

Safe & Secure Strategies: What is Gender Neutral Design

Tuesday February 13th, 2024
2:00 pm to 2:50 pm Aloeswood Room

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2024 Midwest Facility Masters Conference

February 13-14 • Exhibits on February 13 • Wisconsin Dells



Architecture Engineering Planning



What is Meant by Gender Neutral?

adjective: gender-neutral

1. Not relating or specific to people of one particular gender.
2. Expression that cannot be taken to refer to one gender only.
3. Gender-Neutral terms: flight attendant, firefighter, and police officer

pronoun: gender-neutral

They/them/theirs (“Shea ate their food because they were hungry.”)

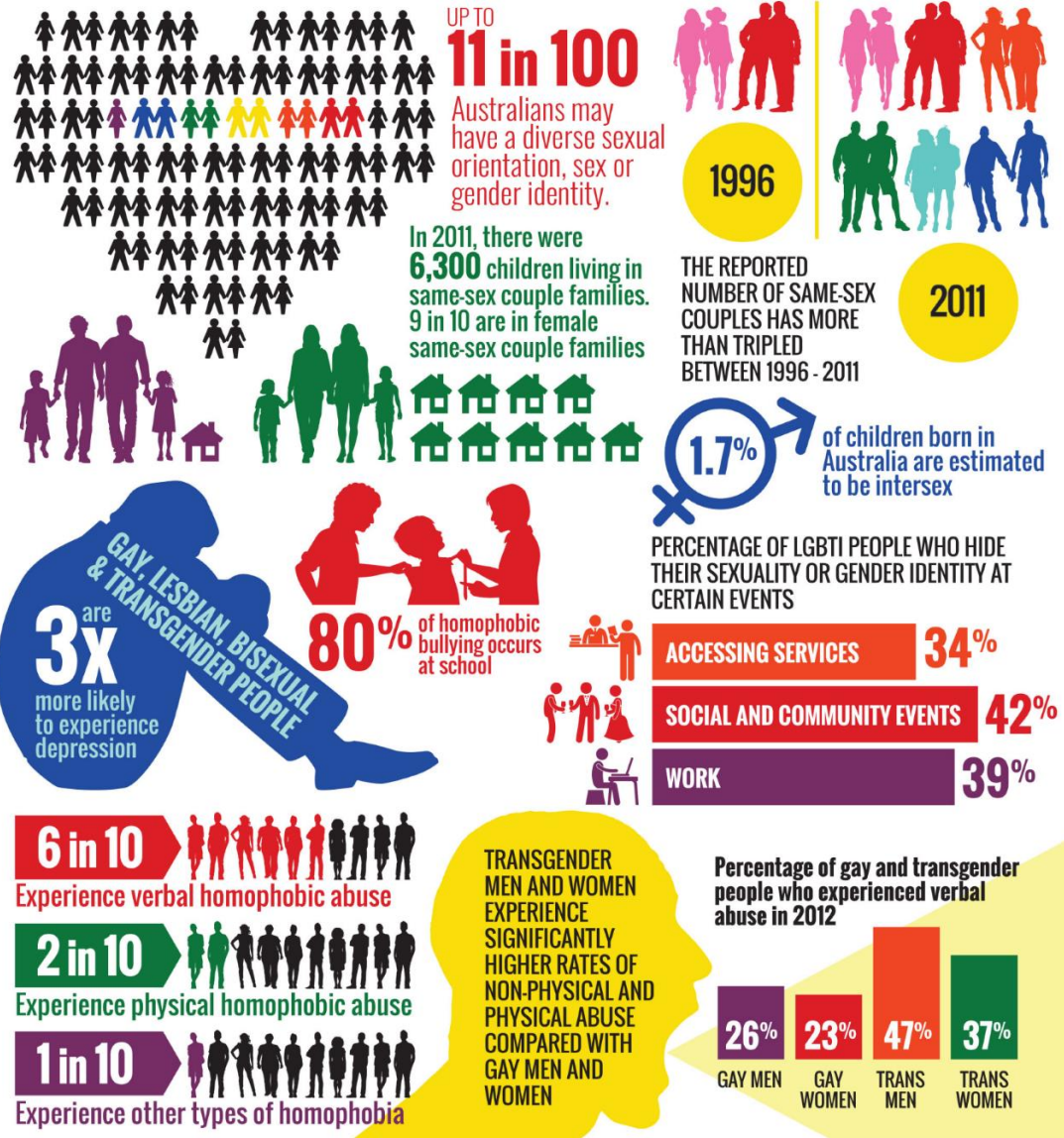
This is a common gender-neutral pronoun and can be used in the singular if we do not know the person we are talking about.

