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EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES: DISCIPLINE, SURVEILLANCE AND
DEMOCRACY

By

MOHAMMED E. ATTIA

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The members of the committee approve the thesis of Mohammed E Attia defended on June 30, 2006.

Ricardo Navarro
Professor Directing Thesis

Tock Ohazama
Committee Member

Jill Pable
Committee Member

Approved:

Eric Wiedegreen, Chair, Department of Interior Design

Sally McRorie, Dean, College of Visual Arts, Theatre and Dance

The Office of Graduate Studies has verified and approved the above named committee members

For Ostaz

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables	viii
List of Figures	ix
Abstract	xi
1. INTRODUCTION	1
The Purpose	3
Justification of the Project	3
Brief Description of the Design Problem	3
Goals of the Project	4
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	
Introduction	5
Background Information	7
Search techniques	7
The 18 th Century and the Culture of Discipline	8
The 19 th Century and the Means of Correct Training	11
The Panopticon	12

Modern Educational Theory	16
Learning and Learning Environments	16
Brain Based Learning theory and Design Applications	17
Multiple Intelligences Theory	25
Social Interaction and Adolescents Development	27
Middle School Trends	33
Middle school Teaming Theory	33
TEAMS (Technology Enhancing Achievement in Middle School)	35
Summary of the findings and design recommendation	37

3. DESIGN PROGRAM

Project Description and History	40
Existing Site Conditions	41
Client Philosophy and Goals	52
Client Operational and Organizational Structure	52
User Profile	53
Image and Character	55
Type of Construction Materials	55
Energy Conservation and Green Design	57
Analysis of Individual space Requirements	57

4. THE PROPOSAL	
Design Process	58
The Building Block	58
The Preliminary Layout	62
Images of the Proposed Development	69
5. FINAL DISCUSSIONS OF THE PROJECT	94
REFERENCES	95
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH	96

LIST OF TABLES

2.1 Summary of Gardner's MI theory	25
2.2 The development of adolescents	29
3.1 Breakdown of students by grade level and geographic area	54
3.2 Considerations for material selection	56
3.3 Spatial program	57

LIST OF FIGURES

1.1 The art of preventing and correcting deformities of the body in children	1
2.1 Classroom from the 18 th Century, Perspective	10
2.2 classroom from the 18 th century, Plan view	11
2.3 J. Bentham's plan of the Opticon	13
2.4 The Penitentiary at Stateville, USA, 20 century	14
2.5 classroom from the 19 th century	14
2.6 Auditorium in a Prison from the 19 th century	15
2.7 Crossroads elementary school	18
2.8 Heinz and Lilo Bertelsmann Campus Center	19
2.9 Interdistrict Downtown School	19
2.10 Carlin Springs Elementary School	20
2.11 Davis Elementary School	21
2.12 Watering Hole Space	23
2.13 Cave Space	23
2.14 Campfire Space	24
2.15 Examples of Middle School Teaming Layout	35
3.1 Site location map	41
3.2 Existing facility layout	43
3.3 Existing school building floor plan	44
3.4 Existing building circulation diagram	45
3.5 Existing building zoning diagram	46
3.6 Existing building controlled vs. free space diagram	47
3.7 Existing facility main entrance	48
3.8 Existing interior courtyard	48
3.9 Existing student entrance	49

