The Three P’s…
People, Pinterest and Programming:
Planning a School For Homeless Children in Oklahoma City
Meet Us

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**Length:**
60 Minutes

**Description:**
How do you have public involvement for a school where the children are homeless and in many cases their parents aren’t very involved? Find out how we had to step out of our normal programming and planning comfort zone to design a facility that the children, the faculty and the community could be proud of. In this program we will explore how we met with the students, faculty and staff to get their ideas for the new school and our use of Pinterest as a programming tool.
Learning Objectives

1. Learn how to reach out and program a school for homeless children.
2. Learn various techniques to get design ideas from PK-5th grade students.
3. Learn how to communicate with a homeless school community to gain their ideas.
4. Learn how to use Pinterest as a programming tool and how to organize the information for large groups to understand.
Agenda

• What is Positive Tomorrows?
• Review issues in the planning process.
• Who did we meet with?
• How did we conduct our information gathering?
• How to use Pinterest as a planning tool.
• Discuss and review the design outcomes.
Our Mission:
Educating homeless children and their families to break the cycle of poverty.
Counting Homeless Families

HUD’s definition of homelessness excludes more than 80% of homeless children.
More than 8,500 homeless children in Oklahoma City

1 in 21 children is homeless in Oklahoma

1 in 10 students is homeless in the Oklahoma City Public School District
only 74% of school age children in Oklahoma are actually in school

by the numbers

2.5 million homeless kids in the US

OK ranks as the 7th worst state for homeless children

7,500+ homeless children in central Oklahoma alone
1 in 14 children under the age of 6 is homeless.
What keeps homeless kids out of class?

The top challenges homeless children faced in attending school were:

- Family worried about basic survival needs: 82%
- Lack of transportation: 43%
- Inability to do homework due to lack of a study area: 42%
- Lack of clothing and supplies: 30%
- Poor health and medical care: 29%

• Lack of parental involvement
• High student turnover
• No public funding, fully donation based.
• Realistic safety threats
• Staff and building committee (volunteer) turnover
• No national model for this type of school
• Met with the students first

• Involved anyone who would use the spaces daily

• Involve those who can accurately represent their department.

• Involve the whole design team from the very beginning: architect, interior designer, furniture specialist, construction, landscape, IT, MEP, etc.
Dream Big Exercise

Students
Sketching Exercise

Students
Sketching Exercise

Students
Sketching Exercise

Students
Sketching Exercise

Students
Sketching Exercise

You can say whatever you want. If you want to turn pages, you can put a push button.

Water fountain turn pages.
Outcomes from our meetings...

- Safety & Security
- Modern & flexible furniture, “floating chairs”
- Makerspace, “where we can build R2-D2 & BB8”
- Commons Area, “place to sit with friends”
- Have a space of their own, “no one gets left out”
- Treehouses & new computers
- Water fountains & free food were mentioned for every room
Dream Big Exercise

Faculty
Outcomes from our meetings...

• “Home”
• Safety & Security
• Seven Core Principles & Inspirational Words
• Flexible and movable furniture
• Durable & easy to clean
• Open line of sight and natural lighting
• Engaging & interactive without being a sensory overload
Outcomes from our meetings...

• Safety & Security
• Private meeting spaces
• Easy to clean & low cost to maintain
• Teach students & families to be self-sufficient
• Clothing & donation closets, laundry room, showers, & kitchen
• Donor recognition
• Large amounts of information were coming in daily...all from different sources.

• Better organization methods were needed.

• MA+ Interior Designers recommended Pinterest, which they used for personal content at the time.
• Pinterest allowed multiple users to share hundreds of images in various categories.
• Private boards are also available to use where an invite can be extended to select participants.
• Images were then printed, cut out, and organized into the appropriate categories.
Those categories included:

- Outdoor Spaces
- Administration
- Family Support
- Classrooms
- Gymnasium
- Cafeteria/Commons
- Makerspace
- Donor Recognition
- Circulation
- Library
- Collaboration Spaces
- Furnishings
• Each category had its own page, which was hung on the wall for viewing.
• A Discovery Session was held with faculty and staff to review the boards and get feedback.

• Every group had 5 minutes to review each category and leave positive and negative comments.
• Members of the design team were present and moved around to answer questions and facilitate conversations.
• This helped the design team narrow down design options.
• Updated the original Pinterest board with images that received positive feedback by the faculty and staff.
• Engages Community
• Collaborative Effort
• All Components Considered
• Everyone’s Voice is Heard
• Finished Product Fits True Needs
• Overall User Satisfaction
• Faculty, Staff & Students Feel Valued
Site Plan
“Oklahoma HOMEa”

- Importance of “Home”
- Warm Colors
- Natural Elements
- Knowledge of Oklahoma
- Name spaces after areas in the home
Exterior Design
Exterior Design

Seven Core Principles
Exterior Design

Back Porch
Exterior Design

Backyard
You are braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think.
Interior Design

Clubhouse
Interior Design
Questions?
Thank You!

For more information about Positive Tomorrows, visit: www.positivetomorrows.org