



26065 Outback Industrial Way, O'Neals, CA 93645

Mailing: PO Box 400, North Fork, CA 93643

559 877-6209 559 868-4488 FAX

www.chawanakee.k12.ca.us

Darren Q. Sylvia

Superintendent

August 22, 2019

Contact: Darren Sylvia, Superintendent

559.877.6209 office

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hillside Elementary receives award of distinction for innovative design

MADERA COUNTY, CA – Hillside Elementary School – Chawanakee Unified’s newest elementary school – was the only new elementary school in the Central Valley to receive an award of distinction from the 2019 Education Design Showcase awards by School Planning & Management.

“This award is a testament to the commitment of our Board to provide high-quality facilities that support student learning,” said Darren Sylvia, superintendent of Chawanakee Unified School District. “The innovative design provides flexible spaces for our teachers to collaborate and for our students to learn in a project-based environment that is not define by classroom walls.”

School Planning & Management created the Education Design Showcase in 1999 to share innovative and practical practices in planning, design, and construction to support the creation of the best possible learning environments for students at all levels of education.

Chawanakee Unified opened Hillside Elementary School in August 2018 well ahead of the first residents moving in. The state-of-art school is located in Hillside Village, Tesoro Viejo’s inaugural residential village. Serving students in transitional kindergarten through 8th grade, Hillside Elementary School offers a strong science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) curriculum. Students learn by doing with project-based learning and the “outdoor classroom” concept allows for hands-on learning with the natural resources of the community’s landscape.

Hillside Elementary School received the Project of Distinction award for its innovative design that features a 12-foot sliding door system that allows for innovative instruction. The oversized openings expand the learning space where teachers can collaborate with other teachers, as well as provide learning opportunities for students outside the traditional classroom walls.

The panel of judges for the awards consisted of experts and industry leaders in school facility planning, design, and construction. The judges applauded the 26-foot-wide inside corridors that allows for school gatherings, student collaboration, as well as indoor activity space during rainy days.

Hillside Elementary School was designed by Integrated Designs by SOMAM, Inc. It is the first school to be built in Tesoro Viejo. To accommodate the planned growth of the area, the Chawanakee Unified School District Board took action in May, 2019 to hire SIM-PBK Architects to design the new educational complex planned for Tesoro Viejo with an anticipated opening in Fall 2025.