



**Project Advisory Team Meeting Minutes**  
**Jack Yates High School**

**MEETING NO.:** 009

**LOCATION:** Jack Yates High School

**DATE / TIME:** April 17, 2014, 5:00 pm

**ATTENDEES:** Donetrus Hill, Principal; Ray Gatlin, Assistant Principal; Kedrick Wright, HISD-Facility Design; Princess Jenkins, HISD-Facility Planning; Morris Bennett, HISD/KWAME Program Manager; Johnny O'Connor, HISD/SSO; Albert Ray, Moody-Nolan Architects; Jonathan Moody, Moody-Nolan Architects; Wardell Ross, Moody-Nolan Architects; Ishita Shah, Huerta & Associates Architects; Wally Huerta, Huerta & Associates Architects; Carolyn Evans-Shabazz, NAACP Alumni; Roland Cotton, SEHTA-Yates Alumni; Carl Davis, Alumni; Larry Blackmon, Alumni; Maurice Hobson, Parent; Margo Hickman, Yates HS; Velda Hunter, Yates HS; Rennette Lucien, Yates HS Staff; Ray Carrington III, Yates HS Staff; Leo Bobadilla, HISD; Marcus Bland, HISD/Yates HS; Samuel Long, Yates HS Staff; Liz Philippi, Manager Library Services;

**PURPOSE:** The focus of this meeting is to discuss and review the working draft of the Educational Specifications and draft of the Space Requirements.

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

- Discuss the April 9, 2014 School Tours
- Architect's Design Workshop
- Discuss the upcoming Design Charrette
- What to Expect at the Next PAT Meeting

**NOTES:**

**Discussion:**

1. The meeting opened with a quick overview of the agenda followed by comments about the school tours taken on April 9, 2014.
  - a. The first stop in the tour was Lone Star at University Park, which was defined as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Commons (Library) that had no books. Pictures were passed around to the PAT members.
    - i. It was had an open concept with lecture rooms, an area for a computer labs and was meant to be comfortable and flexible.
    - ii. The Learning Commons included separate carrels for tutoring. There were also both open and private (see-through) rooms which allowed the collaboration taking place to be seen and supervised.
    - iii. The students liked the amphitheater in the Learning Commons and it is believed that the new Yates could benefit from it.
  - b. The other stop was Wunsche High School in Spring ISD where the focus was on Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Technology.
    - i. There were various types of classes such as architecture, art and law contained in an open area. Each open area provided space for more than 1 CTE class.
    - ii. The kitchen serving the Culinary CTE program was visible from the main corridor of the school and served as a learning environment for all types of cooking and training.
    - iii. Mr. Gatlin stated that Wunsche was open, with an interesting schedule and an open stairway with classes that looked into the rooms; it had wide hallways, no lockers.
      - 1) The security vestibule served as the entryway to the school. It was isolated and safe with an in-between room to control who came and who left.
      - 2) He was also told that the entryway saved energy with shade and lights.

- 3) The open space had an issue of noise – with no bell schedules, the random movement of kids kept the level of noise in the common areas from being overly disruptive.
- iv. The common comment was made about the dislike of the open space, but within the rooms, it was better because you could see everything and not hear overlapping conversations.
- v. It was noted that Wunsche grew faster than it was anticipated.
  - 1) Teachers had been part of the design and the growth.
  - 2) Kids liked the options, even if there were too many CTE options within each tower.
  - 3) Wunsche presented a college type feel with large classes, labs and small discussion rooms.
- vi. There was a problem mentioned about the Wi-Fi always crashing, and that needs to be taken into account for the new building.
  - 1) The power and technology design of Wunsche was not flexible; utilities (capacity) and the fiber connection cannot now handle the demands that new technology is placing on it. This needs to be addressed in the new building.
- vii. Mr. Blackmon informed the PAT that Wunsche was designed for a specific type of discipline with corporate sponsors to support programming at the school.
- viii. Some expressed that Wunsche's open plan is not suggested for a public school because it was easy to distract students and there was a concern for safety. The design also mimicked a warehouse.
- ix. Mr. Gatlin liked the idea of a museum with an artifact room, which was also supported by Michelle Barnes who wanted a room for memorabilia.
  - x. The building was designed by people using it. It changed to take on the process that drove it there.
  - xi. The cafeteria also serves as an auditorium which the PAT liked. It was also noted that the white boards and projectors were useful. There was also a room for community use which the PAT found positive.
- c. A question was raised as to why these campuses had been selected to tour and their relevance to Jack Yates High School. It was noted that tours are intended to allow the PAT members to experience firsthand 21<sup>st</sup> Century ideas and concepts to help incite conversation about what will or will not work for their particular school and its programs.
2. Princess Jenkins, HISD Facilities Planner, informed everyone that the updated working draft of the Educational Specification Room Descriptions was issued on Tuesday.
3. Moody-Nolan Architects introduced the PAT to different concepts regarding the site and the neighborhoods by facilitating a pre-charrette workshop for the PAT.
  - a. Mr. Albert Ray of Moody-Nolan Architects discussed the Guiding Principles that the PAT developed and how they impact the design process.
    - i. The Architects presented a bell-curve of construction which showed the impacts of the design and construction process on the budget. It showed that there would be a greater impact on the budget early, and the input helps; further into the design process, the ability to make changes is slimmer and the project cost goes up.
    - ii. The upcoming design charrette will add input and will help evaluate the design concepts
  - b. The Architect reviewed the site constraints and how they would affect the building design.
  - c. The positive feedback from some PAT members about Dawson High School façade (neo-Greek style) was discussed. The Architects were also cautioned to keep in mind that a wide open space requires acoustic control. The PAT requested that the new design not resemble a warehouse.
  - d. The PAT was asked "How do you define success for Yates?"
    - i. Yates is happy with their Principal who is taking the school in a positive direction. Mr. Blackmon stated that "We have the leadership, but now we have to give him something to work with". The PAT would like for Jack Yates HS to be:
      - a. High Performing. It was stated that, "A low performance school with high population will survive, but a high performance school with low population would close". The PAT expressed that the building should serve as a beacon with visible leadership with an attractive program to draw people in. They also stated that the facility should have an academic feel.
      - b. Independent; but self-sustaining with pathways such as printing and pharmacy; the problem lays in the parameters from HISD and setting the cap of enrollment to be 1,300 instead of 2,300 that Yates. The PAT wants room to grow fast.
    - ii. The PAT believes success is defined by the environment and facility to let teachers shine and keep students eager to learn, connect and have a proper education; when the students graduate, they should be able to produce, sustain and grow a good, happy life. The environment should bring out the best. There should be no cap for their future and they should be able to handle all life brings to them.
    - iii. In terms of the site, the architect will try and maintain as much as they can of the fields, but will find places for them to be. As architects, we have been given the program and we can design it to build on expansion and add on, and we will try and keep that in mind.
  - e. In terms of the site development, it was noted that the Architect will maintain as many of the existing fields as possible. Included in the Educational Specification is a requirement to identify a location for future classrooms so that too will be included in the site plan.

