Rethinking the Locker Room:

An Interactive Panel Discussion on a Collaborative Vision for Future-Focused, Inclusive PE and Athletic Facilities

30 October 2025











We respectfully acknowledge that we gather on the ancestral and unceded lands of the Akimel O'odham — the O'odham people — who have cared for this place since time immemorial.

We honor their enduring presence, their stewardship of this land, and recognize our responsibility to build meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities today and into the future.

As architects and designers, we acknowledge that the built environment has too often been a tool of exclusion and erasure. We commit to shaping our work in ways that repair harm, center belonging, and uphold Indigenous sovereignty.

What We're Here to Learn

Presentation Objectives

Understand evolving role of changing spaces to support students' physical, emotional, and social wellbeing

Learn how schools

align buildings with

policies that promote
gender inclusivity and
protect against
bullying

student, family, and educator insights inform inclusive design

Examine how inclusive design enhances safety, mental health, privacy, and accessibility for all learners



Ann Vacek NAC

College Place Middle School



Becky Hutchinson Mahlum

Explorer Middle School

New Middle School



Shelly Henderson

Mukilteo School District

Explorer Middle School



Stacey Crumbaker Mahlum

New Middle School



Taine WiltonEdmonds School District

College Place Middle School

New Middle School

Neighboring Communities

District Overview



21,090 Students

34 Schools

55% BIPOC Learners

134 Languages Spoken

44.4% Low Income

Race/Ethnicity

American Indian/Alaskan Native
Asian
Black/African American
Hispanic/Latino of any race(s)
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
Two or More Races
White

0.4%
13.7%
9.6%
24.5%
24.5%

0.9%
44.4%



Mukilteo School District

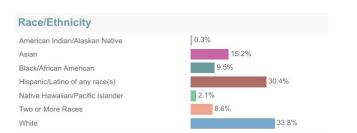
15,195 Students

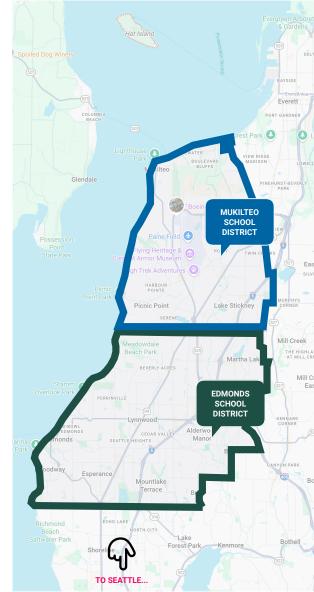
21 Schools

66% BIPOC Learners

117 Languages Spoken

54.6% Low Income









Reenforce BinariesUnderstanding the Issue

Binary-based locker room strategies reinforce exclusion and may increase vulnerability for transgender and nonbinary students



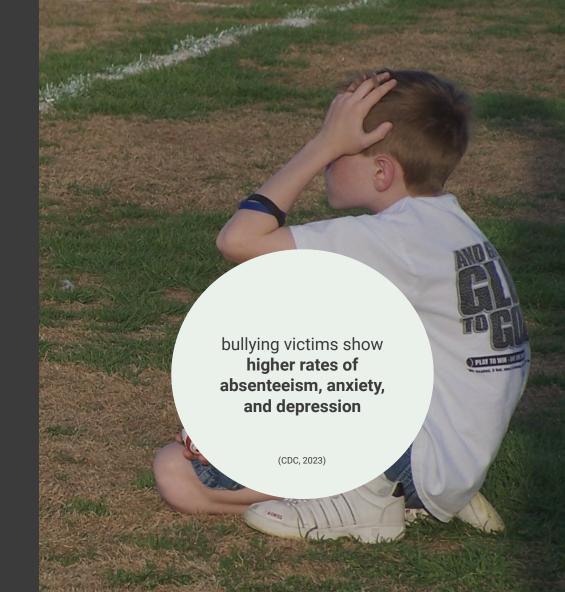
Amplify DiscomfortUnderstanding the Issue

Poor supervision, limited privacy, and **exposure** in locker rooms amplify bodyrelated anxiety and create conditions for bullying



Undermine BelongingUnderstanding the Issue

Bullying and restrictive locker-room practices drive students away from participation, eroding safety, wellbeing, and inclusion



Adolescent Learners

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

structural changes - ability to think in novel ways and desire for challenge

novel abilities - meta cognition & "higher-order" thinking

Budding emotional processing and regulation

SOCIAL AND IDENTITY FORMATION

break from familial importance of peer and teacher influence

peer orientation - desire for social approval and heightened awareness of social hierarchies

malleable identity - shaped and re-shaped through exposure and experience

PHYSICAL CHANGES

hormonal changes triggering a cascade of physical, cognitive and social changes

rapid growth and various body sizes

increased need for **sleep** and physical **movement**



Common Locker Room ModelFunctions Organized by Gender



BOY'S TOILETS & SHOWERS GIRL'S TOILETS & SHOWERS GIRL'S LOCKERS + BOY'S LOCKERS + OPEN CHANGING OPEN CHANGING MEN'S **WOMEN'S STAFF STAFF**

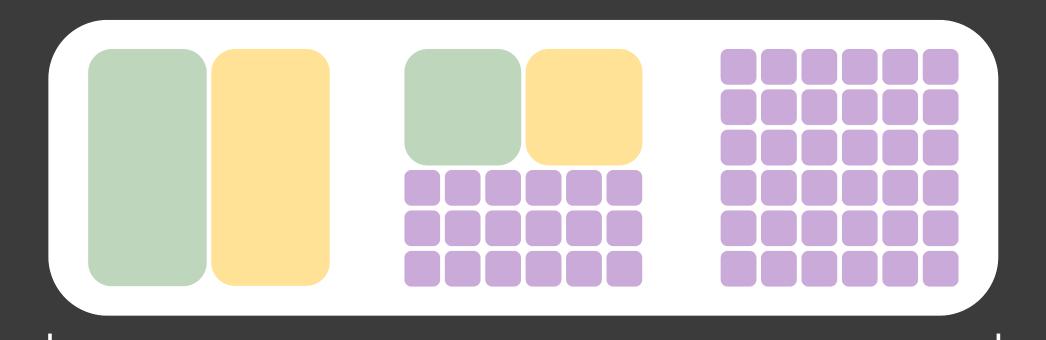
OFFICE

ENTRY

OFFICE

ENTRY

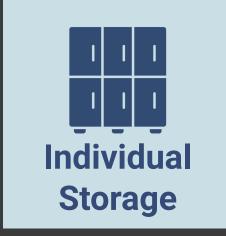
Spatial OrganizationSpectrum of Emerging Models



Shared Changing Spaces Organized by Gender All Student Single Occupant Changing

What functions do we need in a 'locker room'? Types of Activities









Changing out to get ready for PE and Athletics Clothing and equipment storage

Toilets, sinks, mirrors, showers, etc

Peer to peer connection, team gathering, teacher workspace

Common Critical Spatial ProblemsSpaces that are...

Unsupervisable

Invite unwanted behavior

Uncomfortable

Provide insufficient privacy

Binary

Necessitate choice and stigmatize

Inaccessible

Isolate and create "othering" or uneven burden

Common Critical Spatial ProblemsSpaces that are...

