Eastwood Elementary School was the first Irvine Unified School District campus designed in accordance with the goals established in the District’s Comprehensive Facilities Master Plan and Educational Specification developed in 2011 with the design team.

When Schematic Design for Eastwood began in 2014, staff had not yet been identified for the school. Without specific input from users, the design team relied on these findings and worked with the District to build a flexible framework suitable for future unknowns.

These parameters, paired with the challenges of designing on a condensed site, warranted a departure from IUSD’s long-established pinwheel site plan.

The relationship between classrooms, collaborative spaces ("colabs") and courtyards became the driver of campus organization and design—empowering students with agency and choice, flexibility and variety.

"We **BELIEVE** that there are no limits to what we can accomplish. We **RESPECT** ourselves and others by showing honor and appreciation through words and actions. We **ADAPT** our thinking and embrace growth. We **VALIDATE** each other as we seek to solve problems together. We **EMPATHIZE** to improve the lives of everyone."

- Eastwood Elementary Mission

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
This brand-new school serving 725 students is located in the middle of an Irvine neighborhood that celebrates outdoor life with a system of parks, paths and trails that allow pedestrian circulation to be easy, safe and separate from vehicles. Like all IUSD elementary schools, the site shares fields with an adjacent community park.
IUSD has a reputation as one of the highest performing school districts in the nation. Seeking continual improvement, in March of 2011, Irvine Unified School District developed a twenty-year Comprehensive Facilities Master Plan and Educational Specification that would set the vision and guidelines for future facilities. To engage the community, several committees were formed, and a process was established to optimize the input of a wide range of stakeholders that include teachers, staff, community, parents and students. Eastwood Elementary School was the first new elementary school construction project that was a result of the master plan and educational vision.

“"It is the IUSD's intent to assemble a team that will work collaboratively within IUSD and the community to establish a plan that will cover the period 2010-2030."" -IUSD Request for Proposal

**PROCESS GOAL**

To provide quality facilities that positively impact student outcomes and achievement.
Over 50% of IUSD teachers responded to a 70-question survey; the results of which established common trends that influenced the Guiding Principles used for planning. Three day-long visioning sessions were held with educators to evaluate and explore educational program goals and how school design can better support their vision.

“I think of preparing for a new world where kids will need to be able to problem-solve, work together, and build the communication capabilities to articulate to a multicultural, global economy.”
- IUSD Educator

“Accommodating various learning types and modalities including technology, learning by doing, critical thinking skills development.”
- IUSD Educator

“A true educational specification is a dynamic, visionary document reflecting activities that engage students. The educational vision must reflect specific needs within the community so the educational program must grow out of dialogue with all user groups.”
- A4LE, Association for Learning Environments

“When you hear 21st century learning, what comes to mind?”

“21st century learning is going to be less about learning concrete facts, and more about accessing information from multiple places. Students need to learn how to access, evaluate, integrate, organize, and use the information they find. They also need to learn responsible ways of using that information, and how to originate information so that they can be meaningful contributors to the digital landscape.”
- IUSD Educator
With over 200 IUSD stakeholders participating, these visioning sessions produced seven Guiding Principles that shaped the Comprehensive Facilities Master Plan and Ed Specs. There was also an effort to align these principles with the District’s already established Strategic Plan and Continuous Improvements Efforts which encourage a commitment to excellence, community partnership and a promise to provide the highest quality educational experience.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Respond to the Needs of Each Student
   - Support developmental, social, emotional, and intellectual needs of all students

2. Empower Students to Succeed
   - Provide relevant, flexible learning spaces and effective integration of resources

3. Support Professional Development
   - Build capacity, cultivate collaboration, and maximize talents

4. Nurture Healthy People + Safe Environments
   - Thoughtful and sustainable design

5. Establish the Highest Quality Programs
   - Enhance the highest quality educational experience

6. Celebrate the Uniqueness of the Communities
   - Encourage parental, student, and community engagement

7. Maintain a Long Range View
   - Provide flexibility for evolving programs with the built environment
The site for Eastwood Elementary was truly a blank canvas. The construction of the school served as a catalyst in establishing a new type of community - reflecting the people of Irvine, Irvine Unified School District, and the mission of Eastwood Elementary.