(“Who called you?”)

The Growing Understanding of Who We Are

We Now are Learning About the Term Intersex; people are born with sex characteristics (including genitals, gonads and chromosome patterns) that do not fit typical binary notions of male or female bodies. Intersex is an umbrella term used to describe a wide range of natural bodily variations.

- New Social Norms
- New Diagnosis
- New Visibility
- New Realities



2014 Face the Facts www.humanrights.gov.au/face-facts



Gender Neutral in Design Think in Terms of Bullying



SAFETY & SECURITY > FIRE & LIFE SAFETY

Student dies at Alabama high school after possibly ingesting fentanyl-laced substance

Nov. 9, 2022

Four other students at Selma High School also fell ill and were taken to a local hospital.

Mike Kennedy

SAFETY & SECURITY

Stabbing at Utica, N.Y., high school sends 18-year-old student to the hospital

Nov. 1, 2022

A 17-year-old student at Proctor High School sent the 18-year-old student to the hospital with non-life-threatening injuries with stab wounds to his back and hands.

Brooke Just



SAFETY & SECURITY

2 students shot to death outside Chicago high school

Dec. 19, 2022

The attack, in which two other teens were wounded, took place as classes were dismissed Friday at Benito Juarez High School.

Mike Kennedy

NEW JERSEY · Published February 10, 2023 12:36am EST

New Jersey student ends her life after months of bullying, video of school hallway beating circulates online

Adriana Kuch ended her life just days after a video was circulated around her public New Jersey high school



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Gender Neutral in Design

What are You Talking About Here?



Let's Talk Bathrooms

Privacy: Why All the Concern?

Different Times/Generations

Each Introducing Different Expectations/Norms

Those of Us Age 55 and Above

Those of Us Age 40 to 55

Those of Us Age 30 to 40

Those of Us Age 30 and Below

- **Title Nine: New Opportunities and New Challenges**
- **Showering Expectations: Physical Education/Activities**
- **Main Streaming Special Education Students**
- **Social, Ethnic and Religious Norms**
- **Allergies, Diabetes, and other Aliments**
- **Bullying and Abduction: Kids not Using the Restrooms**

The Processes Leading to Change?

For Example:

- **Starts with a Need or Injustice**
the reaction evolves organically
- **Guidelines and Procedures**
an outcome from experiences and other intuitional information
- **Laws and Codes**
an outcome due to lack acknowledgment or uniformity
- **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act**
a 1996 Federal law that restricts access to individuals' private medical information.

Women are Used to a Level of Privacy

Toilet Facilities

In America, individual Stalls have nearly always been the norm

Showers in Locker Rooms

In America, individual stalls and/or rooms

Pool Facilities

Have always swam with a swimsuit

Today, Lactation Rooms

Are private, secure and clean spaces

Expectations are Continuing to Evolve the Private Space Trend

Example: Growth / Greater Availability of Family Restrooms

an expectation of not just parents, but also kids and young adults

Men Were Used to Groups as Social Norm

Toilet Facilities

- Trough Urinals – Individual Urinals – Urinals with Partitions
- Individual Toilet Stalls

Locker Rooms

- Gang Showers
- Group Dressing Areas

Pool Facilities

- Swam naked - Added the “Issued” Swimsuit - Board Shorts

Expectations are; I Had to Do It, So What’s the Big Deal

Example: Growth / Greater Availability of Family Restrooms

an outcome from experiences and other intuitional information

Recognize the Needs for Changing Norms

Family Restrooms

The comfort of, and the expectation for keeping personal/private

- age differences and the identified “Normal”
- gender and physical differences
- medial reasons: medications, diapering, and etc.

Locker Rooms

Private spaces for not just showering but disrobing.