UnsupervisableInvite unwanted behavior

UncomfortableProvide insufficient privacy

Binary

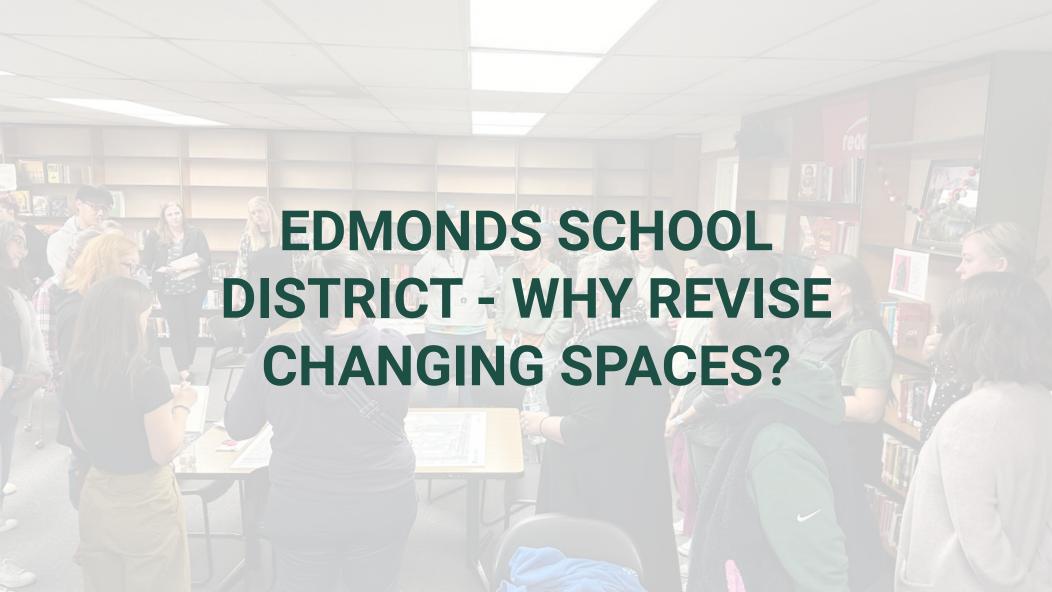
Necessitate choice and stigmatize

Inaccessible
Isolate and create "othering"
or uneven burden

Aspiration



Socially, emotionally, and physically safe and respectful experiences using changing spaces



Edmonds School District Policy 3207: Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying

The Edmonds School District Board of Directors is committed to a safe and civil educational environment for all students that is free from harassment, intimidation or bullying.

Harassment, intimidation or bullying means any **intentionally written message or image** including those that are electronically transmitted verbal or physical act, including but not limited to one shown to be motivated by race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, mental or physical disability or other distinguishing characteristics, when an act:

- · Physically harms a student or damages the student's property;
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
- Creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment;
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Edmonds School District

Policy 3211: Supporting Gender Inclusive Schools

The board believes in fostering an educational environment that is safe and free of discrimination for all students, regardless of gender expression, gender identity, or sex.

To that end, the board recognizes the **importance of an inclusive** approach toward transgender and gender-expansive students with regard to key terms, communication and the use of names and pronouns, student records, confidential health and education information, communication, restroom and locker room use and accessibility, sports and physical education, dress codes, and other school activities, in order to provide these students with an equal opportunity for learning and achievement.

This policy is a component of the **district's responsibility to create** and maintain a safe, civil, respectful and inclusive learning community and will be implemented in conjunction with comprehensive training of staff and volunteers.



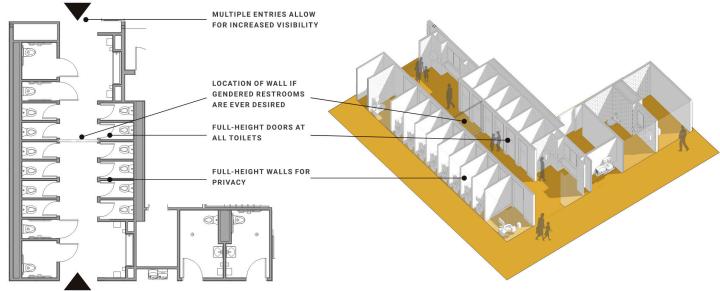
Building on Single-Occupant Toilet Strategies

PUBLIC CORE TOILETS



Learning from strategies developed through single-occupant toilet design discussions and applying them to develop future flexible single-occupant changing solutions





The Challenge: Two New Middle Schools, One Strategy

New Middle School at Former Alderwood Middle School



WHAT IF... THERE WERE OPTIONS

PROVIDED THAT HELPED ALL

LEARNERS FEEL INCLUDED IN PE AND

ATHLETIC CHANGING SPACES, AND

ALLOWED THEM TO PARTICIPATE?



College Place Middle School and Elementary School



timeline:

Intramural Activities july 2024 **Building Tour - UW** Consult with NAC LA office for july 2024 LBUSD Shared Design Insights Plan Studies, Literature july 2024 - ongoing Review, and Webinar Reviews Middle School Teacher and august 2024 Staff Focus Group **Explorer Middle School** september 2024 Discussion - Mukilteo School District Survey to Middle School Staff, sept - oct 2024 Students, and Families Student, Teacher, and october 2024 **Staff Changing Summit GSA Student Group** november 2024 **Feedback Meeting**

Lincoln High School Tour november 2024 **Seattle Public Schools University Prep ULab** january 2025 **Tour (A4LE Event)** Meeting with JLG for january 2025 Shared Design Insights **CPM Steering Committee** january 2025 and Board Memo CPM Middle School Student mar - apr 2025 **Design Outreach CPM Focus Follow-Up Summit** april 2025 with Changing Stall Mockup NMS Focus Follow-Up tbd Summit



what we heard: UW Intramural Activities Building Tour

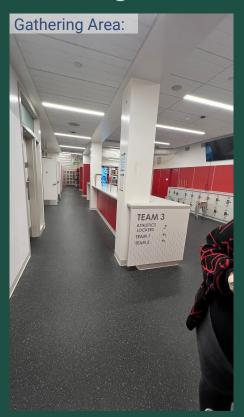








what we heard: Lincoln High School - Seattle Public Schools













what we learned:ULab - University Prep









what we did: STUDENT, PARENT, AND STAFF SURVEY

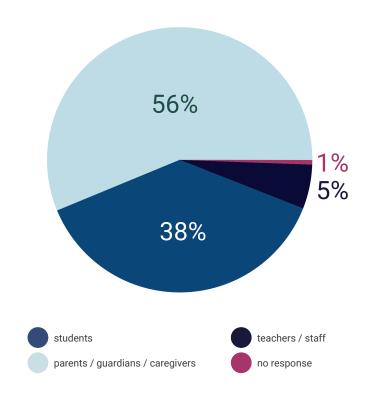
goal: explore perceptions and experiences of spaces to change and learn for middle school physical education and athletics

what we heard: SURVEY

203 Students

Parents
Guardians
Caregivers

29 Teachers Staff



what we heard: SURVEY

My child currently just wears PE clothes all day so that they don't have to change. Being able to change in privacy would make a huge difference.

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver

- > 40% of student responders reported they prefer changing in a shower or toilet stall when possible
- > Positive response and general consensus that single occupant changing rooms are acceptable
- Primary benefits: privacy and comfort; further exploration to understand level of privacy
- > How much privacy is too much privacy?
- > Changing time constraints vs number of stalls provided

what we heard: SURVEY

- > Varied responses to all-student storage areas around student choice, level of openness and possible confusion about approach
- > Shared spaces are important social connection areas for students and teams

