

AIA Dallas



A Chapter of The American
Institute of Architects

October 27, 2016

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Dallas, TX, 75206

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Dear DISD Board of Trustees:

AIA Dallas commends DISD for adopting CityLab HS as a transformative education model to prepare students for future roles in the fields of architecture, design, and public policy. Its studio culture is a reflection of the design thinking process of the architecture and design professions, and an impactful way to teach students to be assertive problem solvers and holistic thinkers. We look forward to CityLab creating a unique learning environment that encourages citizenship and community-building while also preparing local students for college and careers.

As we are all aware, cities are complex systems that go beyond buildings, highways, streets, bicycle lanes, pedestrian trails, open spaces, and landscape patterns, to establish neighborhoods and provide the settings for public life. A downtown Dallas location for CityLab would allow students to examine ways that the urban core was designed, planned, and developed in the past, while proposing new visions for the future.

CityLab has the opportunity to be an invaluable education experience by taking advantage of its location in downtown Dallas as a living laboratory. This "living lab" would provide students the opportunity to explore their neighborhoods, and understand the relationship of the built and natural environments, as well as the processes involved in city-planning.

CityLab HS commitment to downtown Dallas mirrors AIA Dallas' commitment to enhancing the Dallas CBD and increasing surrounding neighborhood connections.

AIA Dallas is fully committed to broadening education options for growth and success of local students, as well as for opportunities to encourage diversity in design fields that better mirror the society that they serve. We hope to partner with the school to provide opportunities and resources for CityLab students such as:

- Educational outreach and enrichment programs in collaboration with our ACE (Architecture, Construction & Engineering) Mentorship Program, the Dallas Center for Architecture, in addition to the AIA Dallas Education Outreach, Latinos in Architecture, and Women in Architecture committees.
- Opportunities for CityLab HS students to apply for the Dallas Center for Architecture Foundation's Diversity in Architecture Scholarships.
- Ongoing mentoring opportunities for CityLab HS students through our members and firms.

AIA Dallas supports your consideration for approval of the opening of CityLab High School at the Pegasus Complex Located at 912 South Ervay Street for the 2017-18 School Year.

Sincerely,

Zaida Basora, FAIA
AIA Dallas
2016 President

Jan Blackmon, FAIA
AIA Dallas
Executive Director