

ILLUMIE

The Willows Community School

Private, DK-8 school in Culver City, Ca

Architect: Pfau Long Architecture

124,000 square feet

www.illigconstruct.com

"Illig exceeded our expectations in delivering high quality and meeting aggressive schedule objectives. Their attention to detail and high client service set them apart!"

Denise Gutches,
Owner's Representative
DKG Consulting

The Willows Community School is a private, DK-8 school in Culver City serving students and their families for over 20 years. The campus is comprised of six distinct buildings that The Willows acquired over the years as their enrollment and program expanded. The Willows engaged Illig Construction Company on a negotiated basis to perform preconstruction and construction for the renovation of four academic buildings and the demolition and redevelopment of the entire campus site. Pfau Long Architecture Ltd. was engaged to conduct campus master planning and design the first phase for construction.



In a design-assist mode during preconstruction, Illig Construction worked hand in hand with The Willows administration, DKG Consulting and Pfau Long Architecture to develop over \$750,000 in value engineering savings to meet the project budget. Multiple options and solutions were presented, along with the cost impact for each, to achieve best value for The Willows while respecting design intent and meeting completion deadlines. Project features include new designs and technology that stimulate and support The Willows commitment to education through imagination and discovery. A new Library/Media Center with a German Nana Wall (glass accordion door) encourages students to utilize both interior and exterior environments. The Library terrace provides the opportunity to highlight projects for

the entire Willows community to experience, promoting a greater awareness among students across grade levels. A new STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) Education Lab allows teachers to link disciplines with hands on, experiential projects.

Flexible learning spaces, classrooms and administration were modernized and reconfigured with new energy efficient lighting, skylights, flooring, restrooms, surface finishes, roofing and storefront systems. The incorporation of Brazilian IPE wood at the school entry, as well as perimeter access points, provided a more inviting entry and cohesiveness to the overall campus.

The site renovation links the various campus buildings with pathways, landscaping, lighting and opportunities for outdoor classroom experiences. Site lighting, via a main control panel, creates various lighting effects and juxtaposition of colors throughout the campus site, setting the tone for campus events and curriculum delivery. Amy Dugré, Director of Technology, sees “a more unified campus with a beautiful flow that encourages more community-wide engagement. Both students and faculty are utilizing the new outdoor spaces—they provide new opportunities for conversation and interaction. At the same time, campus security and emergency preparedness has been enhanced.” New sport courts and areas for imaginative play (a slate “chalkboard” wall, water trough, sand pit, interactive playground and organic garden) expand the student learning experience both physically and creatively. Head of School Lisa Rosenstein shares the realization of this transformation, “We have strategically carved out spaces to foster the different types of play critical in child development. Also, we have consciously given our children



The Library/Media Center is at the heart of campus, a hub for collaborative and cross-disciplinary learning.

choices. I cross the campus and see second graders using the steps on the plaza for dramatic play, a development kindergarten group is running on the rocks improvising a game, and the kindergartners are building a bridge across a river of water from our pump in the sand area. There is joy and friendship—and deep learning everywhere.” The end result supports The Willows’ core value to cultivate student imagination and discovery while embracing questioning and exploration.

The campus development has encouraged more “hands on” learning experiences allowing student imaginations to flow. Kindergarten teacher Brent Weiss shares his perspective. “A variety of structured sports and creative play now occur simultaneously, without conflict, making the student outdoor experience more fulfilling. Expanded classrooms provide more flexible program space, easier transitions between activities, and the opportunity for students to view and appreciate the development of a longer term project. Nooks for small group outdoor learning enable teachers to take the classroom outside.”



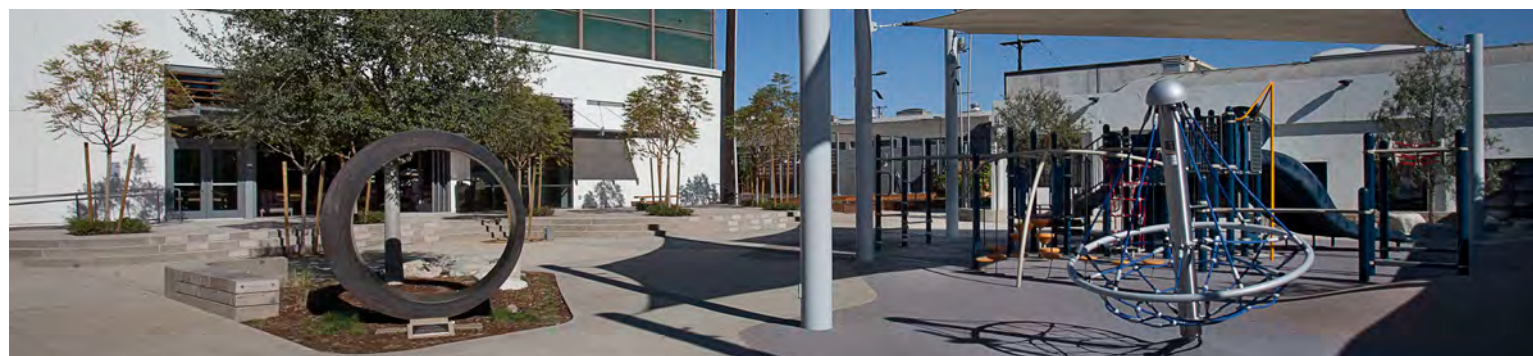
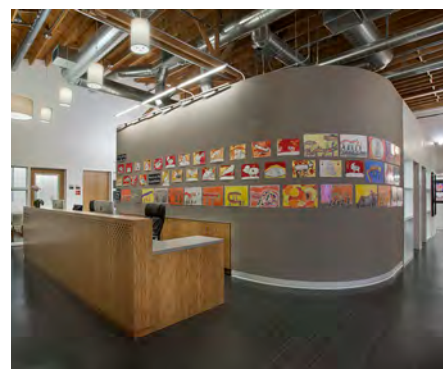
“Illig was a good fit for Willows! They led mini-tours of the project, provided learning opportunities for the students, and shared what they do as builders.”

Brent Weiss, Kindergarten Teacher

Phil Lee, kindergarten teacher, relates how his students embraced the learning opportunity provided by the campus construction: “Kindergartners created construction vests, designed weight-bearing structures with paper cups and cardboard, and interviewed our architects and construction workers.” Students designed their own science experiment using 12” dowels, modelling the installation of the support poles for the shade structure and discovering scientific principles of stability.

The effective collaboration and planning amongst the entire project team resulted in meeting an aggressive construction schedule. Construction delivery was phased to accomplish a continued, seamless, education delivery with key phases completed on time to welcome students for the new school year. As various phases were completed, Illig Construction led tours to acquaint The Willows community with the amenities of their new campus facilities. At all times, student/teacher safety and paths of travel were a paramount focus.

“The Illig Team was very receptive to working with our students and teachers to take advantage of this incredible learning opportunity,” reflected Lisa Rosenstein. “There was a great energy between Illig Construction, Pfau Long Architecture and The Willows with collaboration all in light of our objectives and goals.”





"Our newly renovated and enhanced campus is a vibrant 21st century environment where great minds grow."

The Willows
Community School



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