



PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES AUTHORITY EDUCATIONAL SPECIFICATIONS RESOURCE MANUAL

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INTRODUCTION: HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

The purpose of this manual is to assist school district staff, in cooperation with school and community leaders in preparing educational specifications. The document includes a definition of the educational specifications, suggested procedures, and a model format. The intent of this manual is to provide an example only. Both the form and the content of a district's document should reflect the specific goals and plans of the district and their community. Although parts of this guide may be inappropriate for a particular project because of its size or type, topics should be reviewed to discover whether they are relevant.

WHAT IS AN EDUCATIONAL SPECIFICATION?

Educational specifications (ed specs) are written communication to the design professional which bridge a school's educational program with its capital needs, allowing for effective implementation of the project as defined in the district's adopted and PSFA approved FMP. Ed specs are driven by information from the district related to their educational programs.

WHY DEVELOP EDUCATIONAL SPECIFICATION?

The ed specs objective is to assist the district in clearly stating the educational program and facility requirements for projects involving addition, significant renovation/remodel, and/or new/replacement school for which the district is requesting state funding assistance. The district will use the ed specs document to guide programming detail and design

ORGANIZATION OF THIS MANUAL:

This manual is organized in sections that follow the educational specifications development process:

- Form and Educational Specification Committee
- Draft a Committee Invitation Letter
- Document Project Requirements
- Area Relationships and Space Requirements
- Space Requirements Worksheets
- Sample Section of Educational Specifications
- Suggested Outline for Educational Specifications
- Final Educational Specifications Document Approvals

PSFA EDUCATIONAL SPECIFICATIONS PROCESS

1. FORM AN EDUCATIONAL SPECIFICATIONS COMMITTEE

When starting the educational specifications process, it is important to create a committee to draft, review and finalize the final educational specification document. The educational specifications should accurately communicate the activities that will occur in the proposed facility, as well as the other requirements that support those activities. The following list will provide a starting point when considering potential committee members:

- Teachers (Pre-School, Various grade levels, Art, Music, Technology, Physical education, Special Education)
- Maintenance and Custodians
- Students
- Administration
- Parents
- Nurses, Counselors (Psychologist, Speech, etc)
- Curriculum Specialist
- Transportation
- Librarian
- Food Service
- Superintendent or representative
- School Board Members
- Potential Community Members (Neighborhood association, Chamber of commerce, Local businesses, Town or City Planner, Economic Development Specialist, City and Town Council Members, Local Community Higher Ed, Non Profits, Planning & Zoning Commission, Advocacy Groups, or Higher Education
- PSFA (Regional Manager and/ or Facilities Master Planner)

2. DRAFT A COMMITTEE INVITATION LETTER

Below is an example of an invitation letter to the committee that would be sent to member of the district staff, teachers, students, parents and other community members.

Date: <Date>

RE: Educational Specification Committee

Dear <Title> <Name>,

You are being invited to serve on the Educational Specification Committee which is being organized for work to be completed on <date>. While the committee is mostly comprised of teachers, and staff, it will also include students, parents, administrators, and community members.

The purpose of this committee may require five (5) full day work sessions. The schedule for these session is indicated:

<Date> Visioning Work Session

<Date> Ed Spec Lab #1 (1 or 2 days)

<Date> Ed Spec Lab #2 (1 or 2 days)

The educational specifications work session will be facilitated by <Name, Company, and Credentials> and will be held at <Location and Time>. The visioning work session will begin by discussing overall trends in education and new concepts for school facilities. The work sessions will include extensive brainstorming, review of best practices in school organization, and begin to translate this information into facility needs.

This planning process requires involvement by all facets of the school community and we encourage and invite you to participate as an active participant in these sessions. We are asking for firm commitment of your attendance at these session to ensure the effective ness of this planning process. Please RSVP to <Name, Phone number, and Email>.

We look forward to meeting with you on <Date> as we begin this exciting process. On behalf of the <School District>, I look forward to your participation in this important endeavor and appreciate your continued support of quality education for all of our students.