3.10 Existing classroom	49
3.11 Existing classroom	50
3.12 Existing classroom	50
3.13 Existing teachers station in an existing classroom	51
4.1 Concept sketch for a pod unit plan	60
4.2 Concept sketch for a pod unit section	60
4.3 Alternative concept sketch for a pod unit plan	61
4.4 Alternative concept sketch for a pod unit section	61
4.5 The educational street	62
4.6 Conceptual plan layout for the school building	63
4.7 Concept floor plan for a house	64
4.8 Conceptual corridor section	65
4.9 Sketch floor plan of a quadrant	66
4.10 Sketch section through a quadrant	67
4.11 Sketch floor plan for the school building	67
4.12 Schematic perspective in the proposed corridor	68
4.13 Schematic perspective in the proposed courtyard	68
4.14 Proposed zoning plan	69
4.15 Proposed circulation plan	70
4.16 Proposed free space vs. controlled space plan	71
4.17 Proposed group vs. individual learning space plan	72
4.18 Proposed indoor vs. outdoor plan	73
4.19 Proposed spatial learning models plan	74
4.20 Proposed floor plan	75
4.21 Proposed school building aerial view	76
4.22 Proposed entrance	76
4.23 Proposed community center	77
4.24 Proposed house entrance	77
4.25 Proposed house entrance	78
4.26 Proposed house courtyard	78
4.27 Proposed community center/temple space perspective	79
4.28 Proposed community center/ temple space floor plan	80
4.29 Sketch for house entrance/ tower	81
4.30 Sketch for community center section	81
4.31 Resources center/waterhole space floor plan	82
4.32 Meeting/camp fire space floor plan	83
4.33 Classroom/cave space floor plan	84
4.34 Proposed resources/waterhole space perspective	85
4.35 Proposed meeting/camp fire space perspective	86
4.36 Proposed classroom/cave space perspective	87
4.37 Proposed section through the classroom space	87
4.38 Existing building conditions composition board	88
4.39 Proposed design process composition board	89
4.40 Proposed building design composition board	90

4.41 Proposed circulation composition board	91
4.42 Proposed house design composition board	92
4.43 Proposed learning spaces composition board	93

ABSTRACT

Learning is a continuous process of information that occurs in every day life. The school building is not the only environment in which learning takes place, but it is a place of learning, where space is designed to host special learning activities. Historically speaking, school design has been based on a subject specific classroom. A subject specific classroom would accommodate for designated periods during the school day, one teacher, and a group of students. This subject specific classroom planning strategy has been used to develop many existing school facilities. Immediately after the First World War, educational theory picked up on distilling concepts, which emphasize the importance of freedom rather than restraint, stressing the primacy of emotions over and above intellect.

The research project aims to reach through an informed decision making process built on the accumulated base of knowledge and research in the fields of education and the science of learning; a design proposal that would be complementary to the educational philosophy practiced within the educational facility. This study is concerned with a research model that would revolve around the needs of the local community, developing a cooperative role between the university and the local community. The study provides an overview on the historical development of the appearance of the modern day classroom, and the educational theories that influenced change throughout that development.

Furthermore the study's focus is on project TEAMS (Technology Enhancing Achievement in Middle School) a middle school instructional program founded in 1990 at Florida State University with Dr. Sally Butzin and Dr. Bob Reiser and Fairview middle

school, one of the prototypes for the TEAMS educational philosophy. Built in 1970, the school was designed in the open concept model. Finally, in 2005 permanent walls transformed the school in to an enclosed classroom system. This phenomenon, which Fairview middle school went through over a period of three decades, is unique in its nature due to correlation between the changing instructional policies and the spatial morphology of the school. For that reason, the school provides a good study model for the topic of this research. The project explores how the implementation of the TEAMS educational theory could influence the architectural design of Fairview middle school educational facility. Interviews with the school community as well as the founders of the educational program created a dialog that is crucial to the design proposal.

Modern theories of learning science, such as Howard Gardner's multiple intelligence theory, brain based learning theory, and adolescents learning science theories are explained and reflected on to derive design recommendations for learning environments and middle school design. This approach creates of smaller learning communities by way of dividing the school to four equal quadrants, each with a courtyard, play ground and utilities. The four sub schools are organized around a central courtyard and connected through a visually continuous corridor in an effort to provide environmental support to adolescents. The design proposes a contrast of open, semi enclosed and enclosed areas in a spatially interesting composition to better support and enhance brain activities according to brain based learning research creating visually interesting environments, providing safe and easy access, and creating patterns that would enhance brain activities and give construct to the content of the subject matter.

The design incorporates the TEAMS Philosophy due to the positive effect on the physical interior environment of the school. The design implications derived from the TEAMS philosophy lead to smaller learning environment within the school as subunits or communities within the school environment. Furthermore, the proposed design achieved a better student per classroom ratio, and reduced the required square footage. This new proposal gives appearance to new open areas for congregation and play.