



2014 EXHIBITION OF SCHOOL PLANNING & ARCHITECTURE



VISTA
EDUCATION
CAMPUS

VISTA EDUCATION CAMPUS
School for Students With Special Needs
Davis School District
Farmington, Utah

VISTA EDUCATION CAMPUS EXTERIOR



VISTA EDUCATION CAMPUS

SITE PLAN

School buses bring most of the students to school. The site is designed to support many school buses individually dropping-off and picking each student up at the main entrance.



The Nature Walk area is designed to provide a safe outdoor learning environment where students can refresh outside, relieve built up energy and tension and enjoy the landscaping and views of the mountainside.



SCHOOL DISTRICT PROGRAMS

The Davis School District had the desire for the Vista Education Campus (VEC) to become the hub of special education for the district. To create this special education center the school district is moving departments that serve the entire district to the new facility. The Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy (OT/PT) departments and the Nursing department are now housed in the new school. There is also a flexible training room that is available for district wide use for special education training and other professional development. Most of the school districts teachers who focus on students with special needs are dispersed in the neighborhood community schools. Bringing the district departments and training area into the new VEC solidifies the school as the heart of the district's special education community, because each of the special education teachers, para-educators, aides, and administrators will come to the school for support and training.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Because the Vista Education Campus (VEC) serves so many students across the school district, it has a non-traditional school community. Generally a school community includes the students, parents, teachers, residents, local businesses and civic resources in a neighborhood or town. The geographic area VEC serves encompasses all of Davis County which includes eight high school communities.

The community includes the same groups as a traditional school, only most residents, local businesses and municipalities tend to focus on their local community high school. This gives the school the unique opportunity to focus most of its attention on the needs of the each student and utilize the support and resources of the entire county.

The Davis School District has a vast special education community. It is comprised of the district's special education director and specialists, district medical and nursing departments, special education teachers, para-educators and aides from each school and, most importantly, the students and their parents.

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING CENTER

SCHOOL COMMUNITY

The new Vista Educational Campus (VEC) is an exceptional facility specifically planned and designed to serve the students of the Davis School District who have special needs. The school environment is a pleasant balance of the intersection between an engaging 21st century learning and careful design features which support students with special needs. The result truly is a barrier-free environment that is active and engaging school that supports each student as they transition to responsible independence.

The school runs four unique programs to serve high school aged students with special needs - STEPS, MAPS, STAR and STRIDE. The building's unique design supports these four individual programs. The spaces are organized to allow each program to function individually while being part of the whole school. Each program has its own dedicated learning community and there are several shared spaces around the town center that are organized to facilitate student exploration.



The colors and materials are carefully coordinated to provide visual stimulation (for those who need it) without over stimulating (for those who are prone to seizure or severe behavioral challenges).

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING CENTER

EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT



The educational environment is a careful intertwining of space and details which support students with special needs and spaces which support 21st century learning engagement. Each learning community supports a specific program and the Town Center is shared by all programs. The learning spaces support the educational goals to help each student transition to responsible independent adults.

The most unique feature in the Vista Educational Campus is the manner the school district desired to serve their students with special needs. It is an active learning environment that supports a variety of learning styles and teaching methodologies. There are spaces for collaboration and group activities, traditional classroom activities, and spaces that support independent learning or one-on-one instruction. Rather than designing a school that looks like an institutional 1960s elementary school (all examples of special needs schools the district toured or investigated were of this type), the district wanted to elevate the design of their school for students with special needs by using the best current thinking on school design and apply it to meet their needs.