IT'S ABOUT SAFETY AND
SECURITY FOR ALL
GENDERS, AND BY DOING
THAT WE SUPPORT
THOSE THAT ARE MOST
VULNERABLE



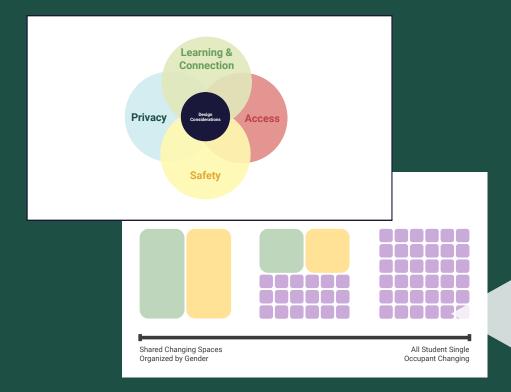
what we did: STUDENT AND STAFF SUMMIT



Students should be able to choose a private space to change



what we did: STUDENT AND STAFF SUMMIT

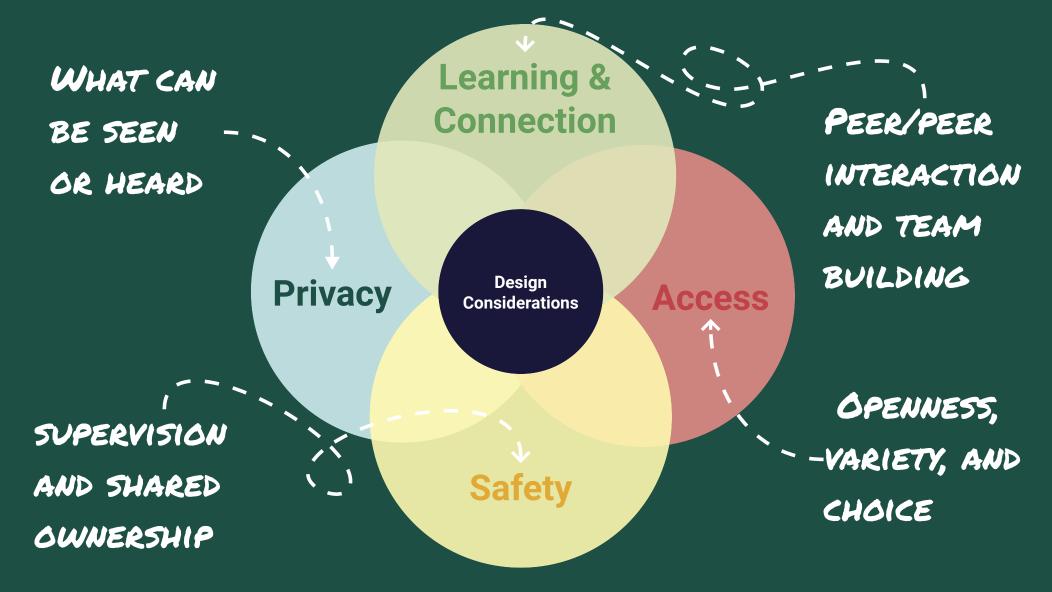




what we did: STUDENT AND STAFF SUMMIT

I think that complete everything went 2
Pretty good, and the formal was good. Discussing in the tables was a good way to show how everyone felt about the question or topic that was being talked about.







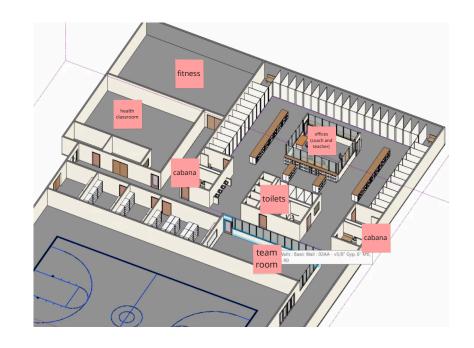
what we did: GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCE STUDENT DISCUSSION

"difficult to picture future gender inclusive changing rooms based on what they currently use and experience"

don't want there to be a potential for people to slide phones under stall doors or kneel down and look under

would be worth figuring out a way that teachers can tell whether or not more than one person is in a stall

the design seems to lessen bullying





what we're doing now: FOLLOW-UP SUMMITS

- Right-sizing the number of changing stalls
- Testing scale of changing stalls with students to rightsize layout and experience
 - Follow-up testing with students to inform sizing, comfort, and adaptability

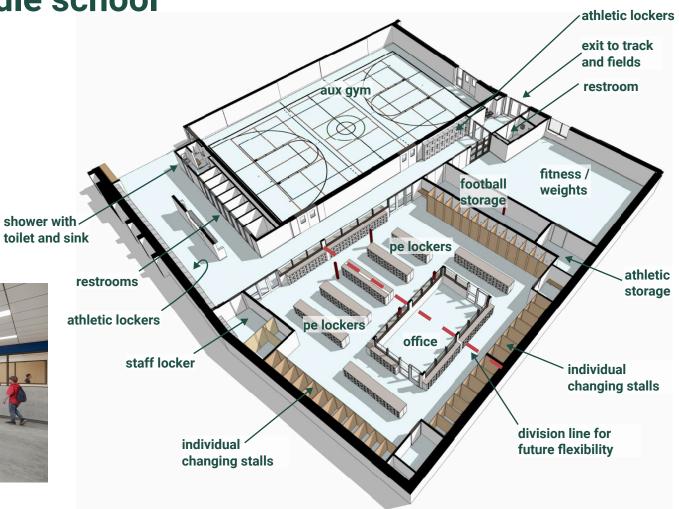
what we heard: CPM Stall Mockup



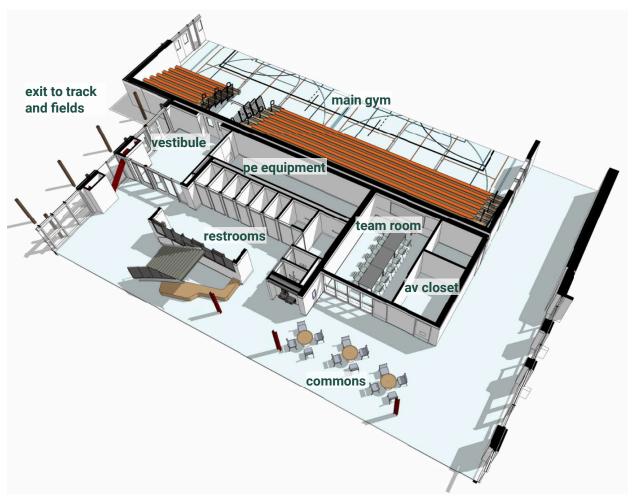
college place middle school



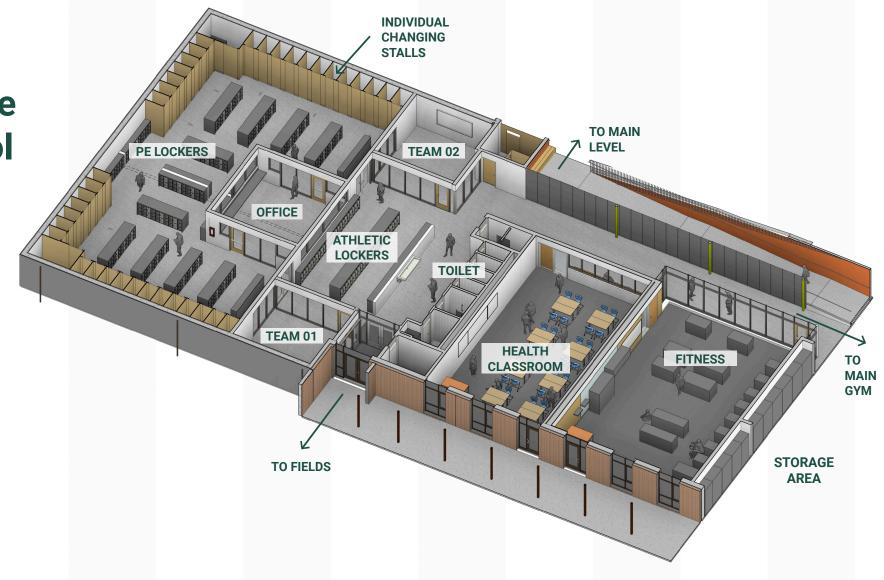




college place middle school



new middle school





Mukilteo School District Strategic Plan

Core Values:

- Equity
- Commitment to high expectations
- Relationships
- Collaboration
- Belonging
- · Continuous Improvement

Goal 1 Students learn, grow and thrive
1A. Build school and classroom communities where students are acknowledged and valued, feel safe, and know they belong.

We provide a welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment. We support and honor our diverse students and communities. Individuals of all identities, backgrounds, and experiences thrive and have a strong sense of belonging.

