

2024

# Framework for Expanding K-12 Engagement

ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGIATE  
SCHOOLS OF ARCHITECTURE



# Framework for Expanding K-12 Engagement

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## 1.0 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Collectively created by the 2023-24 ACSA Leadership Committee in keeping with the objectives of the 2022-25 Strategic Plan (Goal 1: Equity, Social Justice and Climate Action), this framework for engaging K12 hopes to guide and articulate this work in the spirit of co-creation and equity. Co-creation ensures that the voices, perspectives, and experiences of K-12 stakeholders are valued and integrated into new content for architectural education. From an equity standpoint, co-creation enables institutions to design programs, curricula, and initiatives by prioritizing the context. This not only fosters a sense of belonging and inclusivity, but it allows institutions to identify and address barriers to access and opportunity.

The purpose of this document is to guide institutions looking to initiate or expand their K-12 engagement. By setting up an inquiry based approach, this document examines the obstacles and opportunities that must be considered in the pre-college architecture engagement. The following considerations, questions, and resources are intended to provide a framework for architecture schools to formulate their investigation into the appropriate mode of K-12 engagement, based on their individual situations and goals. Rather than provide a step-by-step set of instructions for setting up a K-12 program, this guide seeks to establish a line of inquiry for stakeholders with various roles within an institution (Administrators, Faculty, Staff, etc...) to investigate the many ways of engaging K-12 students.

### 1.1 USING THE DOCUMENT

This Framework is presented in the following series of objectives for which engagement with the K-12 sector might benefit an institution and existing K12 stakeholders:

**Exposure to Architecture**

**Admissions and College Prep**

**Community Engagement**

**Service-Learning**



**Curriculum Development**

It is incumbent on each individual institution using this guide to prioritize these objectives according to their unique goals, missions, values, resources and curricular imperatives. Following these objectives is a set of basic, yet fundamental questions each institution should be asking as they begin their investigations. Throughout the document are links and brief descriptions of various architecture and design example programs found in K-12. Use the legend below to compare the considerations based on resources available.

#### LEGEND

Grade Levels: **K-12**

Financial Resources:  -   

Time for Planning:  -   

Level of External Partnership:  -   

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

### 2.1 OBJECTIVE FOR ENGAGEMENT: EXPOSURE TO ARCHITECTURE

Goal: To ignite interest in architecture and design among K-12 students through hands-on workshops, site visits, and design competitions that foster creativity, critical thinking, and appreciation for the built environment.

#### CONSIDERATIONS

- Host Design Workshops and Competitions: 3-12 💰💰📅📅📅🤝🤝

Organize design workshops, competitions, and hands-on activities that allow K-12 students to explore architectural principles and unleash their creativity.

- Provide Access to Architectural Resources: 3-12 💰📅🤝🤝

Offer access to architectural resources, such as books, models, and digital tools, that K-12 teachers and students can use to explore architectural concepts and design processes. Guide K-12 teachers in using the resources to develop curricular content.

- Facilitate Field Trips and Site Visits: K-12 💰📅📅🤝🤝

Arrange field trips and site visits to architectural landmarks, construction sites, and design studios to provide K-12 students with real-world exposure to architecture and design practices.

- Engage Professional Architects and Designers: 6-12 💰📅🤝🤝

Invite professional architects and designers to guest lecture, lead workshops, and mentor K-12 students, providing valuable insights and inspiration from the field.

- Offer Professional Development Workshops: K-12 💰📅📅📅🤝🤝🤝

Provide professional development workshops and resources for K-12 teachers to integrate architecture and design into their curriculum effectively.


- Promote Sustainable Design Education: K-12 💰📅📅🤝🤝

Emphasize the importance of sustainable design and environmental stewardship in architecture and design education, empowering K-12 students to become responsible global citizens.

## 2.2 OBJECTIVE FOR ENGAGEMENT: ADMISSIONS and COLLEGE PREPARATION

Goal: To inspire K-12 students to consider higher education by showcasing the benefits and opportunities available at our respective institutions through engaging presentations, campus visits, and interactive workshops.

