

everyone

included, challenged, successful



To whom it may concern

**Re: Fielding Nair International**

We are pleased to confirm that we are working with Fielding Nair International on the design and redevelopment of our campus in Brussels, Belgium, which caters to the needs of 1,470 students belonging to 70 nationalities. The project is multi-phase and will be spread over a period of eight years, costing about \$53,000,000. The project involves building a new High School, Elementary School, Sports Center and Performing Arts Center located on a historic site, subject to many local constraints.

FNI have a well-established system whereby the actual design phase does not begin until they have understood the school's learning vision, or helped to articulate it, in order to ensure that the new buildings will truly support the approaches to learning embraced by the school. FNI bring their own ideas to the table, which fosters creative thinking, but spend the necessary time to understand ideas other than their own.

The partnership between ISB and FNI is particularly exciting as the school has just completed a design for a new curriculum framework, the Common Ground Curriculum, which is soon to be launched as the heart of a new global network of international practitioners. The 'architecture' of the new curriculum has informed the architecture of the new buildings, and vice versa, to the extent that we have called the building project 'The Common Ground Campus'. Both parties have benefitted from, and enjoyed, the interchange of ideas as we developed the common conceptual principles that will shape learning, landscape and buildings.

FNI are clearly well resourced with specialists in many fields, including "curriculum mapping" experts whose aim is to verify that the proposed buildings will meet the spatial needs of the school. Workshops are led by their teams from the outset to build buy-in from leadership and faculty and hear the wishes of the main users of the future premises, i.e. the teachers themselves.

We have been impressed with their innovative ideas to optimize the use of space, notably by moving away from the traditional "cells and bells" model to "agile learning spaces" that essentially provide multipurpose areas that can be used for different types of learning. FNI are particularly adept at designing flexible spaces to accommodate different sizes of 'learning community'.

Although we are still only in the final stages of designing our new High School, we are confident that FNI will follow through during inevitable refinements as we get closer to the construction phase, and feel that they will continue to effectively support our needs to "sell" the project to our various stakeholders, such as our Board of Trustees, parents and teachers.

Our experience with FNI so far has been positive and we have had many moments of confirmation that they were the best choice from among a number of possible conceptual and design architects in Europe and around the world. In fact, having built this partnership, it is quite difficult to see how we would have proceeded with less 'learning-focused' architects. We are thus able to recommend FNI without any reservations whatsoever, and will be pleased to act as referees by answering any queries that you may have.



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23 February 2010

Mr. Henry Ahking  
Manager of Facilities Development, Vancouver School Board  
1580 West Broadway  
Vancouver, BC V6J 5K8

Dear Mr. Ahking

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**Re: Letter of Reference - Fielding Nair International**

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It is with great pleasure that I provide this letter of reference for Randy Fielding and the FNI Team.

Regina Public Schools (RPS) has been working with FNI for approximately 3 years. At that time RPS had just completed a 10 Year Renewal Plan and was in the process of implementing its unique *Structural Innovation* educational initiative. FNI was contacted as we had seen their innovative approach to the design of educational facilities and we were interested in their ability to think beyond the traditional 'cells and bells' model.

FNI was retained to lead a community consultation process to develop conceptual designs for 4 replacement elementary schools. Randy Fielding and his team demonstrated their unique ability to listen in a warm and respectful manner to the stakeholders during the consultation phase while still responding to the functional requirements of RPS. Randy's ability to work with the community and draw out their ideas and gain consensus is a special talent. Two of the elementary schools involved the merger of 2 school populations (i.e. only 1 school would be built) which necessitated a site selection. The site selection process was a very sensitive issue within the two school communities and required skillful management. FNI's skilled team of professionals demonstrated extreme patience and a genuine sensitivity to the needs and concerns of the Community and addressed them with creative solutions. At the conclusion of the Schematic Design presentations, it became apparent that the FNI team had appropriately transformed the excitement, creativity and functionality that was evident during the consultations with designs that exceeded everyone's expectations.

I would like to extend my unqualified recommendation to your school board of the FNI team. Please feel free to call me; I would be pleased to discuss our experiences with you further.