Sincerely,

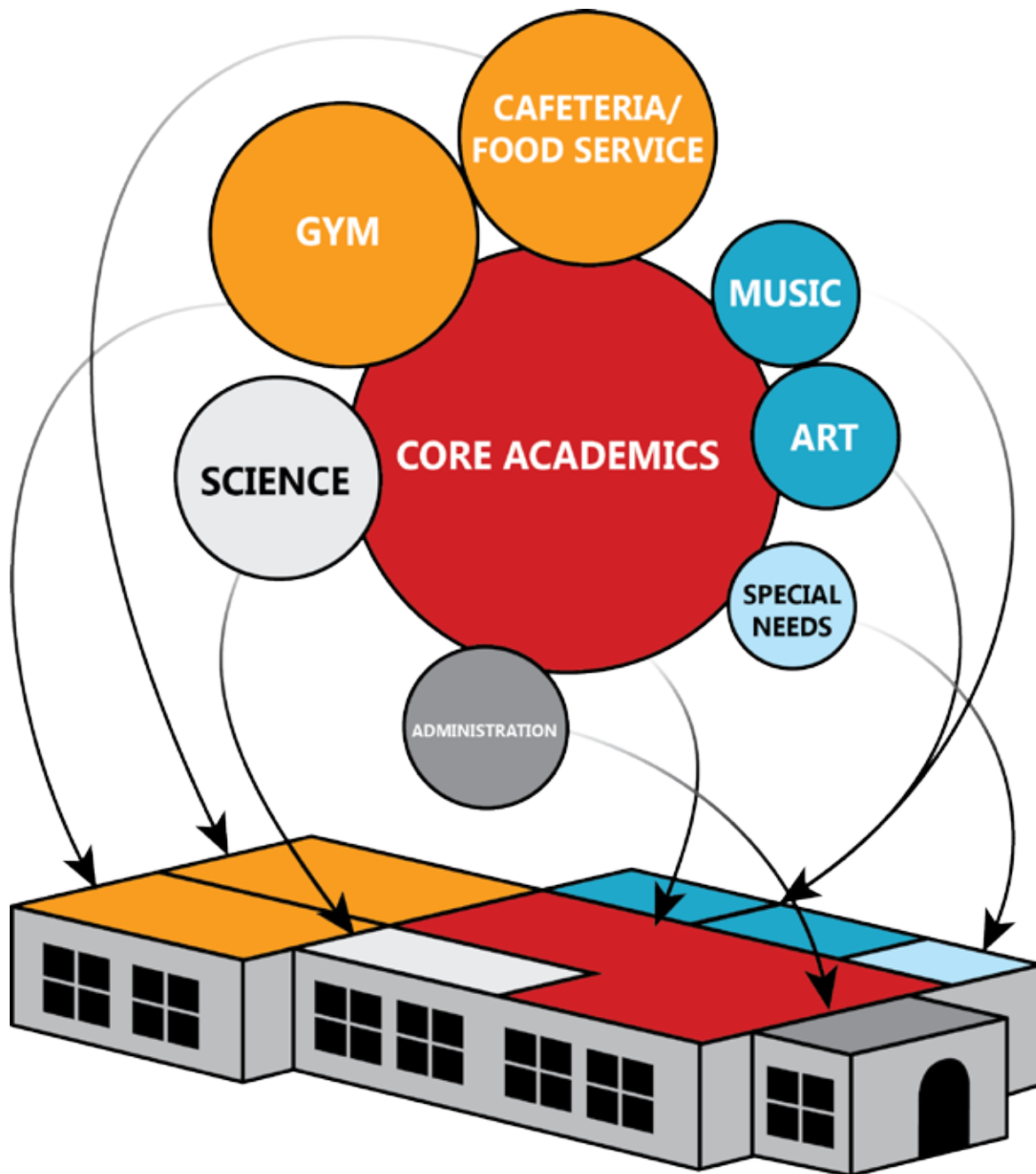
<Superintendent, and or School Board President >
<School District Name>

3. DOCUMENT PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

When drafting the educational specifications document, it is important to cover all the necessary information. Gathering this information into lists and diagrams will help clarify the requirements for the architect or design professional, and for other interested parties.

AREA RELATIONSHIPS AND SPACE REQUIREMENTS

Diagrams of area relationships should be developed in cooperation with the district's architect or design professional. The following is an example of the type of information that would be useful to include in a space requirement diagram.



SPACE REQUIREMENTS WORKSHEETS

Below are sample worksheets that the educational specifications committee would discuss and fill out for the completion of the document. Please refer to the Adequacy Planning Guide for more specific information on square footage. Please note that limits for gross square foot per student is set by the Public School Capital Outlay (PSCOC) and can be found on the PSFA website.