### CONSIDERATIONS

- Promote College Prep Events: 9-12 

Organize college preparation events and college fairs in collaboration with K-12 schools and districts to provide students with information about the college admissions process, academic programs, and campus life.

- Establish Dual Enrollment Programs: 9-12 

Develop dual enrollment programs that allow high school students to earn college credits while still in high school. This not only provides students with a head start on their college education but also fosters relationships between the college and K-12 institutions.

- Provide Campus Tours and Visits: 6-12 

Offer guided campus tours, and information sessions and student shadowing opportunities specifically designed for K-12 students and educators. These visits allow students to experience campus life firsthand and help educators understand the college's offerings and atmosphere.

- Embed College Readiness Skills: 9-12 

Embed college readiness skills, such as critical thinking, communication, and research skills, into K-12 curriculum frameworks to better prepare students for success in higher education.

- Offer Scholarship Opportunities: 9-12 

Partner with K-12 schools and organizations to offer scholarship opportunities for high-achieving students or those with financial need. This demonstrates the college's commitment to supporting student success and access to higher education.

- Provide Access to Admissions Counselors: 9-12 

Assign admissions counselors or representatives to work closely with K-12 schools and counselors to provide guidance and support throughout the college application process. This personalized approach helps build trust and rapport with students and educators.

## 2.3 OBJECTIVE FOR ENGAGEMENT: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Goal: To strengthen partnerships between K-12 schools, higher education institutions, and local communities through collaborative initiatives that promote active citizenship, social justice, and sustainable community development.

### CONSIDERATIONS

- Encourage Community Engagement Projects: K-12       

Encourage well-trained faculty to develop community engagement projects that involve K-12 students designing and improving public spaces, fostering a sense of civic responsibility and creativity.

- Attend K-12 Community Events: K-12      

Participate in community events, parent nights, and college readiness programs hosted by K-12 schools and organizations. This demonstrates the college's commitment to community engagement and increases visibility among prospective students and families.

- Provide Training and Support: K-12       










Offer training, workshops, and resources for college students, K-12 teachers, and administrators to develop the facilitation skills, knowledge of history and systems, and cultural competencies needed to engage effectively with the community.

- Facilitate Reflection and Learning: K-12  

Incorporate reflection activities, discussions, and assignments into community engagement experiences to encourage critical thinking, self-awareness, and learning among college students.

- Offer Diverse Engagement Opportunities: K-12       

Provide a range of K-12 community engagement opportunities for college students, including volunteer service, internships, research projects, service-learning courses, and community-based learning experiences.

- Develop Sustainable Projects: K-12         

Support the development of sustainable community engagement projects and initiatives that address long-term community needs and promote lasting positive change.






- Connect with Local Community Partners: K-12        

Establish connections and collaboration opportunities between K-12 and local community partners (such as non-profits, local government agencies, professional organizations, professional firms, local businesses, etc.) by serving as a conduit or facilitator.

## 2.4 OBJECTIVE FOR ENGAGEMENT: SERVICE-LEARNING

Goal: To integrate service-learning pedagogy, outcomes and experiences into the curriculum of the school, fostering experiential learning, civic engagement, and personal development while addressing community challenges.


### CONSIDERATIONS

- Establish Joint Objectives: **K-12**       

Define clear objectives and learning outcomes for service-learning initiatives, ensuring alignment with both college and K-12 educational goals.

- Establish Long-Term Partnerships: **K-12**        

Cultivate long-term partnerships with K-12 schools, districts, and educational organizations to sustain and expand efforts to identify service-learning opportunities that address community needs in architecture and design over time.

- Integrate Service-Learning into Curriculum: **K-12**        

Work with K-12 educators to integrate service-learning projects into their curriculum, providing college students with meaningful opportunities to apply classroom knowledge to real-world contexts.