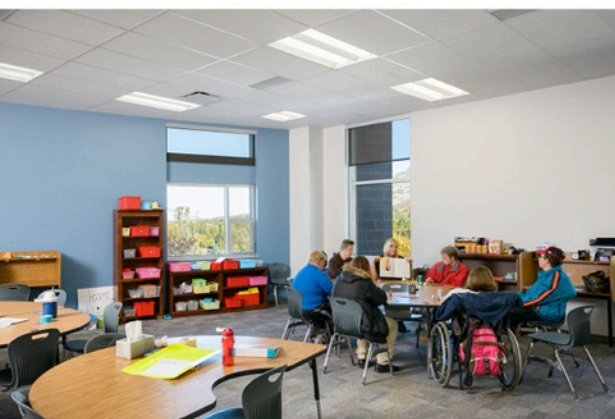
The Collaborative Learning Center supports a variety of learning activities for a variety of group sizes. Niches provide space for one-on-one learning, a break-out room supports small group learning, teacher collaboration and parent meetings (IEP) and the open collaboration area supports group interaction. Each of the classrooms are accessible through the Collaborative Learning Center.



MAPS Community



STRIDE Community



"This place is life changing"

- Student

STAR Collaboration Center

FOUR UNIQUE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The District has developed four different and distinct programs to meet the to various ranges of special needs and characteristics their students have. Each of the four programs need to coexist and connect under one roof in the Vista Education Campus.

The four unique programs include:

- **STEPS** (a post-secondary transition program),
- **MAPS** (supports students who are medically fragile and more cognitively challenged),
- **STAR** (focuses on academic skills, job skills, career training, independent living skills community access, and leisure activities), and
- **STRIDE** (serves students who require more intense supervision for behavior and academic needs).

The four distinct learning zones that revolve around the Town Center. The building's unique design supports these four individual programs. The spaces are organized to allow each program to function individually and they all are connected to become a unified school. Each program has its own dedicated learning community and there are several shared spaces around the Town Center carefully organized to facilitate student exploration.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Because of the unique student body every decision and detail is deliberately conceived to improve the learning environment for students with special needs. The layout of the school is simple and provides clear wayfinding, the corridors are wider than normal so two people in wheelchairs can pass someone walking. Niches are found throughout the school, especially surrounding the MAPS community, to accommodate wheelchairs and apparatus parking. Cabinets and storage areas are designed to provide a place for support materials and not have the clutter which is distracting to many students. The colors and materials are carefully coordinated to provide visual stimulation without over stimulating.

Other Features include:

- Carefully specified lighting
- Unisex restrooms throughout to support students that require assistance
- Standard restrooms throughout to support independent students
- Restroom with changing room and shower near PE
- Restroom and shower in MAPC Community

LEARNING NOOKS FOR INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTION

INDEPENDENT LEARNING

WIDE CORRIDORS WITH APPARATUS NICHES



Wide Corridors with Apparatus Niches

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

TOWN CENTER

Like a small town, shared public spaces are organized around the Town Center. The Cafeteria (restaurant), school store (shopping), media center (library), main office (businesses), PE area (recreation), performance platform (entertainment) and apartment simulator (living) are all accessible from the Town Center. Like neighborhoods, each of the school districts four special needs programs have distinct identities and are located in more private areas with pathways leading directly to the Town Center. This organization empowers each of the learning communities to support the characteristics and learning needs of each student, while being an important part of the whole school.

In the quest to help each student transition to a responsible, independent adult, the function of many spaces is altered to become a learning laboratory to teach students life skills and marketable job skills.

The VEC was specifically designed to Support Learning for Students with Special Needs and Support 21st Century Learning Activities. There are many concepts which can support the students needs while encouraging 21st century learning activities. These concepts include:

- Flexibility
- Collaboration
- Connected Learning Spaces
- Learning Spaces that are Welcoming and Stimulating
- Proper Acoustics and Lighting
- Educational Technology
- Sustainability





"There are fantastic teachers and staff that have always been the most important source for success for our youth! Now this facility gives them the right tools to enhance their teaching."

