

## Special Needs School, Kuwait



Currently, Franklin Hill & Associates is the exclusive educational facility planning consultant for the Special Needs Schools in Kuwait. Under the direction of Langdon Wilson International, Architects, the total project consists of three campuses totaling 6,000,000 GSF and serving 9,000 special needs students.



Designed to accommodate autism, physical disabilities, deaf, blind, and down syndrome students, numerous unique educational planning concepts will be applied to ALL students and educational situations.

Working with the LWI design team, Franklin Hill & Associates orchestrated the involvement of international consultants and established the overarching educational philosophy for 21 Century learning and the programmatic functional framework for design. Dr. Hill personally was engaged in programming all the educational spaces for both male and female facilities.

Hill proposed a very unique “small learning communities” model that could be applied across all exceptionalities giving both educational continuity to learning and a “systems” construction approach for economic and timely design and construction.



Sensorial design elements were employed that extended far beyond the general classrooms or neighborhoods to include family group areas and even indoor/outdoor patio spaces for environmental stimulation in the oftentimes extreme Middle East climate. Advanced technologies and specialized ergonomic furniture will also be incorporated as this project opens in 2015.

Dr. Hill orchestrated a tour of internationally recognized “world class” schools to explore curricula, technology, and emerging special needs pedagogy that is changing the design of education worldwide. Hill concluded that such a tour must both educate and inspire the client to new ideas, while properly embracing the uniqueness of Middle Eastern culture and custom.



This requires a complex balancing of educational trends, international pedagogy, local culture, and in-country design and construction systems.

Hill believes the psychology of changing educational circumstances worldwide is a critical part of the 21st century educational design process. But, it must be built upon a carefully built understanding of the intricacies of the host country. If it does not match with culture and custom, the best ideas will not be well accepted and as a result, fail in results, says Hill.