

**Joe Rodriguez****5/29/02****What was your involvement during the planning and construction of the school here?**

Well actually it really started in about 1990. What it involved at that point—I was principal of Glencoe high school—and we put together the planning team led by Dr. Miller to look at a remodel of both Glencoe and Hilhi to make them a little bit larger, and also what the new high-school might look like. We met over a couple of years to try to put together the general concept of the school, and basically that was done through the architects. And they worked with us over about a two-year period of time teachers and administrators in trying to come up with a concept—we wanted to have a large school that felt small with communities of learning trying to make sure that it met all the needs for a comprehensive high-school. Trying to deal with the whole issue of how to build a school that was really built around the general idea of the CAMS, because the CAMS had just started about that point. We did that, and then we tried to go for a bond and it failed—a bond to build the school—so then the program kind of slowed down for a while until we put forth the bond again in 94 and we were successful in doing that. My involvement in June of 94—I left the principalship at Glencoe and went to our district office and I was responsible for facilities and it worked directly with the construction piece. When Mr. Barnekoff was appointed principal we worked together to see that everything on the construction went well. It was a good two-year period of time, and it was also one period of time during one of the wettest winters that we ever had, we just got deluged with 96, it was just terrible, but the construction went ahead so we were able to do it.

**Were you involved with making the bond pass?**

I was involved as were many others in the passage of the bond, our leadership then was Dr Nikki Squire who was the superintendent then, and she was the driving force. We also had a tremendous parent group led by Caroline Ortmann who is now on our board. She lead and was instrumental

in the planning team to get the bond passed, it was really a community effort.

### **What changed that made it pass?**

Well, when we went for the bond earlier we were in a situation where there were concerns about our fiscal ability to run the school district. There were concerns about the then-leadership of the school district. We simply weren't able to get the ground support for getting it passed. But the next time it went very well, and I think everyone worked very hard. It was an easier sell. Also the size of the school was being a problem, the number of students, we were growing so fast. There was a real need to move ninth graders to the high school. The other piece that I did in addition to working with Phil and with Orville Allemann who was for the construction of the building was directly involved in doing the boundary for Century because we were doing a boundary for three high-schools, but we were also moving ninth-graders up we were re-doing the boundaries for junior high's, and we were re-doing the boundaries for eight elementary schools as we were moving into unification. So that was an interesting process of doing the boundaries. It took about four months to accomplish that and it was a very long and difficult process because people were really polarized about where they ought to go to school. We just did the boundary for Liberty high school, and that went very, very well because its location was such where it was pretty easy to see where lines would be drawn. Century created a little of a problem around where do you divide up the middle part of Hillsboro.

### **Besides the CAMS as you previously mentioned, is there anything else that was supposed to be a main goal of Century?**

There were a number of goals, and if you get your hands on the cards that were by the architects that posed what where the major points that we wanted to accomplish, more light, attractive building, focal main entry so that people would know where to go into the building. That was in direct contrast to where both Hilhi and Glencoe . . . where Glencoe, you drive by Glencoe and all you see is this wall. You have no idea where the entrance is or anything. And at Hilhi there's just so many separate buildings it's very hard to see where you go in. The other one of our goals, I don't know if we accomplished it, it's interesting walking in the halls here. The thing we wanted to do was kind of capture a main street in the commons area and I think we did that. But when I reflect back on what the original plans were,

we first had designs drawn up on the board. They're different than what the school looks like now, but the concept if you walk through the halls you get this kind of street approach as you walk through the corridors, it's long hallways and classrooms set off all classrooms with windows and light. It was very important to the design team that worked on it. Areas for staff to work that were separate from students, more importantly computer labs in each of the areas. Science classrooms, kind of making it so you could have smaller groups of students working in pods of the building, or areas of the building. And then of course the standard gyms, art rooms, band rooms. I think the centerpiece for this school is the auditorium, I mean, it is an absolutely gorgeous facility. We debated long and hard about it and the design that this school has, is the design that we ultimately ended up with. The design for Hilhi's auditorium is more where the conversation started but we didn't end up there where at Hillhi you can have you actually can close off and have three separate areas in the auditorium. This is a beautiful performing auditorium and it is the centerpiece of the school.

**With the actual construction of the building was there any big dilemmas that occurred?**

During the construction it really was the weather, the rain. I remember coming out here a number of times. I was very impressed with this (meshed?) that they used on the footings all around the buildings. It was a mesh to keep moisture from coming into the school, and they worked very hard. We had the orchestra pit was flooded, that created some problems, there was lots of difficulties with the weather that year, but we worked through all of them. Unfortunately, one of the things that we found after the school was built, and we remedied that after working with the architect and the contractor, was that the courtyards had some interesting dilemmas with water seeping in where the walls kind of—we weren't sure, the way the they kind of described it was that the wind—it was a pretty bad winter that 97, with the wind from the south swirling around actually into the stucco walls that were in the courtyards. We had to repair all of them. We had some water seepage come down, and they've all been repaired, but the weather presented a difficult challenge that year, and we had trouble getting the fields all in too, and that was a problem for baseball in particular. We had trouble getting the track in, there were all sorts of little complications in the construction—but, in hindsight we opened Century on time, ahead of time actually. Staff was able to come in, kids did a great job, kids that worked on the infrastructure for technology, they then came back and trained teachers

on how to use the system it really worked well, Dave Parker was in on that whole piece.

**Is there anything unique about Century from the other 30 schools you are oversee?**

It really met the design team's goal. I drive down this road, this building is very very attractive. The entry clearly stands out with the clock tower. We've worked hard on Liberty to make it different, but it has a main focal entry instead of having a clock tower it has kind of a rotunda over the library which is above the administration, sort of similar to this school, we used features of this school to build Liberty. The brick on this building is really very attractive, I think from the utilitarian point of view of going through the building, I think we accomplished everything we wanted. Every school is a little different and unique. The design team that originally worked on the project left it at one point when the principal began to work on it, and his team of leaders and teachers, they made other changes and tweeks, as they should in looking at moving forward, so the school is really a blend of a lot of peoples thoughts and efforts.

**Anything else?**

I told Mrs. Duyckinck that I'd remember something if she asked me if I did anything else with the school, and I told her when I moved to the district office, one of my responsibilities in addition to facilities was property acquisition. One of the things I was buying houses that were on this site, the school site, and when I went to the one house to make an offer—kind of funny—it was on Johnson, right where the tennis courts are. So I go into the house, I walk in and I meet the owner and his wife, and I sit down and I look at the wall. This is 1995 when I do this. When we moved to Hillsboro from Florida in 1978 it was one of the houses we had looked at to buy. It was on about two acres right here, very nice house, and what it was was that the wall that I remembered was the brick fireplace and I found that to be very ironic that buying the house for the school district and it was a house that we almost bought to move into. It was a nice area, it backed up to a filbert orchard and everything, I found that to be a little ironic, it was one of the side benefits of my job.