- Roz Welch, Parent

ASKING QUESTIONS

RETHINKING TRADITIONS

CONSIDERING 21ST CENTURY SPACES

CONSOLIDATION OF SPACES

CONSENSUS WITH 4 PROGRAMS

STAR Collaboration

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process involved the collaboration between two highly expert groups. The first group was the district leadership and facility planning department who has vast experience in providing inviting 21st century learning environments. The second group was the special education community who master the complexities of providing for the educational, medical, emotional and social needs of each individual student. While the two groups came from different backgrounds, they were instantly able to unite around a common goal, "Provide the best learning environment possible to support the educational requirements of students with special needs."

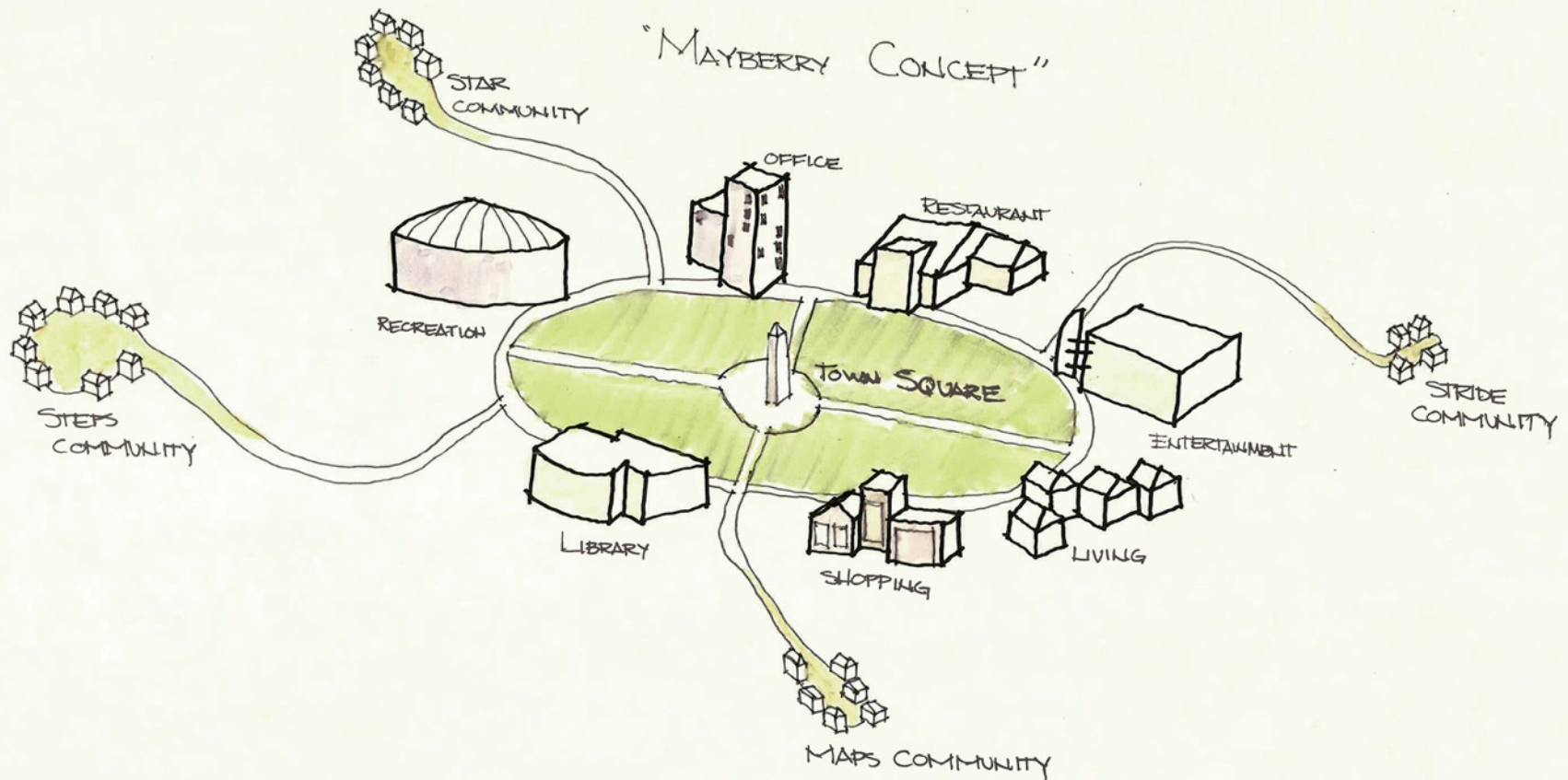
The planning process involved many idea sharing and consensus building workshops, including:

- Vision consensus
- Diving into special education programs
- Digging Deeper Workshops
- Concept development

STAKEHOLDERS

The stakeholders involved in planning came primarily from the high school aged special education community, specifically those involved in the existing Vista School. The Stakeholders included:

- District Director of Special Education
- District Facilities Management and Planning Director
- District Architectural Services Manager
- Vista School Principal
- STAR Director and Educators
- STEPS Director and Educators
- MAPS Director and Educators
- STRIDE Director and Educators
- Vista Administrators
- District Nursing
- Davis Diagnostic Resource Center
 - Parents



PLANNING CONCEPT

One of the design concepts was to support students transitioning to independent lifestyles. Most of the students will end up functioning independently. For many this will mean going to college, for most it will mean thriving in today's high paced society. To support that transition the stakeholders wanted an open, active aesthetic to help students acclimate to an open energetic environment so they will be comfortable independently going to places like a shopping mall or university student union.

It was very important to the stakeholders that the four distinct learning groups have their own sense of community and identity, and feel connected and unified with the whole school. The "Mayberry Concept" was developed around the idea of a comfortable, shared town center or gathering place, with small communities, similar to small town neighborhoods, connected through the town center.

Through the planning process of vision consensus building, diving into programs, digging deeper into what a facility to support students with special needs had to be, and concept development an extensive space list was developed along with the understanding of what each unique program really needed in order to meet the individual needs of each student.

MAIN LEVEL FLOOR PLAN



LOWER LEVEL FLOOR PLAN



Rather than a P.E. space that was just designed to play basketball, volleyball or house assemblies, the team discovered that the P.E. activities were really OT/PT sessions where the students stretched, did yoga, played Wii Fit, walked on a treadmill or used a mobility apparatus. The traditional elementary gymnasium transformed into a P.E. center that was open to the commons, smaller and more engaging for the students.

PROJECT DATA: (CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION)

Submitting Firm: MHTN ARCHITECTS	
Project Role	Educational Planning, Architecture, Interior Design, Landscape
Project Contact	Brian Parker
Title	Associate Principal
Address	420 East South Temple Suite 100
City, State or Province, Country	Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
Phone	O: 801-595-6700 M:801-647-0793
Joint Partner Firm: N.A.	
Project Role	
Project Contact	
Title	
Address	
City, State or Province, Country	
Phone	
Other Firm: N.A.	
Project Role	
Project Contact	
Title	
Address	
City, State or Province, Country	
Phone	
Construction Firm: WADMAN CORPORATION	
Project Role	Construction Manager / General Contractor
Project Contact	Phil Clawson
Title	Project Manager
Address	2920 South 925 West
City, State or Province, Country	Ogden, Utah 84401
Phone	801-621-4185

PROJECT DETAILS

1. Project Name	Vista Education Campus
2. District Name	Davis School District
3. City/State	Farmington, Utah
4. Superintendent	Dr. Bryan Bowles
5. Occupancy Date	July 2013
6. Grades Housed	9th Grade to Age 22
7. Design Capacity (# of students)	250 Students
8. Site Size (acres)	5.6 Acres
9. Gross Area (Sq. Ft.)	71,027 GSF
10. Space Per Pupil (Gross)	284 SF
Design Build (Y/N)?	No
If Yes, Total Costs	
If Yes, Cost Includes	
If No, Site Development Costs	\$1,665,000
If No, Construction Costs	\$9,608,439
If no, FF&E	\$100,000 most FF&E was reused from old facility
If No, Other:	Demolition \$186,000
If No, Total Cost:	\$11,559,439