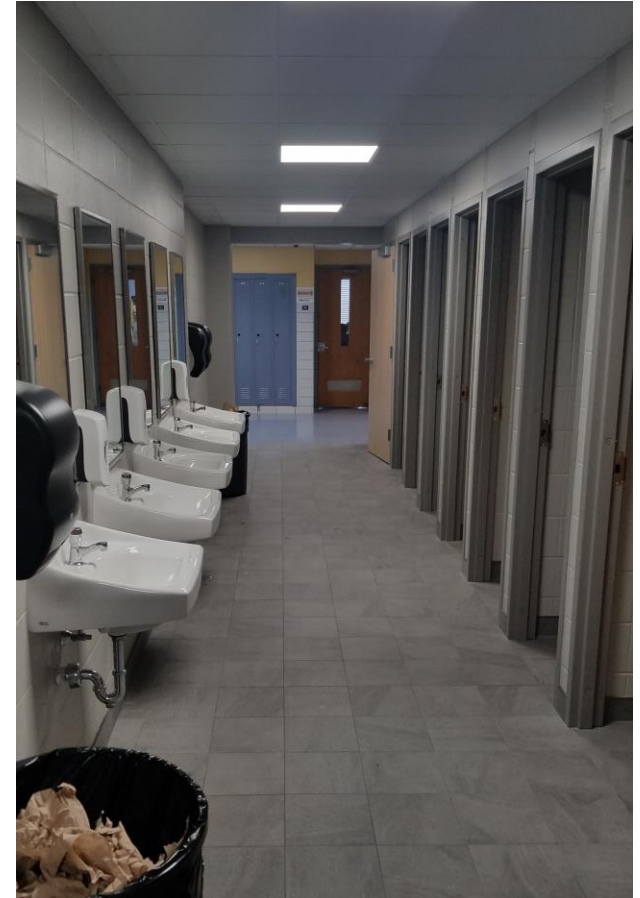
Free Zones

Spaces reserved for those with allergies

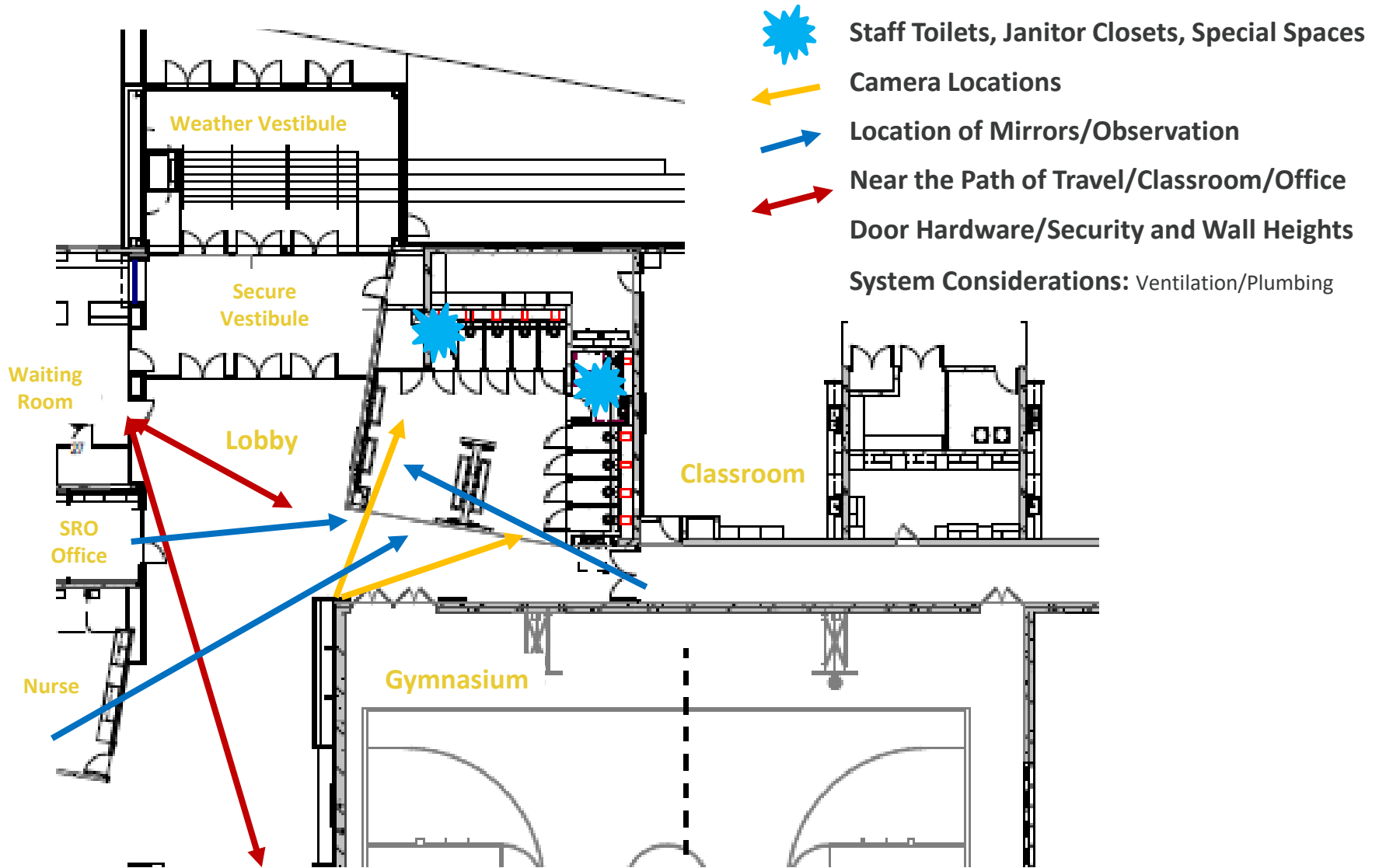
Quite Space

A private personal space for feeling safe or secure

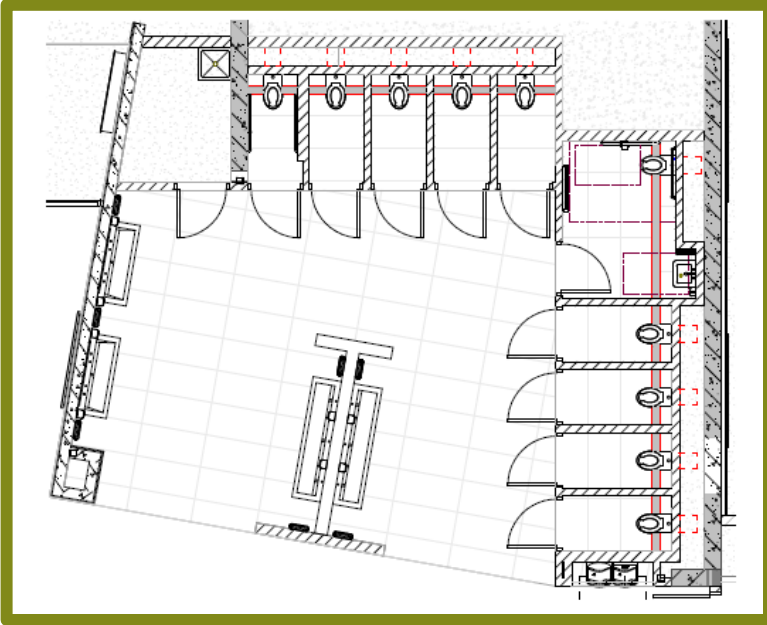
- migraine headaches or other heath related concerns
- de-escalation and the quite space for calming



Safe and Secure: Restroom Design



Restroom Design Considerations



- Depending on the Total Need, at least one toilet room needs to contain one sink and maintain ALL handicapped clearances.
- Doors need to extend from floor to ceiling and have clearances small enough to discourage sliding cameras under or above doors.
- Floors should slope to the fixture wall, and we recommend a continuous trench drain.
- Each stall should be negatively pressurized with door grills which are mounted high to discourage damage and deter individuals from peering inside.
- Ceilings should be hard but consider acoustics.
- Consider walls which can quickly be cleaned with a pressure washer (provide hose bib for quick couples)
- Cleaning is critical for these methods of design. Consider janitor closet locations.
- Staff Toilets can be keyed separately
- What about urinals, sinks, garbage and dispensers