- Facilitate Collaborative Planning: **K-12**       

Facilitate collaborative planning meetings between college faculty, K-12 teachers, and administrators to design service-learning projects that meet the needs of both college students and K-12 students.

- Ensure Reflection and Assessment: **College**     

Incorporate reflection and assessment components into service-learning experiences for college students, allowing them to critically evaluate their experiences and learning outcomes.

- Create Mentorship Opportunities: **6-12**        

Establish opportunities that connect college students and faculty with K-12 students through mentorship programs. Through continuing and longer-term engagement, K-12 students become regularly supported by mentors throughout the year.

## 2.5 OBJECTIVE FOR ENGAGEMENT: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Goal: To align K12 opportunities for students with program curricula and learning objectives, ensuring that educational experiences are impactful and responsive to the needs and aspirations of students and stakeholders.

### CONSIDERATIONS

- Facilitate Curriculum Mapping Workshops: K-12        

Host curriculum mapping workshops or collaborative sessions where K-12 teachers and college faculty can identify areas of alignment and integration between high school and college curricula.

- Promote Interdisciplinary Learning: K-12        


Encourage interdisciplinary learning experiences that bridge the gap between K-12 and college curricula, fostering connections across subject areas and promoting holistic student development.

- Provide Access to Educational Resources: 3-12    





Offer access to educational resources, materials, and technologies that support curriculum goals and enhance teaching and learning experiences for K-12 educators and students.

- Facilitate Cross-Institutional Collaboration: 3-12        

Foster collaboration between K-12 schools, colleges, and universities to share best practices, resources, and expertise in curriculum development and implementation.

- Implement Formative Assessment Strategies: 6-12      

Incorporate formative assessment strategies into K-12 curriculum design to monitor student progress, identify areas for improvement, and inform instructional decisions.

- Provide Access to Professionals and Industry: 6-12      

Offer connections with professional firms, organizations, industry partners, and other institutions that could support curricular development.



### 3.0 ARCHITECTURE K-12 EXAMPLES

#### EXPOSURE TO ARCHITECTURE

##### Architects in Schools

<https://www.af-oregon.org/architects-in-schools/>

Architects in Schools is a program run by the Architecture Foundation of Oregon whose goal is to “introduce the youngest Oregonians to the power and possibilities of design with the end goal of creating lifelong learners and critical thinkers who have a voice in their community.” Begun in 2003, it now serves over 5400 third through fifth grade students in the Portland metropolitan area, Salem, Eugene and Central, Southern, Eastern and Coastal Oregon. “Architects in Schools delivers arts programming, environmental understanding, awareness of cultural links to history, understanding responsibility to the natural environment, career awareness and communication skills – all through the principles and practices of architecture and design while addressing Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards.”

##### Hip Hop Architecture Camps

<https://www.hiphoparchitecture.com/>

This week-long intensive experience is specifically designed to empower underrepresented youth to explore and excel in the fields of architecture, urban planning, and creative placemaking through the lens of hip hop culture. Our program is based on the “4C’s” - Creativity, Collaboration, Communication, and Critical Thinking - and brings together students with top industry professionals, including architects, urban planners, designers, community activists, and hip hop artists. Together, they work to envision and create innovative designs for their own communities, using a range of mediums including physical models, digital models, and even their own original Hip Hop Architecture track and music video.

#### ADMISSIONS and COLLEGE PREPARATION

##### ACE Mentor

<https://www.acementor.org/>

The ACE Mentor Program of America, founded in 1994, is a no-cost after-school program that prioritizes workforce development for high school students by connecting them with experts from the design and construction industry. ACE Mentor addresses pressing workforce needs, offers a range of exciting opportunities for students, and plays a crucial role in bridging the skills gap, with continuous mentor opportunities from high school through to full-time employment.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EXAMPLES

### Youth Engagement Planning - Adventures in Planning

<https://youthengagementplanning.com/adventures-in-planning>

The program aligns with the elements of STEAM and focuses on inspiring youth to be strong leaders advocating for change in their communities. The downloadable workbook is divided into nine sections, each intended to be covered over the course of a week and each covering a different sub-discipline of urban planning:

Discover Planning (Planning 101)

Follow the Map (Land Use & Zoning)

Walking Back in Time (Historic Preservation)

The Neighborhood Pride (Housing & Neighborhoods)

The Wind Farmer (Sustainability & Environmental Planning & Energy)

The World Around Me (Urban Design & Tactical Urbanism)

Every Trip Has a Story (Transportation)

The Business of the City (Economic Development)

The Future is the Biggest Adventure (Comprehensive Planning)Name,

### National Organization for Minority Architects (NOMA) Project Pipeline

Website: <https://nomalaprojectpipeline.org/>

The national program led by the National Organization for Minority Architects (NOMA) mission is to “empower young people to affect change in their community through design.” Through after-school programs, field trips, summer camps, and other workshops, the program endeavors to provide a pathway for minority students to become licensed architects and professionals. The program is typically a collaboration between K-12 schools, universities, professionals, and other organizations. Architecture schools usually participate in the program by being a host, a sponsor, or providing faculty and student mentors.

## SERVICE-LEARNING EXAMPLE

### UVA School of Architecture: K-12 Modules for the Memorial to Enslaved Laborers

<https://mel.virginia.edu/educators>

The Memorial to Enslaved Laborers (MEL) at the University of Virginia is a physical embodiment of the University's wider efforts to center the lives and contributions of the enslaved community who largely built and operated the University from its founding in 1819 through emancipation, and beyond. In addition to honoring the excellence and intelligences of this most underrepresented community, the design elements and physical features of the MEL offer numerous opportunities to engage visitors in an active and participatory form of place-based education. In a collaboration with local K-12 Educators, students at the University of Virginia, co-developed educational materials for use by K-12 educators, students, and the general public when engaging with the Memorial in person or through online formats. With an emphasis on a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach to curricular development, the K-12 modules were developed as part of an undergraduate course taught at the University of Virginia (led by John Comazzi) in which university students partnered with local K-12 educators and the MEL's Community Engagement Committee, which includes Descendants of the original enslaved community.

## CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT EXAMPLES

### CityLab High School

<https://www.dallasisd.org/domain/20159>

CityLab High School, Dallas, TX and the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) College of Architecture, Planning and Public Affairs (CAPPA) created an Inter Local Agreement for course work in 2020 which created dual credit courses for CityLab High School students. They developed course equivalencies so that students at CityLab could get up to 6 credits of college credit while in high school.

### American Society for Landscape Architect (ASLA) - Tools for PreK-12 Teachers

<https://www.asla.org/prek12teachers.aspx>

ASLA invites educators to experience DREAM BIG with Design and learn how to introduce landscape architecture to students. Classroom teachers, afterschool leaders, homeschool educator, families, and design professionals can access a host of sessions that build on interdisciplinary curricula focusing on science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM).

## 4.0 KEY QUESTIONS

Here are some guiding questions that the school or college should ask when they are planning K-12 engagement. Some questions might be more relevant for administrators, faculty, or staff in planning and implementing the programs, nevertheless, the questions act as a starting point for an inquiry based approach to engagement.

### WHY:

Why would you like to engage with K-12 education?

Why is this program relevant to your institution's strategic plan, mission, charter, vision, and core values?

### WHAT:

What is the purpose of your engagement? (e.g. for recruitment; for exposure to the field; for diversifying the field; for service-learning; for community-engaged learning; for curriculum requirements; for general community engagement/partnerships)

What are your goals and objectives? SMART goals

What kind of format would you like to engage in? (e.g. one-off program; after school; semester-long; year-long; multi-year, Summer camp)

What kind of resources would I need? (e.g. financial; time; materials; curricular; staff/admin support; students; instructors; volunteers)

What are the existing resources/infrastructure available? (e.g. school/university; local; state; national)

What are the processes needed for me to get approval at my college and university?

### HOW:

How do I go about starting this engagement with K-12 education partners?