Elementary School Spaces

	Proposed Spaces for ___ number of students	
	Quantity of Space	Total square foot
Core Academics		
Special Needs		
Media Center		
Art Lab		
Music		
Physical Education		
Administration		
Food Service		
Custodial		
Sub Total		
Tare (30% of gross)		
Total		

Square Foot Per Student

Students in School	Divided by total sf	Square Foot per student

These examples of tables list square footages by program area for an elementary facility.

Core Academics Space Requirements

Core Academics	Proposed Spaces for ___ number of students		
	Quantity of Space	Square Feet	Total
Kindergarten Classroom			
Learning Lab/Classroom			
Shared Group Room/Tutor/ Conference			
Instruction Material Storage			
Computer Lab			
Multipurpose Learning Lab			
Core Academic Sub-Total			

Special Needs Space Requirements

	Proposed Spaces for ___ number of students		
	Quantity of Space	Square foot	Total
Self-Contained Classroom (Or 3 & 4 Year Old DD Pre K)			
Restroom/Shower			
Special Needs Related Service Room	*See core academics		
Resource/Tutor			
Shared Conference Room/Admin			
Storage			
Offices	*See administration		
Special Needs Sub-Total			

Media Center Space Requirements

	Proposed Spaces for ___ number of students		
	Quantity of Space	Square foot	Total
Reading Areas/Circulation/Media Specialist Office			
Workroom/Storage			
Stacks			
Media Center Sub-Total			

Art Lab Space Requirements

	Proposed Spaces for ___ number of students		
	Quantity of Space	Square foot	Total
Art Lab			
Art Lab Sub-Total			

Music Lab Space Requirements

	Proposed Spaces for ___ number of students		
	Quantity of Space	Square foot	Total
Music Room			
Storage			
Music Lab Sub-Total			

Physical Education Space Requirements

	Proposed Spaces for ___ number of students		
	Quantity of Space	Square foot	Total
Multipurpose Room			
Storage			
Physical Education Sub-Total			

Administrative Space Requirements

	Proposed Spaces for ___ number of students		
	Quantity of Space	Square Feet	Total
Administration			
Reception/Secretarial			
Principal's Office			
Assistant Principal			
Conference Rom			
Administrative Storage			
Copy Room			
Nurses Office			
Nurses Exam Space			
Stock Room			
Guidance Counselor Office			
Guidance Counselor Shared Space			
Parent Workspace			
Flexible Office Space For Admin And Special Needs			
Administration Sub-Total			

Food Service Space Requirements

	Proposed Spaces for ___ number of students		
	Quantity of Space	Square Feet	Total
Kitchen			
Preparation Area			
Serving Area			
Dry Food Storage			
Cooler/Freezer			
Ware Washing			
Kitchen Managers Office			
Lockers			
Food Service Sub-Total			

Custodial/Maintenance Space Requirements

	Proposed Spaces for ___ number of students		
	Quantity of Space	Square foot	Total
Receiving/Storage			
Maintenance Areas			
Maintenance Shops			
Janitors Closets			
Custodial/Maintenance Subtotal			

Learning Community

	Proposed Spaces for ___ number of students		
	Quantity of Space	Square Feet	Total
Classrooms			
Large Classroom (Tech-ED Lab)*			
Resource Room			
Science Lab			
Science Prep/Storage			
Business, Marketing, Computer			
Learning Community Subtotal			

Decentralized Admin/Guidance/Teacher Prep Space Requirements

	Proposed Spaces for ___ number of students		
	Quantity of Space	Square Feet	Total
Conference Room			
Office			
Instructional Material Storage			
Work/Copy			
Teacher Prep			
Learning Community			
Number Of Learning Communities			
Totals Per Pod/Cluster			
Decentralized Admin/Guidance/ Teacher Prep Sub-Total			

Example Classroom Space Description

	Proposed Spaces for ___ number of students	
	Audience	Total
Individual, Small, Large, Group Activities		
Storage Of Materials		
Project Based Learning		
Demonstrations		
Computer Based Instruction		

Example Mechanical, Electrical and Tech Space Description

	Proposed Spaces for ___ number of students	
	Audience	Total
Mechanical		
Plumbing		
Electrical/Lighting		
Furniture Equipment		
Special Considerations		
Example Mechanical, Electrical And Tech Space Subtotal		

4. SAMPLE SECTION OF EDUCATIONAL SPECIFICATION

Educational specifications should convey clear educational objectives. Good design solutions depend on proper interpretation of the educational specifications by the design professional. The follow is presented to help facilitate the process:

INTRODUCTION:

It is the goal of the core academic program to provide opportunities for students of all grade levels to foster mastery of basic skills in reading, language, social studies, mathematics, science, citizenship, health, technology, and other content areas; experience and enhance their awareness and understanding of multi-cultural values, beliefs, and other aspects of society; and become involved in inquiry-based learning expressed by hands-on, minds-on, experiences.