Community-facing campus edges needed to have a compatible relationship with the strong Mediterranean Mission aesthetic of its Eastwood Village neighborhood. The team worked hand in hand with both IUSD and The Irvine Company to ensure the school would suit the community it would serve. Spanish-tiled roof forms; rich, earthy tones and conservative, and deep-set openings flank community edges and respond to context, while expansive glass and movable walls celebrate NextGen learning on the interior of campus.

**2014 CONDITIONS**

**CONTEXT PLAN**
1. Mediterranean mission
2. Next gen learning environment
3. Landscape buffer
The relationship between indoor and outdoor space was the main driver in the design of the campus. The previous IUSD “pinwheel” campus design created poor sightlines into courtyards, rendering them largely unused during lunch and recess. With less than ten acres, the District wanted to utilize every inch of the site to its fullest potential. By creating classroom clusters parallel to each other, visibility was maximized. As a result, all outdoor space is easily supervised and well used throughout the day.
The flexibility designed into classrooms is intended to empower students and allow them to choose their channel of learning. Multiple types of flexible seating and operable glass walls allow students to adapt their environment and to personalize their engagement with learning day to day, hour to hour.
Collaboration spaces are an extension of the classroom. Walls between classrooms and colabs host operable glass doors that, when open, erase lines between the two. When closed (which isn’t often), there is still a visual connection. In addition to borrowed light through classrooms, solartubes bring supplemental daylight into these highly used spaces.
Courtyards between classroom clusters are an extension of the traditional indoor learning space. They serve as outdoor colabs during instructional time and offer areas to socialize, relax, read, snack or play during recess and lunch periods.

Just as diversity and choice influence classroom design, outdoor spaces promote interactions of different kinds and aid learning with elements like chalkboard walls, trike paths and turf mounds for imaginative play.
As part of a multi-site post-occupancy evaluation study of K-12 schools with collaboration spaces, Eastwood Elementary School was visited for a day of field observations of stakeholders using the spaces (staff, teachers, students, parents, community members).

Study Parameters
- three 90 minute sessions of observations
- online teacher surveys
- one 60 minute focus group and staff workshop

The observation protocol focused on the use of spaces intended for some range of collaborative activity. This included shared collaborative spaces between classrooms (learning commons and kindergarten activity center), collaboration areas open to circulation pathways, informal touchdown spots, the group activity area in the library, and outdoor learning areas.

**THE BIG QUESTION:** In what ways do designed environments help or hinder the process of collaborative work + learning?

**GOAL:** Empower use of environments designed for collaboration – helping well-designed spaces become well-utilized spaces.

### COLLABORATIVE SPACES SUPPORT A RANGE OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

1. **AGENTIC**
   - Cues permissions necessary for collaboration

2. **APPARENT**
   - Cues behavior necessary for collaboration

3. **AVAILABLE**
   - Accessible + adjacent to core learning spaces

4. **ATTENTIVE**
   - Attends to human needs + minimizes distractions

5. **AGILE**
   - Easily rearranged based on task/activity

6. **AFFORDED**
   - Variety, resources, size + building features (e.g., glass, storage, movable walls)
RESULTS

1. students working together between class
2. student working privately behind bookshelf
3. one on one teacher-student instruction
4. hi-top table used by students each session
5. higher surfaces used for teacher-student collaboration
6. students utilizing white board space for group learning
7. student reading quietly on tablet
8. students checking out tablets for group work
9. group of students working together on the floor

COLLABORATION SPACE MAPPING

interaction hotspots
“...the building is amazing. We are lucky to be a part of that project. It’s definitely one of the best buildings I’ve seen in the country and it really shows well when touring the school. The kids and teachers are definitely more engaged while having the flexibility of the interior space and the outside.”
- Craig Harvey, Education Division Manager VS America, Inc.

“Eastwood’s cool, Eastwood’s fun, you get to learn all the time! You have different places to sit or think. Eastwood is amazing!”
- Sonia, Student of Eastwood Elementary

“So excited about the concept of open learning! Kids can learn outside of textbooks with more hands-on activities to stimulate their minds. Wonderful staff and beautiful campus. The principal is friendly and really cares about the well-being for students, teachers, and parents.”
- Cindy Loata, IUSD Community Member