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

SYSTEMATIC REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING FACILITY

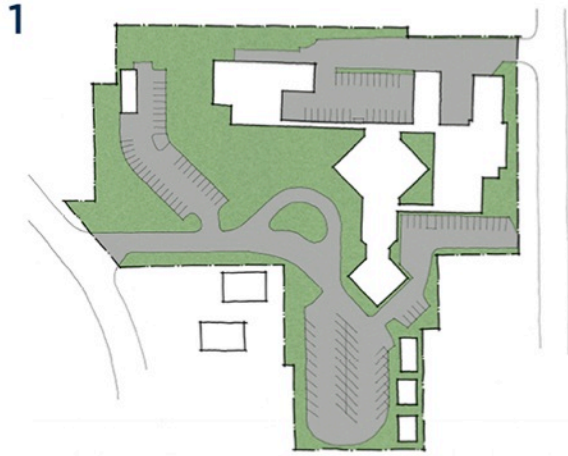
Because the school district mandated that the VEC would replace the old vista school on the same site, a phasing strategy was developed to systematically replace the existing school. The goal of the district and design team was to impact the student routine as little as possible. Because moving a department is inconvenient and can be challenging for students to readjust, each department moved a maximum of two times, the second move was into their final completed space. To reduce student distraction the moving periods were planned to take place during summer breaks.

The phasing strategy was developed to build as much as possible, without demolishing used teaching space. This was accomplished by demolishing an unused portion of the original Vista School and building the two story element in its place first. All of the original building functions were moved into the new first phase and the remainder of the original building was demolished. At that point the new school was completed. To temporarily house some spaces that were part of the second construction phase, areas were planned to temporarily accommodate programs while the campus was completed. The library served as temporary offices, the training room housed the MAPS community. A restroom with an accessible shower is located near the PE area to serve any student using the PE area, and to serve the MAPS department while their final space was under construction.

Communication and coordination between the school and contractor was critical. To provide safe access to the school buses the contractor limited the construction access and staging to the back (north) side of the site. This allowed the buses to continue to pick up and drop off in the front of the school all throughout construction. The contractor coordinated disruptive activities with the school to minimize distraction or trauma. The result of the thoughtful planning and continual communication was that very few students were impacted by the construction, their routine was maintained and their old school was transformed to their new home.



CONSTRUCTION PHASING STRATEGY



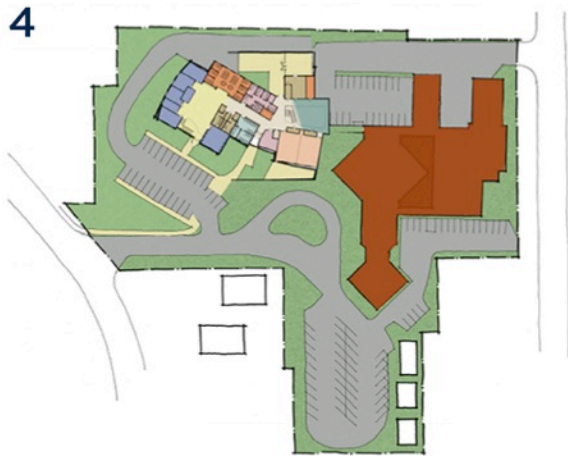
Phase 1 - Old Vista School



Phase 2 - Demolition of unused portion of building



Phase 3 - Construction of two level space including: learning communities, gym, media center, temp offices and temp MAPS community



Phase 4 - Demolition of remaining old school



Phase 5 - Construction to complete the new school and site



Phase 6 - New Vista Education Campus



CAFETERIA AND KITCHEN

The dining commons is part of the open Town Center. Similar to a university student union, the dining commons is open and available for group discussion, individual study and contemplation and other learning activities throughout the day. Synergy is developed between learning spaces and the dining commons as a student is able to see into the apartment simulator, life skills room, student store, and overlook the PE area through an open balcony.