The core academic area is composed of spaces associated with typical academic and corresponding illustrations and adjacencies are described herein. Additionally, description of activities and persons to be accommodated as well as design considerations are listed.

OVERVIEW

The core academics concept should be organized to facilitate an interdisciplinary approach to instruction. Characteristics of this area are:

- Ability to organize space by teams
- Instruction and facility space to encourage team and student communication
- A flexible learning environment that is:
- Adaptable to change and supportive of different program delivery/organizational patterns
- Adequately sized with space to support the work of teams and production of student work, and encourages the integration of curricula

The concepts that will give direction to this interdisciplinary approach are:

- Integrated curricula
- Performance objectives for students
- Individualized/intra-dependent learning environments
- Performance assessment
- Decentralized/shared decision making
- Coordination of services provided to students

In addition to the traditional large and small group instruction, many varied activities take place in the various core academic learning areas;

- Writing/composing
- Role playing- skits or acting out situations
- Hands on projects and activities – individual and group
- Oral presentations
- Interactive activities, room-to-room, school to-school, class to community
- Team teaching among all the disciplines
- Group and teamwork activities

5. SUGGESTED OUTLINE FOR EDUCATIONAL SPECIFICATIONS

Document organization must be logical and user friendly. Below is an example of what should be included on the title page and table of contents of a completed Education Specification.

TITLE PAGE:

Educational specifications

Name of school

Type of school

Name of local educational agency

List of local board of education members

List of committee members and consultants

Contact person

Date of board approval

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- I. Executive summary
- II. Overall building program requirements worksheets
 - a. Special relationships
 - b. Illustration
 - c. Program area requirements worksheet
 - d. Total gross square foot (TGS) above allowable GSF pre table located in Appendix A
- III. Program areas overview
- IV. Special features
- V. Flexibility of the learning environment
- VI. 21st century best practices
- VII. Work session overview
- VIII. Technology
- IX. Safety & security
- X. Site issues
- XI. Sustainable schools
- XII. Aesthetics
- XIII. Student spaces
- XIV. Public spaces
- XV. Community use
- XVI. Program area descriptions:
 - a. Core academics
 - b. Special needs
 - c. Technical/career education
 - d. Visual arts
 - e. Music/arts
 - f. Gym/physical education
 - g. Media center
 - h. Administration
 - i. Cafeteria/ food services
 - j. Custodial/building services

6. FINAL EDUCATIONAL SPECIFICATIONS DOCUMENT APPROVALS

For school districts, the final educational specifications document for public schools and district authorized charter schools should be approved and signed by the school board president and the superintendent of the school. State authorized charter schools should have their final educational specifications document approved and signed by the Head Administrator and the governing board president.

Once the final educational specifications document has been signed, it must be submitted to the New Mexico Public School Facilities for final approval. The submittal package must include the signed cover letter, one hard copy and one electronic copy. Below is a sample letter.

Date: <Date>

PSFA Facilities Master Planner
Public School Facilities Authority
1312 Basehart Drive SE
Albuquerque, NM 87106

Dear Master Planner,

The <Name> School Board/ or Governing Board has reviewed and approved the Educational Specifications for <Project Name> project at <School Name> school on <Date>. With this letter we now submit our Educational Specifications to PSFA. Please find an enclosed hard copy, the electronic copy has been loaded into PSFA Construction Information Management System.

Please contact me if you have any questions or desire additional information. I can be reached at <Phone Number> or by E-mail at <E-mail address>.

Sincerely,

<School Board President/ or Governing Board President >
<School District Name>
<Superintendent/ Head Administrator>

Cc: PSFA Regional Manager
PSFA Planning & Design Manager

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“A Handbook to Writing Educational Specifications.” Alaska Department of Education & Early Development. State of Alaska, Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, 2005. Web. 7 Apr. 2016.