Key Activities

- Develop and implement a districtwide vision and model for ensuring our schools are welcoming to all students and families
- Define and implement culturally and linguistically responsive best practices in our schools
- Refine plans to support crisis response teams and mental health services

Mukilteo School District

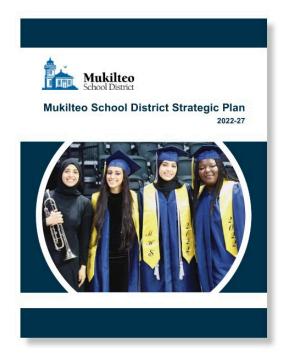
Policy 3211: Gender Inclusive Schools

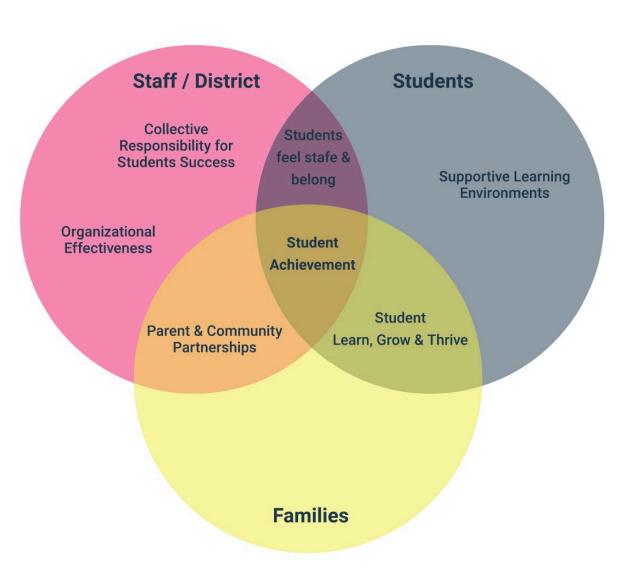
The board believes in fostering an educational environment that is safe and free of discrimination for all students, regardless of gender expression, gender identity, or sex.

To that end, the board recognizes the **importance of an inclusive** approach toward transgender and gender-expansive students with regard to key terms, communication and the use of names and pronouns, student records, confidential health and education information, communication, restroom, and locker room use and accessibility, sports and physical education, dress codes, and other school activities, in order to provide these students with an equal opportunity for learning and achievement.

This policy is a component of the **district's responsibility to create** and maintain a safe, civil, respectful and inclusive learning community and will be implemented in conjunction with comprehensive training of staff and volunteers.

Mukilteo School District Strategic Plan & Goals





Mukilteo School DistrictBoard Equity Policy 0540

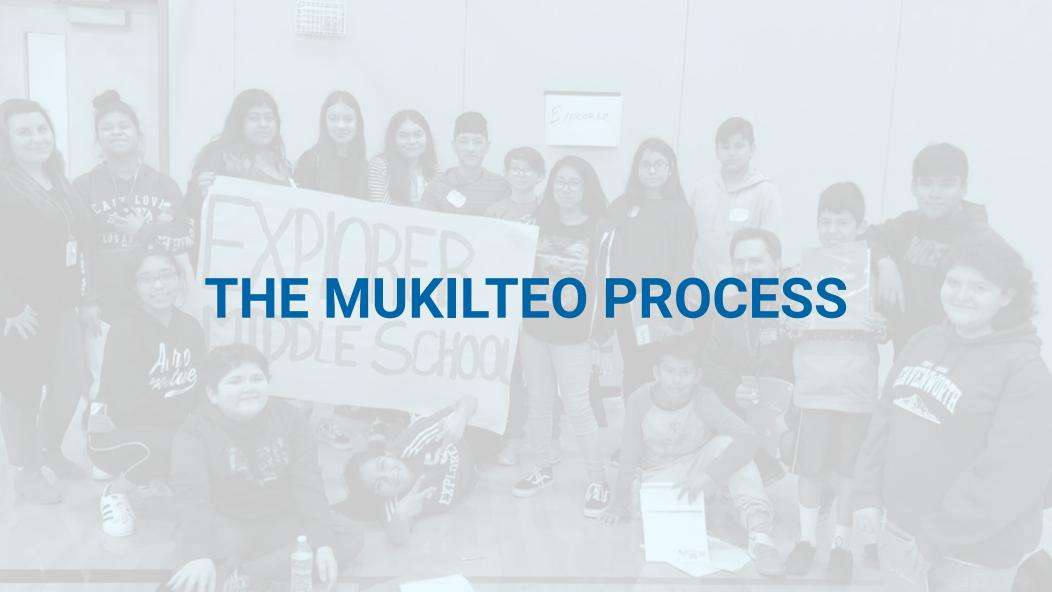


Students shall be educated in **environments** that respect them as individuals, respect their families, and respect their cultural heritage...

Each student is known by name, strength, and need.

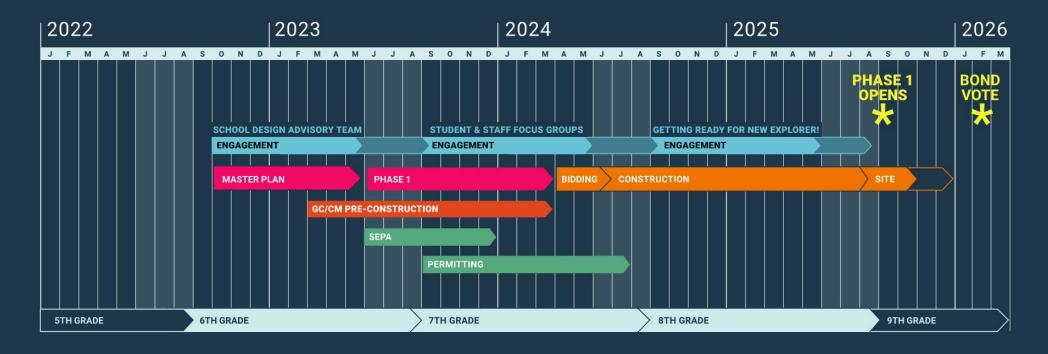
The Challenge

With limited funding, where and how should we invest bond dollars to have the biggest impact on student safety, belonging, and well-being at **Explorer Middle School?**



Explorer Middle School

Schedule



School Design Advisory Team

To ensure the school reflects diverse cultural values

To ensure the new school supports current and future educational needs

To ensure the new school supports **partnerships** with families and the community

To assess, evaluate, and **synthesize** what we've heard from the other engagement processes

Participants:

Families, Teachers, Neighbors, Capital Projects Team, Principal

Programming & Assessment

To learn how the Explorer community is experiencing their school today - what's working and not working

To learn about **program needs**, experiences, expectations, hopes and dreams

To connect district and sitespecific facility priorities in support of long-term building operations

Participants:

Teachers, Staff,
Facilities
(District + Site Specific)

Listening & Learning

To learn about **perceptions and lived experiences**

To invite **socio-spatial storytelling** to understand how school spaces act

To imagine ways to activate the new Explorer building to communicate values and messages of belonging and inclusion and strengthen social-emotional learning

Participants:

Students, Families, Teachers, Neighbors



timeline:







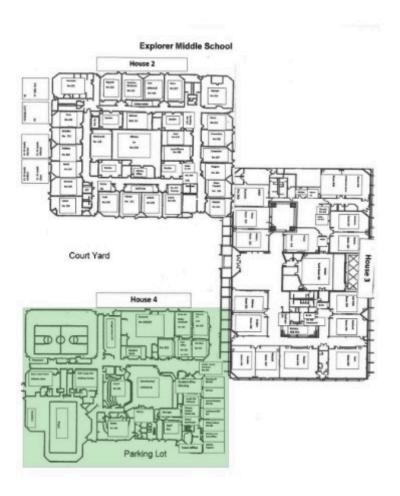
To learn about perceptions and lived experiences

To invite **socio-spatial storytelling** to understand how school spaces act

To imagine ways to activate the new Explorer building to communicate values and messages of belonging and inclusion and strengthen social-emotional learning

Participants Students, Families, Teachers, Neighbors

Student Survey - House 4 Feedback













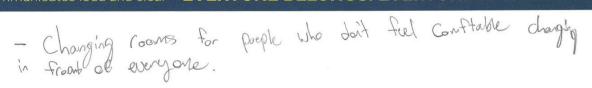
Student Listening Sessions Ideas for a Reimagined Locker Room





How can we design a school that communicates loud and clear - **EVERYONE BELONGS! EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

Imagine a world where everyone is treated equal... What would PE & Changing look like?

