is our world changing in ways that impact skill demands from our students?

**Automation** -
workplaces demand higher levels of expertise and greater communication skills as automation takes over jobs that require routine skills.

**Globalization** –
technology is shrinking our work and creating greater competition

**Changing work environments** –
greater individual responsibility and horizontal collaboration has replaced hierarchy

**Demographic changes** –
changing cultures and the requirement to address diverse needs
“Breaking Down the [classroom] Box”
- Extended learning areas for small groups
- Transparency between learning spaces

**Project Based Learning Strives to**
- Increase authenticity of education by real applied lessons
- Stimulate enthusiasm via interdisciplinary activities

**Use Technology intuitively to permeate learning**
- Trend away from teaching technology as an end
- Instant access to credible information fulfills and feeds curiosity

**Brain Research**
- Reveals the learning styles supporting Multiple Intelligences
- Exposes limitations of “Sage on the Stage” lectures

**Make school fun and inviting**

**Smaller is better**
What characteristics do our school facilities need to meet these changing demands?

**Flexible** -

at different scales and timescales. Allowing for variation in use, occupancy and layout.

**Inspiring** –

to those working, learning and visiting, and embodying organizational aims.

**Supportive** –

of effective teaching and learning, accommodating a wide range of experiences and activities.

**Involving** –

users and the wider community and linking with other learning places.
Include a variety of learning environments
Diverse Learning Environments

Provide learning environments which foster collaboration
Flexible Learning Spaces

Are designed for learning to take place everywhere
Flexible Learning Spaces

Maximize the opportunity for daylighting
Flexible Learning Spaces

Allow for flexibility and transparency of space
Flexible Learning Spaces

Spaces are large enough to allow multiple arrangements
Flexible Learning Spaces

Include various ways by which spaces can be redefined
Flexible Learning Spaces

Promote comfortable friendly environments
Flexible Learning Spaces

Provide spaces designed for multiple uses
Flexible Learning Spaces

Include a variety of spaces that are both acoustically private and open
Flexible Learning Spaces

Include moveable walls, furniture and display boards
Media rooms include collaboration space and technology options
Technology

Hands on one to one technology
Technology

Public and private work stations with charging capacity
Cyber café and Wi-Fi for all
Technology

Availability of technology outside the classroom
Learning Commons

Open, inviting and flexible common areas
Learning Commons

Variety in the kinds of learning spaces
Learning Commons

Areas exist to promote impromptu socialization.
Learning Commons

Spaces for impromptu collaboration
Flexible Learning Spaces

Include spaces and furniture for small group and individual learning.
Common areas that serve multiple functions
Common Areas

Dining commons serves as a cyber café and performance area.
Passive Supervision

Open and transparent common spaces to support supervision
Outdoor Learning Area

Real life, hands on learning opportunities
Outdoor Learning Area

Roof terraces provide secure outdoor area
Outdoor Learning Area

Outdoor environment blends with the indoor environment
Structured secure outdoor spaces
Outdoor Learning Area

Transparency and connection to the outdoors
THE PLANNING PROCESS

1. Global Visions Process
   Establish guiding principles

2. General Standards
   Principles and requirements for all spaces

3. Individual Academic Areas
   Focus on specific space needs

4. Produce Standard Ed Spec
   Document will be applied to all buildings

This process is repeated for each building type and for each specific school.

COLLABORATION TO PRODUCE CONSISTENT GOALS

GREAT KIDS
GREAT SCHOOLS
THE PLANNING PROCESS

• The standard educational specification process will produce 4 prototype educational specifications (pre-k – 5; pre-k – 8; 6-12; 9-12). Educational specifications for schools with other grade configurations (e.g., pre-k – 1; 6 – 8) will draw from these prototypes. There will be opportunities for community input during the development of the district educational specifications.

• When the school-level design process begins, a educational specification will be developed for each school that is consistent with the overall district educational specifications, but reflect the unique character, vision, and constraints of the school site. There will be opportunities for school community input into the school-level educational specifications and design.
1. What do you feel are the Baltimore City Public School’s greatest opportunities?
   - Where are the school systems current greatest successes?
   - In what does the community have the most pride regarding the current school system?

2. What do you feel are the Baltimore City Public School’s greatest challenges?
   - In what area do the schools struggle most or the problems seem the most insurmountable?
   - What would the community express as the school systems greatest weakness?
3. What are the most important features that a school should have to benefit the communities they serve?

4. What are the most important features that must be included in the school program for making future schools of Baltimore a success for all – students, faculty, staff, parents, and the community?

5. What are the top three things that we should be considering as we program and plan for future schools?
Factors to Think About in the School Design Process

• Good acoustics/Able to hear students and teachers easily
• Flexible, adaptable space
• School temperature is comfortable - not too hot and not too cold
• Excellent, up-to-date technology
• Visual comfort (quality of light and colors)
• High Performance Building Envelope (Well-insulated, well sealed)
• Natural light
• Renewable energy is used
• Air inside the school is clean and fresh
• Heating and cooling system is effective and efficient
• School is safe and secure
• Electric lights are high quality and use little energy
• Energy efficient
• School is placed on its site to provide good light, promote energy efficiency, and have minimum environmental impact
• Materials and products are environmentally friendly
Factors to Think About in the School Design Process

- The costs of items over their entire life are considered, not just the cost of purchase and installation (e.g., maintenance, replacement, etc.)
- Before opening the school, systems (heating, cooling, lighting, etc.) are checked by an experienced, unbiased professional
- Water is used efficiently
- School is a learning tool
- Entire school community has opportunities to shape school design
- Architecture of the building is interesting and inspirational
- Surrounding community is able to use the school building and grounds frequently and extensively
- School building support the school's educational vision
- School building is designed with a focus on how students learn
- School renovation/building helps stimulate economic development
Click [here](#) to share your thoughts on the these questions and inform the development of City Schools’ educational specification.