What are Outcomes of the Social Norms

Toilet Facilities a dramatic Increase in the Number of Unisex Restroom



Remember the Costs to Operations and Maintenance

The Challenges of Good Hygiene

Locker Rooms and Other Showering/Toilet Facilities

Part of Getting Everyone on Board is Making Sure the Facilities are Clean

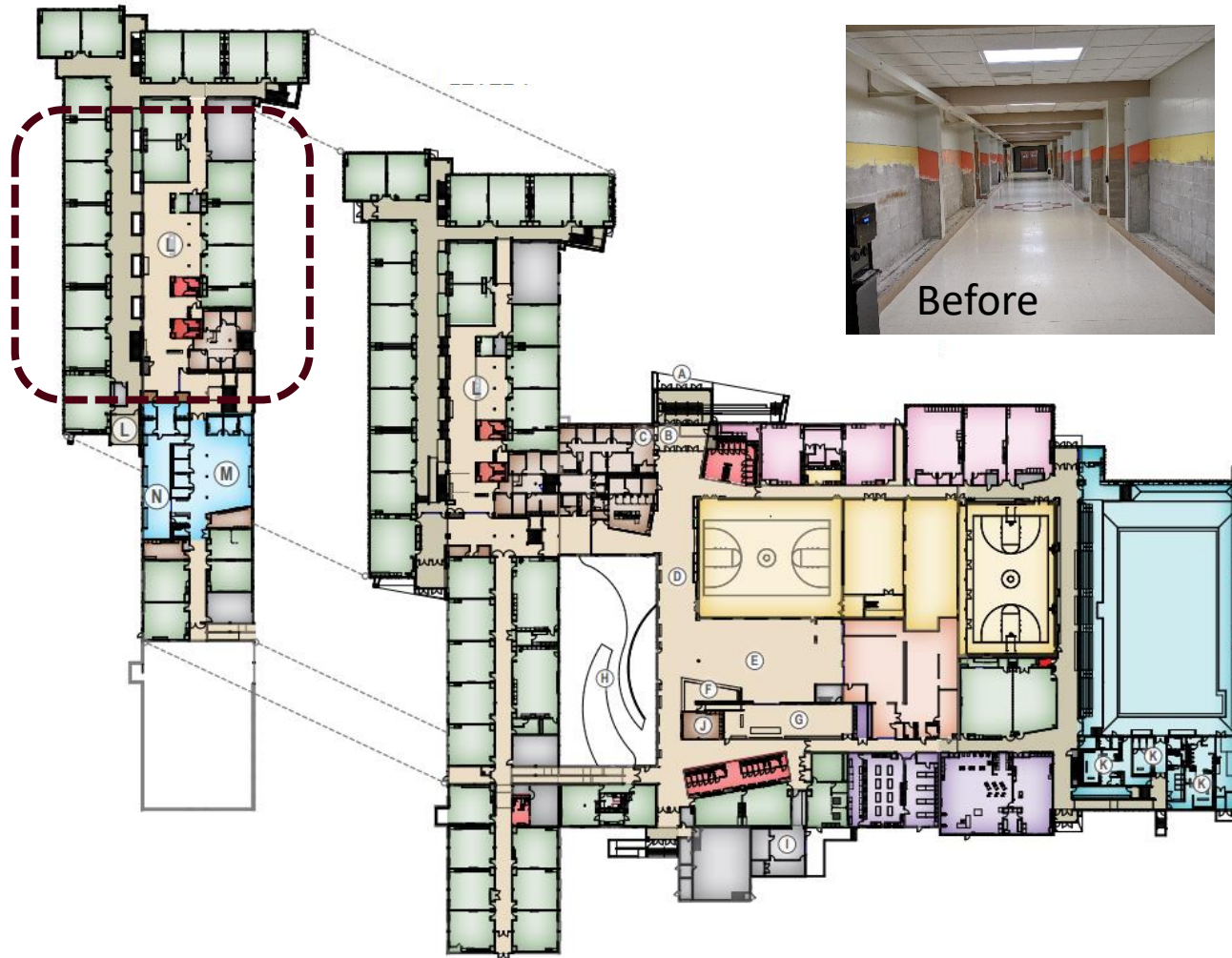


Is Every Building The Same?

- Elementary, Middle, and High Schools
- What is the vision and experience of the Design Leadership Team?
- The input of staff, students, parents, community, and law enforcement members is of great value but how will the information be used or incorporated?
- As design decisions are made, how are we informing and supporting the school board, administration, and staff?
- Remember we are designing for bullying
- What will participants and stakeholders be discussing with they leave the room?