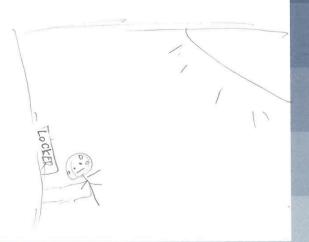


- Air Condienting belowse It gets for hob in the locker room, It's like the sun is IN the locker room.

8th grase first pried



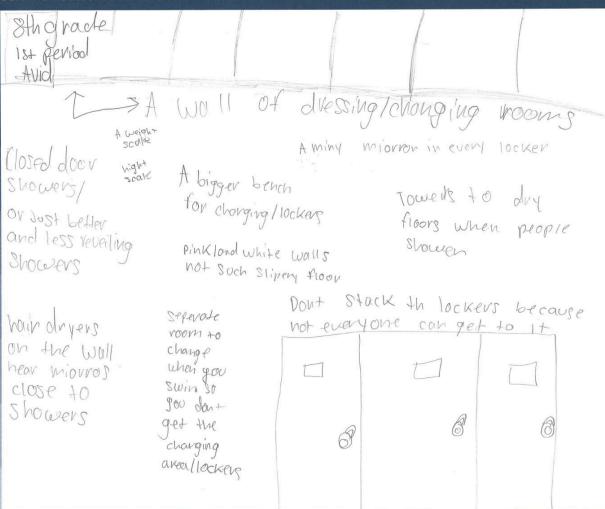




How can we design a school that communicates loud and clear - **EVERYONE BELONGS! EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

Imagine a world where everyone is treated equal... What would PE & Changing look like?

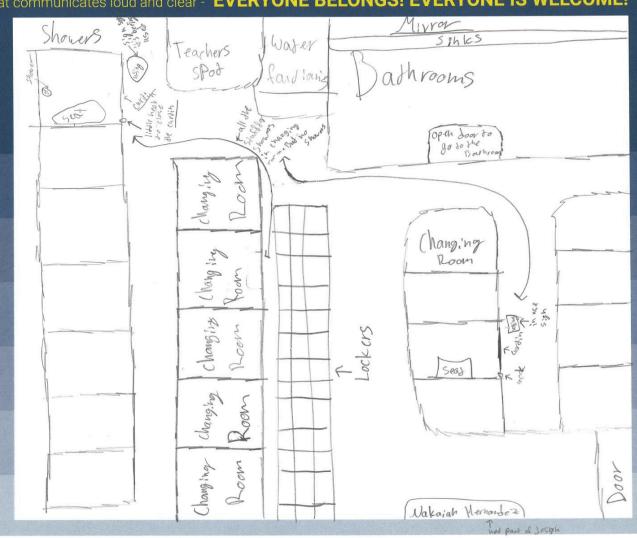




How can we design a school that communicates loud and clear - **EVERYONE BELONGS! EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

Imagine a world where everyone is treated equal... What would PE & Changing look like?





socially, emotionally, and physically safe and respectful experiences using toilets and changing spaces

We would have had choice to change in the bathroom. I like to keep my privacy. So I would like if they let us go to the bathroom and change. I am Muslim so I don't feel comfortable changing in from of other people. I care about my privacy a lot.

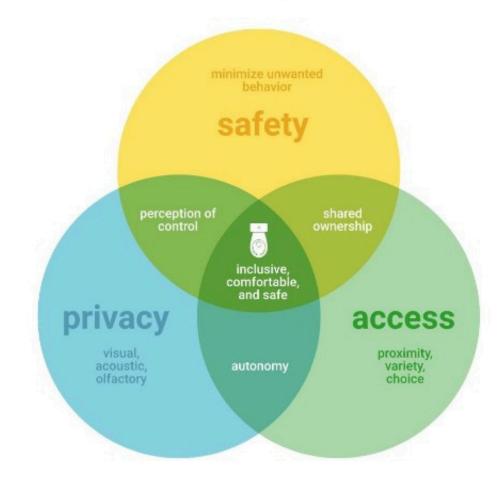
-Student

A space were you can change and feel safe -Student Changing room for people who don't feel comfortable changing in front of everyone -Student



socially, emotionally, and physically safe and respectful experiences using toilets and changing spaces

Spaces that support...





what we did: PROGRAMMING & ASSESSMENT

What's working and not working

To learn about **program needs**, experiences, expectations, hopes and dreams

To connect district and site-specific facility priorities in support of long-term building operations

Participants Teachers, Staff, Facilities

Programming & Assessment

January 18, 2023

Program Goals

- ·What do you hope will be achieved with this project?
- ·How could you see it impacting the way you teach? What are you looking forward to?

Future Trends

- ·What future trends in learning do you anticipate?
- ·How will these affect the way you teach in the new school?

Program Relationships

- ·How should your instructional area be organized?
- ·Are there functions in your program that could be shared as common space or shared with other users?

Special Equipment

Describe any special equipment, fixtures or furniture requirements specific to your program and teaching needs that the new school should accommodate

Programming & Assessment

January 18, 2023

Locker Rooms

- · Issues happen because we can't see students
- · Changing areas are too tight
- Locker rooms are not attached to the gym and transition times are where problems occur
- · Showers are not used unless for swimming

Gymnasium

- · Need a bigger gym
- · Ceiling is too low for volleyball

Weight Room

Need more capacity

Adjacencies

Locker room and gym



what we did: SCHOOL DESIGN ADVISORY TEAM MEETINGS

To ensure the school reflects **diverse cultural values**

To ensure the new school supports current and future **educational needs** and **partnerships** with families and the community

To assess, evaluate, and **synthesize** what we've heard from other engagement processes

Participants Families, Teachers, Neighbors, Capital Projects Team, Principal

CONVERSATION :: COMMUNITY & CONNECTION CONTRIBUTORS :: Tracy, Kalena, Keashia

entry confuse and

intimidate families

coming to the schoo

in search of support

and services

Toilet configuration permits

bullying and harassment due to

lack of supervision and makes

students feel unsafe

Unmaintained

environments

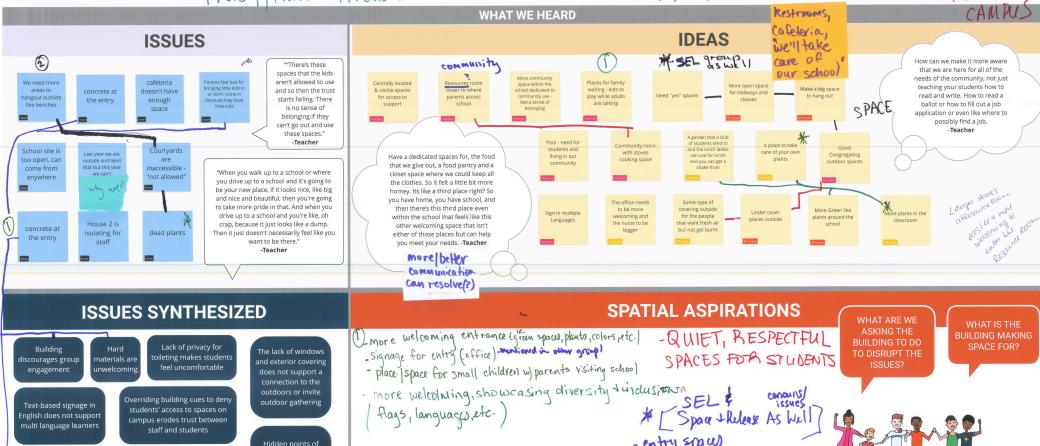
communicate messages

of being unworthy.