Sincerely,

Ron Christie BID, REFP  
General Manager, Educational Facilities  
306.523.3081



Education

Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

July 26, 2010

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Re: Letter of Reference Fielding Nair International

It is with great pleasure that I provide this letter for Fielding Nair International (FNI). Yukon Department of Education has been working with FNI over this past year on a replacement school for FH Collins Secondary in Whitehorse. Our consultation document, *One Vision, Multiple Pathways, Secondary School Programming*, called us to move beyond traditional secondary schools to an innovative 21<sup>st</sup> century model of teaching and learning. FNI shared international best practice in teaching, learning and design through teacher and student workshops, community meetings, and sustainability workshop—all of which are assisting us in designing a school for the future.

FNI was retained under strict criteria and a portfolio of innovation to develop designs for this replacement school of approximately 640 students (future capacity of 800 plus). Randy Fielding and his team demonstrated a unique ability to listen in a warm and respectful manner to stakeholders including School Councils, Elders, First Nations representatives, teachers, administration and department staff during the consultation while still responding to the functional requirements of the project. Having had a great deal of experience with school building projects, I was particularly impressed by the ability of the FNI team to work with this variety of stakeholders and draw out their ideas and gain consensus. As we move forward it is clear that the FNI team has transformed the excitement, creativity and functionality that was evident during our consultations into design options that have exceeded everyone's expectations.

Of particular importance for us living in an isolated region of Canada was our access to the design team. Through creative approaches including the effective use of interactive video conferencing, FNI was able to overcome the distance barriers, while saving on expenses, reducing the project's carbon footprint and actually increasing interaction.

I would like to extend my unqualified recommendation of the FNI team and would be pleased to discuss our experiences with you further.

Sincerely,

  
Michael Woods

Superintendent, Yukon Department of Education

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**RE: Reference for Fielding Nair International**

To Whom It May Concern:

Prior to my retirement last month from Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) as Cluster III Assistant Superintendent, I had the privilege to work with Prakash Nair, President of Fielding Nair International (FNI), for over one year to plan the extensive renovation of Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST). TJHSST is a Virginia Governor's School serving approximately 1800 students representing six regional school divisions. It is a comprehensive high school but has a highly competitive admissions process and requires additional coursework in the sciences and technology to earn the rigorous 26 credits for the TJHSST diploma. Students must conduct original research through one of 13 specialized labs in the school, often in conjunction with universities and research institutions throughout the Washington, D.C., area.

The school has unique curricular and facilities needs that made architectural planning a challenge in looking for a renovation that would, in essence, recreate the facility to meet current curriculum as well as future goals of the school mission. The Fielding Nair International team provided the expertise and vision that were needed to engage all stakeholders, broaden the conversations beyond today's school and envision a building that would be adaptable and viable over the next 40-50 years. That team included Prakash Nair as Principal-in-Charge; Isaac Williams, Jennifer Lamar and Bert Taylor as senior designers; and Chris Hazleton as senior education consultant.

The FNI team spent lead time at the school several days to ensure that they understood the school, its curriculum requirements and instructional patterns, and the visions of stakeholders, especially students, parents, teachers, school administrators, central office leaders and School Board members. Meetings were held with all groups and electronic surveys were created to generate a holistic picture of what was viewed as essential.

In addition, the FNI team met via WebEx Video Conference sessions as often as needed with smaller groups as the conceptual designs were developed and then to respond to questions and explain each design that was created to address the school's vision. They worked extremely well with local architects and the design and construction department of FCPS. In short, the FNI team was a partner as well as a leader in moving the group to a consensus for the renovation design that will meet current and future needs.

The team also created a very impressive front entrance and open foyer area in the design that reflect the science and technology focus of the school. Spaces for teaching and learning will be flexible and varied to promote collaborative group work, large group instruction and subgroup organization into “families” for a variety of learning experiences.

The FNI team and Prakash Nair individually are professional, creative and visionary. They are also agile in their thinking to incorporate unique needs of the school in their design work. I highly recommend Fielding Nair International to you without reservation.

Sincerely yours,

*Cecelia W. Krill*

Cecelia W. Krill, Ph.D.