Most of the kitchens in the school district are warming and serving kitchens. Additional equipment was added to the VEC kitchen to create a small learning commercial kitchen. Students can work through the lunch period at the commercial kitchen and learn food service skills that might prepare them for employment at a restaurant.

The student store is run by students to provide occupational training for the future of working students, and to give students opportunity to practice purchasing necessary items.

The apartment simulator helps students get accustomed to being independent



DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF 4 DISTRICT PROGRAMS

MAPS

(Making Advancements toward Personal Success)

The MAPS program serves ninth grade to 22-year-old students who are severely medically fragile and/ or severely cognitively challenged. The program focuses on individual progress toward personal success and quality of life.

The MAPS Community supports the most fragile students. The learning community is organized to be self sufficient and flexible. Each studio conveniently connects to a restroom facility so the teachers or aides can easily help students, then quickly return to their learning activities. Three of the four learning studios have windows and natural lighting. One studio is designed without windows to provide a light-controlled environment for students who need dimly lit spaces. The MAPS Community is located near the main entrance so students with severe mobility challenges can move quickly to their class.

STRIDE

(Students Transitioning and Reaching for Independent Direction in Education)

The STRIDE program serves ninth grade to 22-year-old students who display moderate to severe cognitive and behavioral disabilities. It is individualized for specific student needs, with a focus on learning the skills needed to become independent.

Because students in the STRIDE Community are easily overstimulated or distracted, it is located in a quiet corner of the school. The STRIDE Studio has a shared area for group learning, acclimation and instruction. Six individual cubes are located off the shared area. The individual cubes give each student a place to decompress and calm down from overstimulation. It also provides them a personal place to remove themselves from visual and auditory distractions and focus on learning. Natural daylight enters the space through windows above the individual cubes. This gives the space natural lighting and a view without the distractions of seeing activity in the outdoor learning and nature walk area.



STAR

(Students Transitioning to Adult Responsibilities)

The STAR program serves post- high school students 18 to 22 years old with mild to moderate learning disabilities. The program provides individualized education and training, with focus on daily living skills and employability.

The STAR community has 6 classrooms of differing sizes to support a variety of group sizes and a break-out conference room organized around a shared collaboration area. The classrooms and break-out room support students in engaging in specific core academic fundamentals and in learning a variety of employment skills. In practicing core learning, communication, and other daily living skills the collaboration area supports groups of students working and learning together. Because the students in the STAR program are most independent, they often come to school to check-in, then catch a city bus to their place of employment. The collaboration area provides an ideal place to check-in and the direct access to the exterior is a convenient way for pedestrian traffic to get to the city bus. The faculty offices for the STAR community are located adjacent to the learning spaces. This enhances the community by having all the faculty and staff near the students they serve. The faculty offices are designed to fit within two classroom modules so they could be converted to classroom spaces as part of a built-in future growth plan.

STEPS

(Students Transitioning for Educational & Personal Success)

The STEPS program serves ninth grade through 22-year-old students who have moderate to severe intellectual, cognitive and/or physical disabilities. It focuses on transitioning from high school to adult life and independence through improving daily living skills and employability.

Students in the STEPS program are often organized into groups of 8-10 with similar physical and learning abilities. The groups work together as they receive instruction and training. The variety of spaces in the STEPS Community support groups working together to meet many educational objectives. The STEPS Community has a various sized classroom spaces, a break-out conference room and a collaboration area to support a variety of group learning. The STEPS Community is conveniently located near the Town Center and shared Life Skills spaces.





THANK YOU!