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- f. Jonathan Moody stated that the Architect's focus was to understand the implications and the function of the school; He noted that Yates is in a unique position between two colleges and they had to anticipate the interaction between them.
- g. The PAT was asked to describe how would Jack Yates define a neighborhood? The following are some of the thoughts and ideas that came from the PAT:
  - i. The concept of education and the neighborhoods is based on a theme that things help define how you lay it out.
  - ii. Neighborhood concepts should be thought of as a scale in that the classes are like houses, hallways are the streets, CTE are like blocks and the large areas or performance spaces (gym, cafeteria, auditorium, etc..) are akin to a community center.
  - iii. Each neighborhood should have its own internal security and acoustical treatments.
  - iv. There are many possibilities and they neighborhood can be broken down to simplify and show the flow of space to understand it.
  - v. Until the design is developed the number of floors is undetermined. The PAT requested that all the students and teachers in one neighborhood should only travel within the neighborhood. It was suggested that CTE classes be located with the neighborhood to reduce the amount of travel.
  - vi. A long hallway would allow more control and supervision of student activities and behavior; athletics and performing arts should have their own entrance or be located so that they can be accessed after hours without impacting the entire school.
  - vii. It was suggested to locate the Learning Commons near an exit for afterhours use. The Learning Commons should be open to a courtyard, as well.
  - viii. The Band Director stated that his old school had its own parking lot to practice with access for events without having to go through the building. This layout worked well for him.
  - ix. It was suggested that the Dining Commons be a central space. This could allow the learning commons to also include eating area like a Starbucks or a cyber cafe.
4. Kedrick Wright, Senior Manager-HISD Facilities Design asked the PAT what dates and times that would best accommodate their schedules for the Design Charrette. Members of the PAT stated that they would be willing to do evenings as well as Saturdays to garner participation. Mr. Wright noted that the charette has to be before school ends so there can be student participation and would preferably take place during the week. It was decided that the best time is during the week of May 19-23. The official date will be announced next week.
5. Principal Hill discussed the issue of the capacity of students set by HISD.
  - a. He noted that the capacity given is an excellent position to gain students, and we need to move forward to get them. Yates needs to be competitive.
  - b. A card was sent out two days ago in the mail to surrounding feeder patterns to recruit students.
  - c. If the school, PAT and Alumni believe that 2,300 students will attend Yates then need to have at least the current planned capacity by the start of construction which will begin in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2015.
  - d. He requested the PAT be "ambassadors for the school" and work to "keep your kids at home" rather than sending them to other schools.
  - e. Leo Bobadilla, Chief Financial Officer for HISD also informed the PAT that they had to focus on the academics that will the new building will support.

**Questions and Concerns from the PAT:**

1. It was unclear as to why Lone Star was visited. The group wasn't impressed by the facility. Wunsche Academy in Spring was chosen so the PAT could get an idea of the CTE programs integrate into the core curriculum. Also, Wunsche is a good example of the flexible schedule and mimics a college environment teaching the students responsibility and time management. Lone Star College at University Park was chosen so the PAT could see a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Commons. The facilities were chosen to give the PAT good examples of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Environments.
2. There has to be special attention to the utilities and services to handle the Wi-Fi being used in the new school.
3. The PAT requests that security be a focus. They stated that Wunschue's security vestibule served this purpose and a similar design should be incorporated into Yates.
4. Concern was expressed about the capped capacity of Yates High School and a strong desire to raise the number. Principal Hill and Leo Bobadilla spoke to this as noted in Item 5 above.
5. The PAT asked if the 2007 bond funds are available for this project and if not where were the monies spent. The Program Manager will review with HISD and provide an answer at the next PAT meeting.

**What to Expect Next PAT Meeting:**

1. The Architect will present more information about site concepts and layout.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

- 9-01 Confirm Date for the Design Charrette (HISD Facilities Design)

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**NEXT PAT MEETING:** The next PAT meeting will be held on May 15, 2014 at 5:00pm

Please review the meeting minutes and submit any changes or corrections to Morris Bennett. After five (5) days, the minutes will be assumed to be accurate.

Sincerely,

**Morris Bennett, P.M.**

HISD – Program Manager

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