undervalued, not important

PRIDE Instills MORE PRIDE

FIRST IM PRESSIONS .. AS SOONAS YOU HITTHE,



- outdoor spaus

SPACE & RELEASE CONVERSATION :: CONTRIBUTORS :: MEGAN, TERRY, KRISTIN WHAT WE HEARD **IDEAS ISSUES** A garden that a club I feel like that's one place that we are really a play ground: of students tend to Last year we ate lacking as a school is a beautiful outdoor a place to take More Green like Please put a and the lunch ladies Green nature plants around the A park care of your own Bunch of plants outside and liked space. We have some greenery in nature can use for lunch playground I beg plants school in the classroom that but this year and you can get a you. obviously but it could be so much more and we can't culturally, outdoor space is a huge piece of that for indigenous students -Teacher Good When I was a kid, my school had this A flower garden Congregating Window plants more windows outdoor common area called the Need More Tight hallways blocks and it was this structure of walking Space cement blocks and we were allowed My memories of middle school to sit and hang out in that space with my friends were outside. I during unstructured times, whether it feel like that is something that is was lunch before school, after missing at Explorer is good Some type of school...It was like you liked going More green areas covered congregating areas. All covering outside Students use there. You knew that that was the I love house 3, the with benches cause Make a big space of our seats are not covered and when you sit on the rock climbing wall for the people cafeteria doesn't bathroom passes huge skylight makes it to hang out place to go to see your friends at the floor you get grass that want fresh air have enough there is not really welcoming to walk the more open and end of the day and say goodbye but not get burnt space hallways during spaces. I mean concrete slabs like comfortable before you went home. class time everywhere. -Teacher -Student -Teacher **ISSUES SYNTHESIZED** SPATIAL ASPIRATIONS WHAT ARE WE WHAT IS THE **ASKING THE BUILDING TO DO** The areas allowed for The lack of windows TO DISRUPT THE and exterior covering student play and does not support a movement are limited connection to the when they are not able

outdoors or invite outdoor gathering

their day

to be supervised by staff



There's a lack of social emotional regulation spaces that are easily accessible to the nervousness, students throughout claustrophobia, anxiety, & stress.









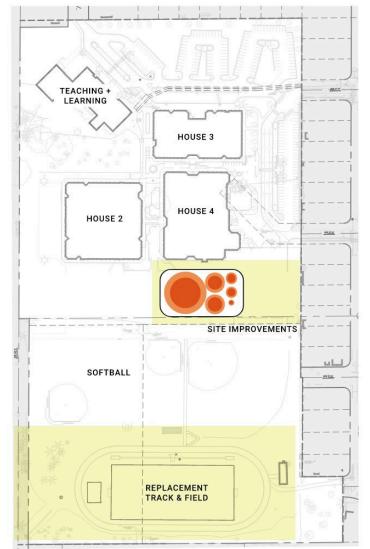




Scenario A Community + Athletics

Considerations

- > Provides missing / deficient Ed Spec programs including Auxillary Gym and fitness room
- > Replaces areas of the current campus that cause emotional stress and operational challenges: locker rooms, congestion between Commons and Gym, all-school assemblies
- > Provides a new, right-sized space for community gathering
- > Creates possibility to demolish the existing gym and pool









what we did: ED SPECS VISIONING & PROGRAMMING

Understanding the Mukilteo School District's **Vision for Secondary Education** and how the built environment plays a role in that Vision

Consider the District's Strategic Plan:

What does this look like at Mukilteo School District?

How do your **educational facilities** support or get in the way?

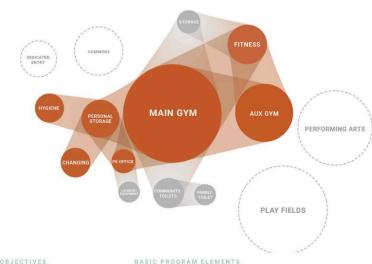
mahlum

MUKILTEO SCHOOL DISTRICT

Middle School Educational Specifications

Mukilteo School District **Everett, Washington** Project No 2022914.00

PHYSICAL EDUCATION & ATHLETICS



- > Supports school and district athletics program, indoors and outdoors
- > Large gathering space for school and community events, including athletics, performing arts, and assemblies
- > Safe and secure personal storage, changing and toileting facilities that accommodate all users

- > Main Gymnasium
- > Auxiliary Gymnasium
- > Fitness Room
- > Storage, Athletic
- > Storage, PE Storage
- > Storage, Football
- > Storage, Field Equipment
- > Storage, Community
- > Personal Storage
- > Changing
- > Hygiene
- > Staff Toilet / Shower
- > Office, PE Teacher
- > Laundry Room

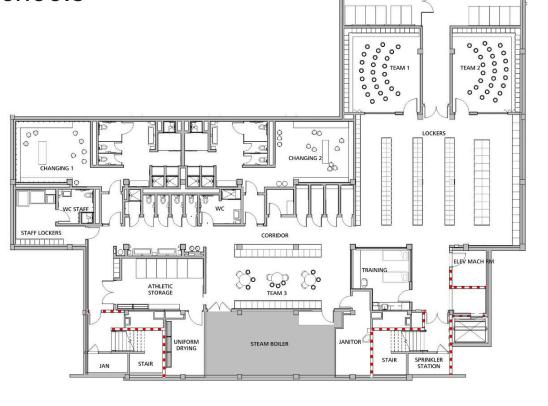
5

what we did: SCHOOL TOURS

Lincoln High SchoolSeattle Public Schools

Kellogg Middle SchoolShoreline School District

Lincoln High SchoolSeattle Public Schools



5 Single Occupant Changing Stalls

2 Gendered Changing Rooms

PE STORAGE



Changing

306 PE Lockers 411 Athletic Lockers



2 Dedicated Team Rooms

> 3 Flex Team Rooms





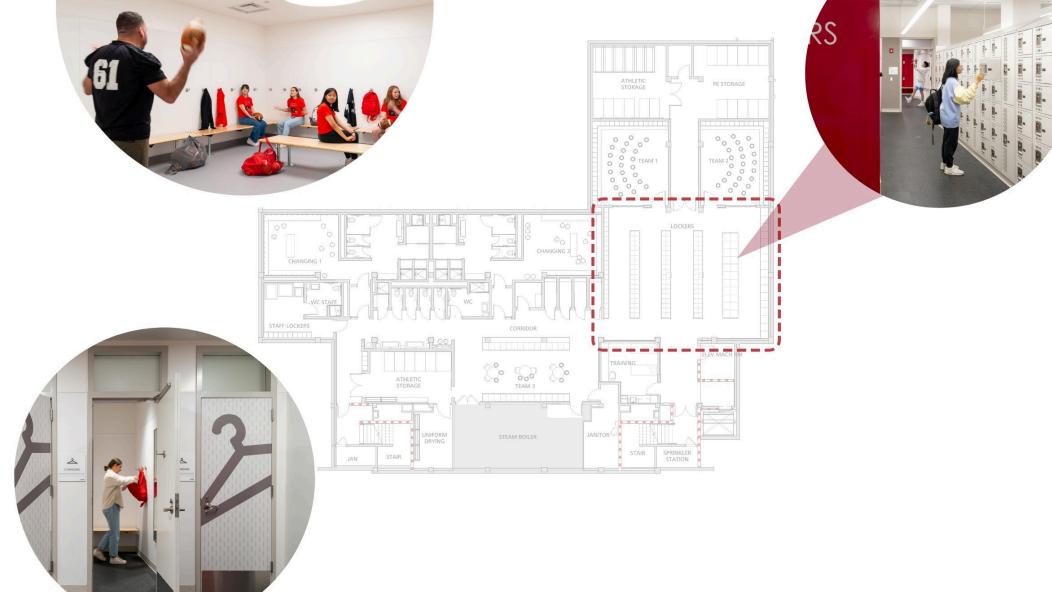
2 Single Occupant Shower Rooms

5 All Gender Toilet Rooms

6 Gendered Shower Rooms

6 Gendered Toilet Rooms Hygiene Support





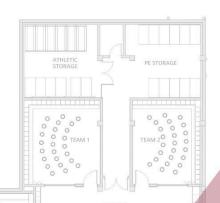








"Middle school spaces want to be very basic, single-function"



"Lockers need to be **lower height** so that adults can see across the student storage area"

