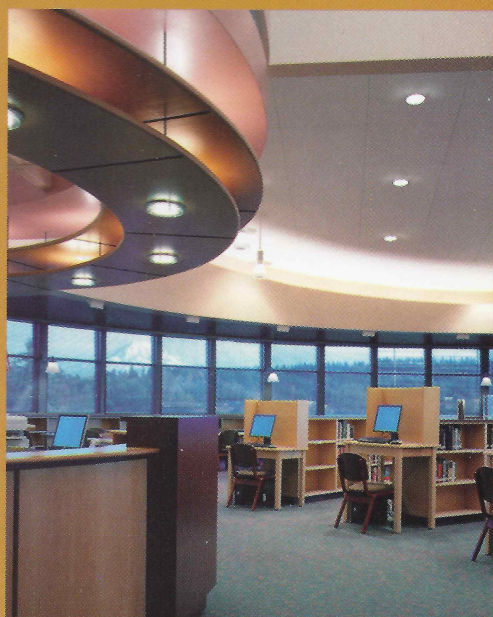


LEARNING BY DESIGN

*A School and University Leader's Annual
Guide to Architectural Services*





Dena New Primary Center

Los Angeles, California

Rachlin Architects Incorporated

School, Community Center/
Joint Use Facilities
New Construction

Rachlin Architects Incorporated

3635 Hayden Ave.
Culver City, CA 90232
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Michael Rachlin, AIA
(310) 204-3400

DESIGN TEAM

Michael Rachlin, AIA,
Principal-in-Charge

Richard Ingrassia, AIA,
Architect

Armando Lopez, Architect

Ken Stein, AIA, Architect

OWNER/CLIENT

Los Angeles Unified
School District
Los Angeles, CA

Patricia Romero, Principal
(323) 981-0225

Type of School and
Grades Served:
Elementary School, K-2
Capacity: 250 students
Size of Site: 2.9 acres

Area of Building:
25,500 square feet

Volume of Building:
255,000 cubic feet

Space per Student:
102 square feet

Cost per Student: \$34,000

Square Foot Cost: \$333

Construction Cost:
\$8.5 million

Total Project Cost:
\$8.5 million

Contract Date: September 2001

Completion Date: October 2005

Percent of Completion: 100%



CHILDREN AT PLAY IN THE COURTYARD

Rachlin Architects was commissioned by the Los Angeles Unified School District to design a 25,500-square-foot learning center that includes a multipurpose room to accommodate student and local community functions, 10 classrooms for 250 students, a library, food service facilities, and administrative offices. The Dena New Primary Center also had to reflect the client's educational program and their desire to break up a large, impersonal school into settings that are manageable for teachers and students. Their goal was to allow the existing overcrowded school to discontinue its year-round track and return to a traditional track.

The firm responded by creating a colorful, inspiring primary center, which opened its doors in fall 2005—the first primary school built in 50



CANOPY IN FRONT OF THE MULTIPURPOSE/KITCHEN BUILDING



MULTIPURPOSE ROOM INTERIOR

Photos: Tom Borer



GALVANIZED METAL STAIRWELL



VIEW OF THE PLAYGROUND AND LUNCH SHELTER

years in the Boyle Heights district of East Los Angeles. We achieved a progressive design using varied materials including cement, plaster, glass, and galvanized metal. Extensive use of natural daylighting, and playful colors create an educationally stimulating, child-friendly environment.

Another challenge in the design was the primary center's site, which is bordered by downtown Los Angeles to the

north, an industrial zone to the south, the Los Angeles River and railway tracks to the west, and a residential/public housing neighborhood to the east. In addressing the project's urban context, which also includes the effects of local gang rivalries on the neighborhood, the design focused the campus inward toward the central courtyard. This provided a sheltered play environment for the children and helped

ensure that access in and out of the school could be secure and controlled.

The Culver City-based architectural firm also used the bold design and color scheme to encourage community members to come together and take pride of ownership in the school. A few months after the school opened, the firm's societal design intentions have been realized. Gang activity has decreased, and neighbor-

hood pride has resurfaced—as seen in local grocery, for example, that was repainted to match the school colors.

Over a year later, Dena New Primary Center's design continues to exceed the client's original goal of creating small learning communities through safe, nurturing, and dynamic spaces for members of their most vulnerable population's first exposure to the learning environment. ■