How do I find out who can I engage with at the local, regional, state, or federal level?

How do you recruit participants from the K-12 schools?

How do you recruit participants from your school?

How do you promote this program (e.g. within the school, college, university, community, region, state-wide, nationally, etc.)?

How might I expand our current or existing program(s)?

How is the program connected with your institution's strategic plan, mission, charter, vision, core values?

**WHO:**

Who can I partner with to start this engagement with K-12 education?

Who is your target audience? (e.g. pre-K; primary; elementary; middle; high school)

Who needs to approve this engagement at the university level?

Who do I need to engage at the local, regional, state, or federal level?

Who will lead this program from your school?

Who will be involved in the program from your school/college/university?

**WHEN:**

When do you start the program?

When do you end the program?

When will this program be integrated into your calendar year?

When do you recruit for this program?

**WHERE:**

Where will this program be based?

Where will this program live within the college, school, or university?

Under whose jurisdiction will this program fall within the college, school, or university?

Where do you hold this program?

Where do you recruit participants from?

## 5.0 RESOURCES

These are examples of existing programs that schools can connect with in efforts to expand their impact.

### 5.1 ASSOCIATION K-12 PATHWAY INITIATIVES

Study Architecture (ACSA): <https://www.studyarchitecture.com/>

American Institute of Architects (AIA) K-12: <https://www.aia.org/resource-center/aia-k-12-pathway-initiatives>

AIA EDI K-12 Architecture and Design Education Scan: <https://content.aia.org/sites/default/files/2017-09/K-12scan-091417-Final.pdf>

International Union of Architects (UIA) - Charter for Built Environment Education Network: <https://www.architectureandchildren-uia.com/info>

International Union of Architects (UIA)- Charter for Architectural Education: <https://www.uia-architectes.org/en/resource/architectural-education-charter/>

Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) National School Programme: <https://www.architecture.com/education-cpd-and-careers/learning/riba-national-schools-programme> *and* Learning Resources: <https://www.architecture.com/education-cpd-and-careers/learning/riba-national-schools-programme/learning-resources>

Association of Architecture Organizations (AAO) - K-12 Design and Education Resources: [http://aonetnetwork.org/resources?keys=&field\\_category\\_tid=43&sort\\_by=created&sort\\_order=DESC](http://aonetnetwork.org/resources?keys=&field_category_tid=43&sort_by=created&sort_order=DESC)

Youth Engagement Planning - Adventures in Planning: <https://youthengagementplanning.com/adventures-in-planning>

American Society for Landscape Architect (ASLA) - Tools for PreK-12 Teachers: <https://www.asla.org/prek12teachers.aspx>

### 5.2 NATIONAL PROGRAMS

Project Lead the Way: <https://www.pltw.org/>

ACE Mentor program: <https://www.acementor.org/>

National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) Pipeline Program: <https://www.noma.net/project-pipeline/>

NAF: <https://naf.org/>

Technology Student Association: <https://tsaweb.org>

### 5.3 STATE/REGIONAL PROGRAMS

Chicago Mobile Makers: <https://mobilemakers.org/>

Denver Architecture Foundation: Out-of-the-Box City (At-Home Family Program): <https://denverarchitecture.org/events-programs/box-city/>

Future City (STEM competition for middle school): <https://futurecity.org/>

Hip Hop Architecture Camp: <https://www.hiphoparchitecture.com/>

NEXT.CC: <https://www.next.cc/>

Architects in Schools (Oregon): <https://www.af-oregon.org/architects-in-schools/>

University of Virginia - School of Architecture Summer Discovery Program: <https://www.arch.virginia.edu/programs/design-discovery>

Design Thinking Toolkit (University of Virginia - EDU+SARC): DT-Toolkit-DES+EDU\_200908-LIVE.pdf

AIA New York - Learning by Design <https://www.centerforarchitecture.org/k-12/k-12-school-programs/learning-by-design-ny/>

## APPENDIX

### 2023-2024 ACSA Leadership Committee Members

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