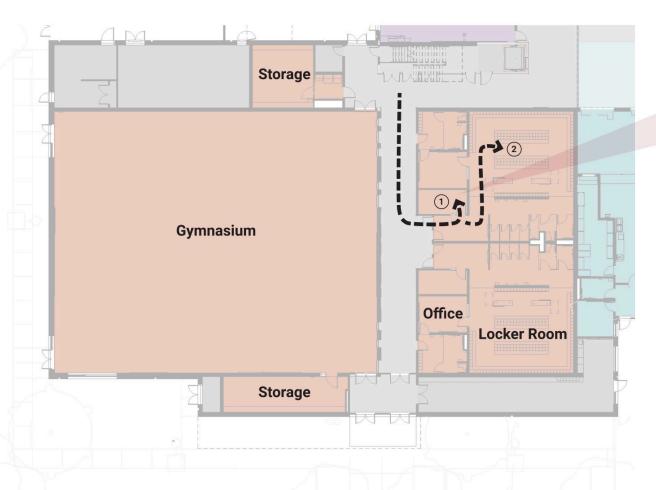


"With a new building, we can optimize lines of sight to improve supervision"

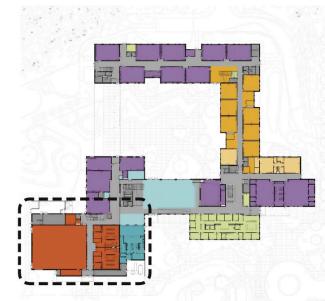
SPRINKLER STATION

Kellogg Middle School

Shoreline School District



"Backpack rooms allow student items to be secured during class and reduce clutter in the locker area"

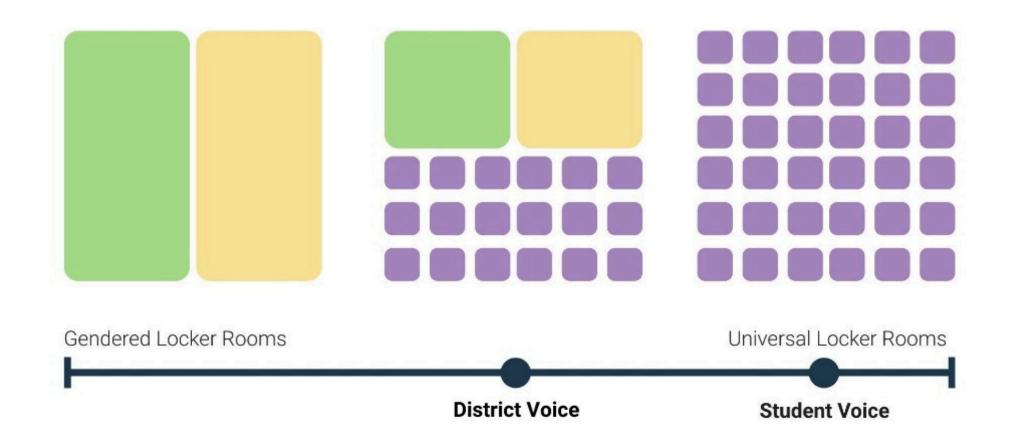




what we did: DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

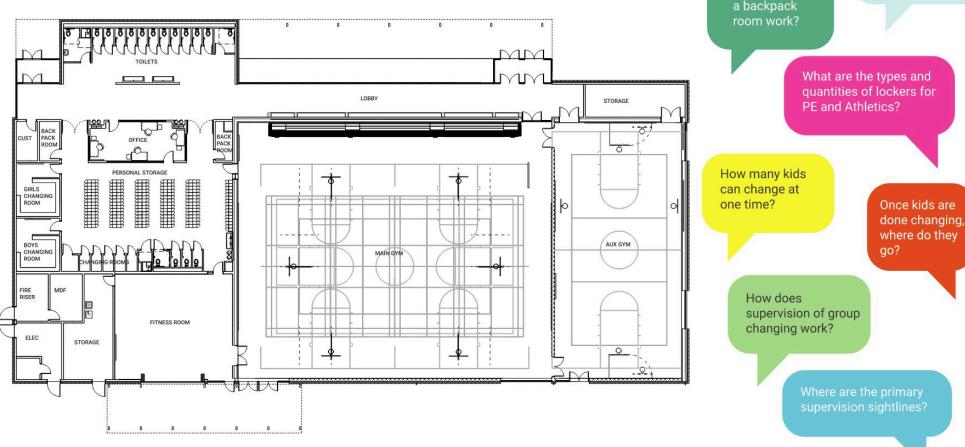
"It was really important to that team to take the **student voice** and bring it to life with this project. It truly is an **innovative space** that has students' **learning**, **growth and well-being** in mind in every corner of this space."

Inclusivity Spectrum



Explorer Phase 1

Floor Plan

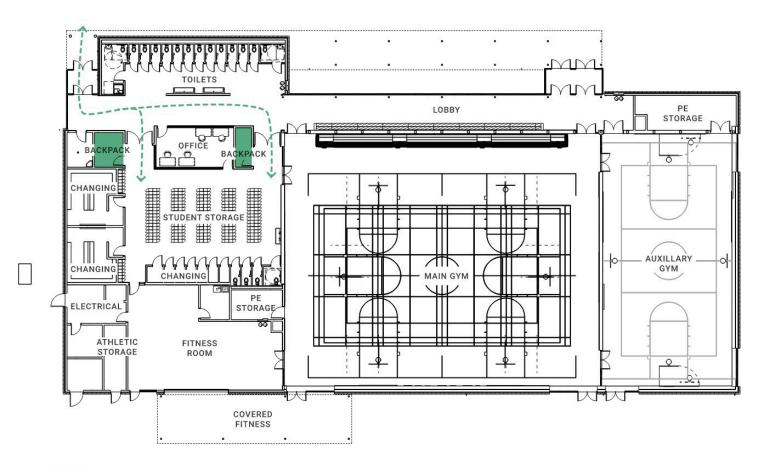


How do Laccess storage from the main gym?

How does a backpack

Explorer Phase 1

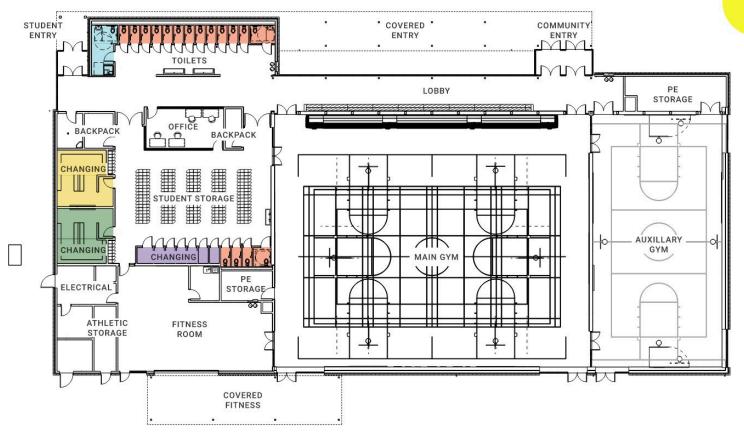
Floor Plan Updated





Design Development

Frequently Asked Questions



What options do students have to change?

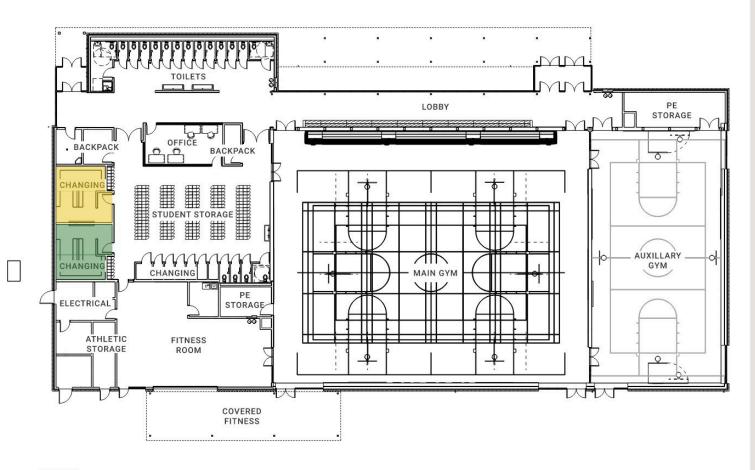
Changing / Hygiene

- Single Changing7 Stalls
- M. Group Changing ~15 Students
- F. Group Changing ~15 Students
- Toilet Stalls17 Stalls
- Showers1 Staff Stall

~55 students

Explorer Phase 1

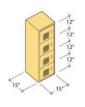
Floor Plan Updated

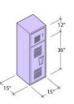


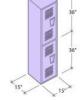
How does supervision of group changing work?

