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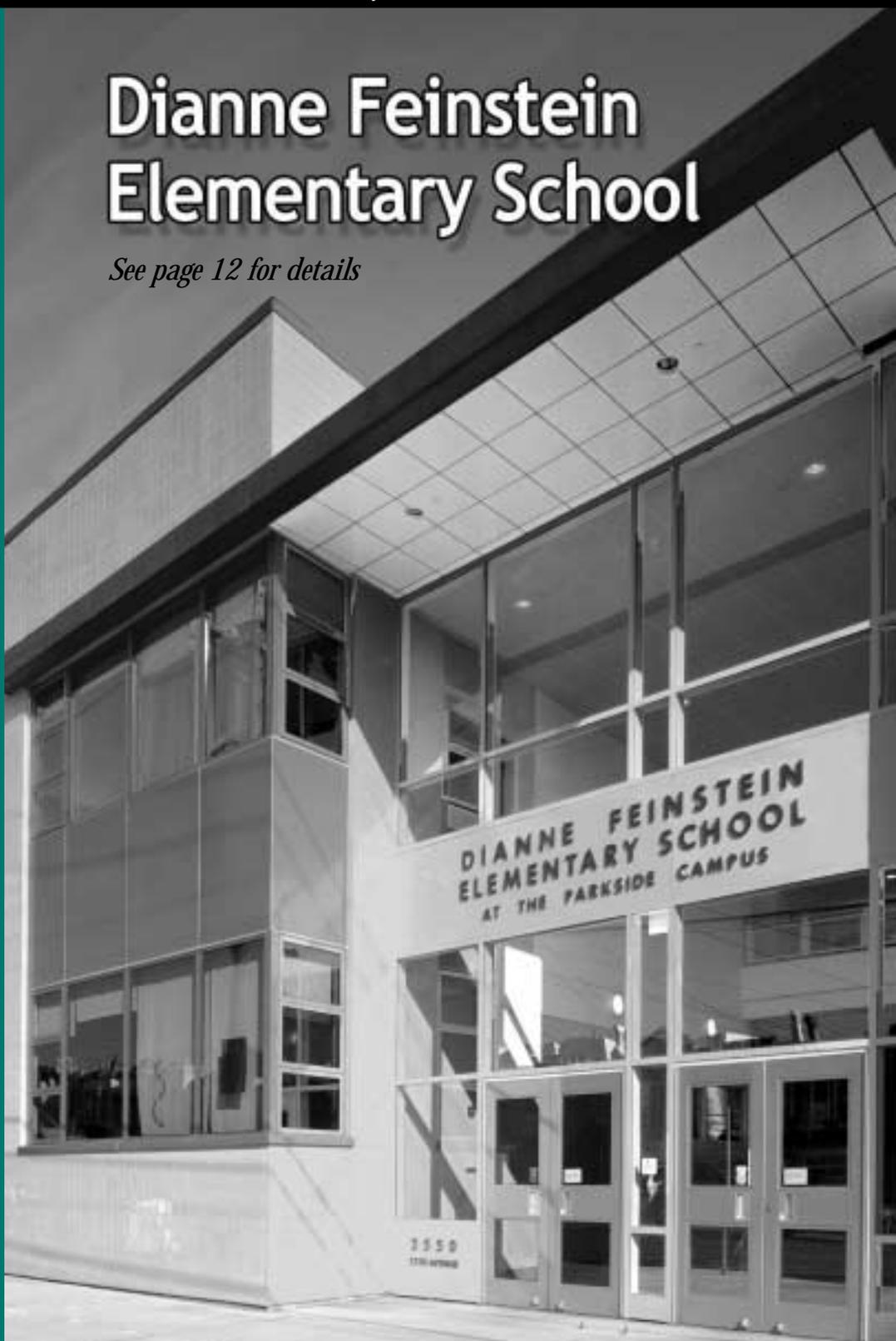
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE COALITION FOR ADEQUATE SCHOOL HOUSING