John Glenn Middle School: Anti-Bullying



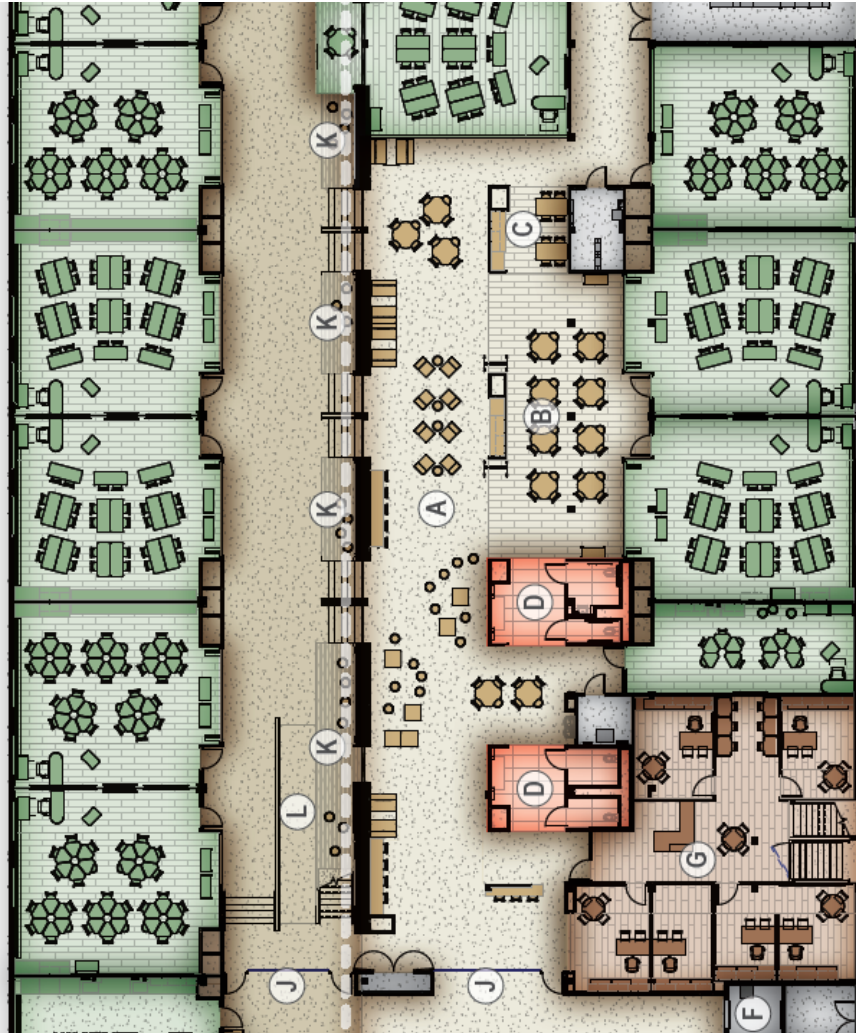
Before



After

- Width of Hallways
- No Lockers
- Direction of Stairs
- Toilet Locations
- Glass vs Walls
- Location of Support Staff
- Cafeteria Design

Teaching / Learning | Bullying / Support



What are all the considerations?

- **Well Building Design (Occupant Comfort)**
 - ✓ Lighting: Natural/Lighting Systems
 - ✓ Acoustics Throughout Area
 - ✓ Sound Reinforcement Systems
- **Student Services Traditional/Non-Traditional**
 - ✓ Accepted Behavior vs Controlled Behavior
 - ✓ Number of Students!!!
 - ✓ Providing Student Support
 - ✓ Remove the Stigma
- **Learning Commons: Needs Purpose**
 - ✓ Access and Observation
 - ✓ Function Types
 - ✓ Supporting Amenities
 - ✓ Toileting and Drinking Fountains
- **Furniture Fixtures and Equipment**
 - ✓ Classroom Furniture
 - ✓ Student Support Furniture
 - ✓ Markerboards/Glassboards
- **Access and Use of Technology**
 - ✓ Sound Reinforcement Systems
 - ✓ Types of "Front of the Room"
 - ✓ Student Access
 - ✓ Charging of Devices

Remember, Bullying is Everywhere

- **Not Every Building is the Same**
 - ✓ Grade Levels
 - ✓ Existing vs New Buildings
 - ✓ Challenges of Site and Systems
 - ✓ Student and Staff Movement
 - ✓ Behavior Control
- **Communication and Controlling the Narrative**
 - ✓ Staff and Parents
 - ✓ Students
 - ✓ Community
 - ✓ Law Enforcement
- **What are the Greatest Threats**
 - ✓ Bullying
 - ✓ External from the Street to the Classroom Door
 - ✓ Shelter in Place vs Exit Strategies

- **Access and Use of Technologies**
 - ✓ Greater Access when Needed for Students
 - ✓ Greater Support and Supervision
 - ✓ Cost, Management, Maintenance
- **Materials, Systems and Equipment**
 - ✓ Glass and Glass Types
 - ✓ Doors and Hardware
 - ✓ Technology: Cameras, Apps and Hardware
 - ✓ Lighting, Communications, and Equipment

What Are
the Take A Ways?



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Questions and Answers

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