Lockers

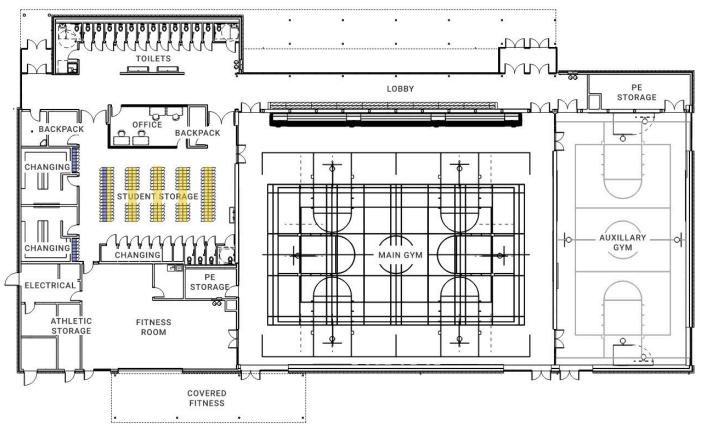
- PE Qty 629
- Athletics Qty 49





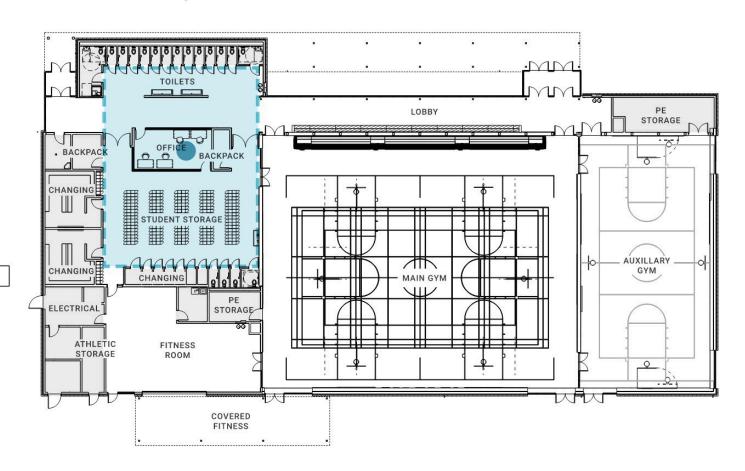






Explorer Phase 1

Floor Plan Updated



Where are the primary supervision sightlines?

Supervision

Office

- Student Storage
- Changing
- Hygiene
- O Main Gym
- Student Entry
- Lobby
- Fitness



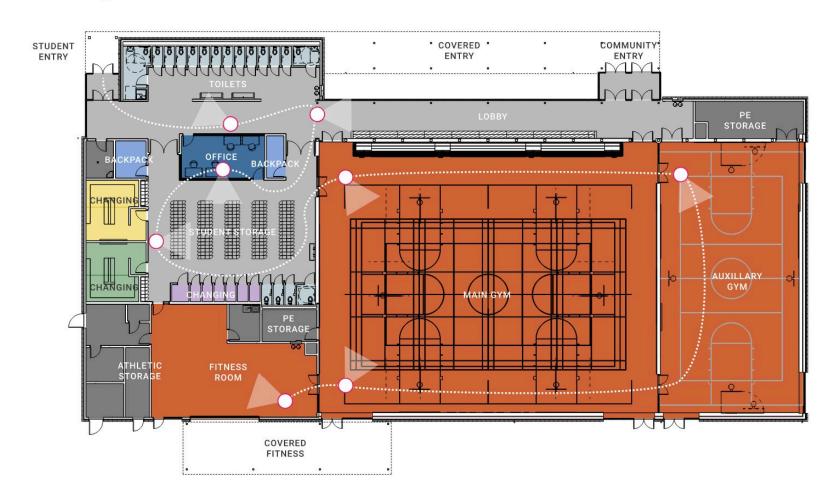




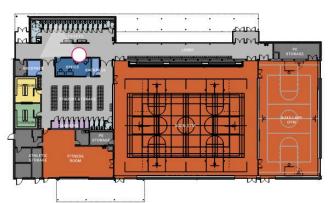


Design Development

Walk-through



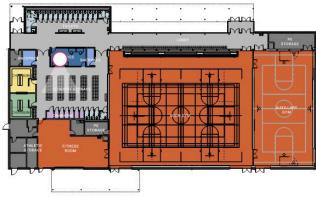
Design DevelopmentStudent Entry





Design Development

Student Storage







Teacher videos showing students how to use the new PE & Athletics support areas





what w INVITII

what we're doing now: INVITING FEEDBACK!

Less shenanigans than last year, **no hiding spots**

Height of lockers is okay

PE office is good for collaboration, don't have to have multiple conversations because women/men are in different places, it is faster to communicate



Some kids are taking more time to change and are tardy to class

Backpack roommanagement is still
getting sorted out

Staff are more tired at the end of the day because they are supervising during transitions

Would like more single-occupant changing rooms

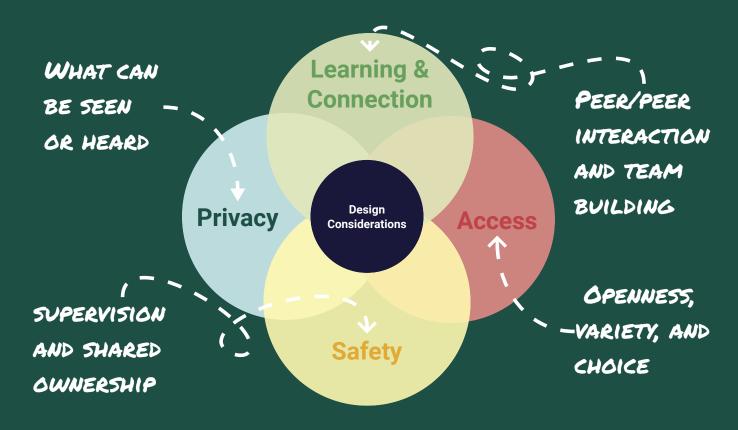
BAYA LOCKERS TO PE

Let's Talk!

♪ TEAM 01



what we did: STUDENT AND STAFF SUMMIT THEMES



what we heard: Lincoln High School - Seattle Public Schools



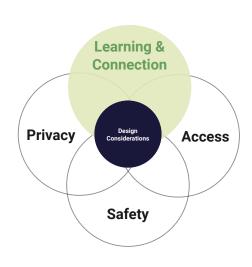
Learning & Connection: Peer/Peer Interaction & Team Building Summit Workshop Key Takeaways

Space for Community Building and Peer Interaction

To be successful, there will need to be structured expectations

To be successful, there will need to be a culture of over-communication and orientation for new students, families, and visitors

Adequately support different needs of teams and PE storage

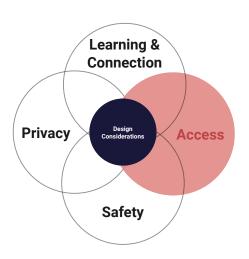


Access: Openess, Variety, Choice Summit Workshop Key Takeaways

Manage Student Density and monitoring in Shared Spaces through scale and variety

Provide student's choice to meet their own comfort level and privacy needs

Single Occupant changing spaces support Inclusivity and Access, more student needed on hybrid model

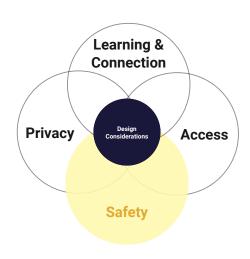


Safety: Supervision & Shared Ownership Summit Workshop Key Takeaways

Shared Responsibility over space promotes safety, respect, ownership and accountability

Security and Access Control, to discourage misbehavior and protect personal belongings

Explore Emergency and Safety Features to fine tune visual and acoustic barriers



Privacy: What Can be Seen or Heard Summit Workshop Key Takeaways

Visual and Acoustic Privacy for general safety and to protect against cell phone use

Occupancy Indicators for safety and efficiency