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Dianne Feinstein Elementary School

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Dianne Feinstein Elementary School

San Francisco Unified School District



Architect: *K2A Architecture + Interiors; San Francisco, CA*
Client: *San Francisco Unified School District*
Project Size: *64,400 square feet*

Dianne Feinstein Elementary School opened its doors in August 2006, welcoming its first classes of students, and becoming the newest school facility for San Francisco Unified School District. This high profile urban institution accommodates 500 children from kindergarten through fifth grade. The school's namesake, Senator Dianne Feinstein, served as the city's mayor for nine years. Senator Feinstein attended the opening day celebrations, taking time to share her joy of reading with the students.

K2A Architecture + Interiors strategically designed this 64,400 square foot, multistory building to accommodate an undersized, sloping site. The new school contains 26 classrooms, an art room, spacious library with media center, large multipurpose room, and administration space. The main office has large wrap around windows, which overlook the main entry. Beyond the building footprint, an expansive play yard fills the site.

The successful combination of texture and massing establish the new school as a good neighbor in its residential setting. A vocabulary of geometric shapes interweaves ceramic portals, flat stucco plains, large windows and two-story curtain wall entries. A contemporary palate of yellows, blues and grey layers with aluminum and copper accents.

Natural light is abundant in Dianne Feinstein Elementary, filling the corridors and classrooms. A linear skylight pierces the second floor, illuminating a mural which extends through to the first floor. A second-floor bridge acts as a separator for the K-5 program. This space furnishes a two-story atrium in the main entry and is accented with a lofty row of rectilinear windows.

Modernist influences of the exterior massing integrate with the interior concept and details. Reading nooks with built-in benches project as cubist bays on the exterior. The floor patterning is inspired by Joseph Albers'

“Homage to the Square,” whose motif helps to define program and seating areas. Brightly colored portals define each school wing, and Albers’ theme carries into signage details.

Each classroom is equipped with built-in storage, custom millwork cabinets, sink, and drinking fountain. Complimentary furnishings incorporate childhood ergonomics and ADA compliance with stylish durability. Computer counters in every classroom offer students a practical advantage. Indirect lighting, operable windows,



and environmental controls create a flexible, comfortable learning environment.

Opportunities for growth and learning extend outside the classroom. The sloping site was utilized to create fully accessible stepped seating for outdoor assemblies. A long ramp, featuring an environmentally themed mural, connects the main yard to an elevated basketball court. Tiered grass rings separate the kindergarten play structures from that of the older children. Soft, brightly colored matting protect the children from falls. The school’s four kindergarten classrooms have direct entry into the yard, which is also accessible beyond the main entry and through the multipurpose room. Young trees and vibrant planter boxes enhance this urban site with natural

Thank You **June DSA Workshop Presenters**



(l to r) DSA Staff Aaron Noble, Gerald Freeman, Dan Levernier, Howard “Chip” Smith, and moderator Steve Newsom, LPA, Inc.



(l to r) DSA Staff Aaron Noble, Howard “Chip” Smith, David Thorman, Gerald Freeman, Craig Rush, and Shaf Ullah

beauty. The school’s large green play yard serves as a striking example to San Francisco Unified School District’s movement of ‘greening play yards’ throughout the district.

On the north end of the Dianne Feinstein Elementary School campus extends a large Multipurpose facility designed to meet both the everyday requirements of the educational programs and provide a gathering place for community events. The space is outfitted with flexible, mobile seating allowing the space to function as the school cafeteria, an open space for PE

classes and rowed seating for assemblies and performances. The space is also fit with a retractable stage, complete with curtains and riggings. There is a separate entrance for after-hours events, allowing community access to the area, while providing security for the rest of the school facilities.

Dianne Feinstein Elementary School is designed to provide a dynamic and engaging environment in which the people of San Francisco can gather, collaborate, and grow. It is a place where communities can gather to help nurture our youngest generation. 