

Tight Site, Tight Partnership:

**A Story of One Site, Two Buildings,
and Twenty Years of Collaboration**

A4LE LearningSCAPES Conference
October 30, 2025 | 3-4PM

QUACKENBUSH ARCHITECTS + PLANNERS

Perkins&Will



Hello!



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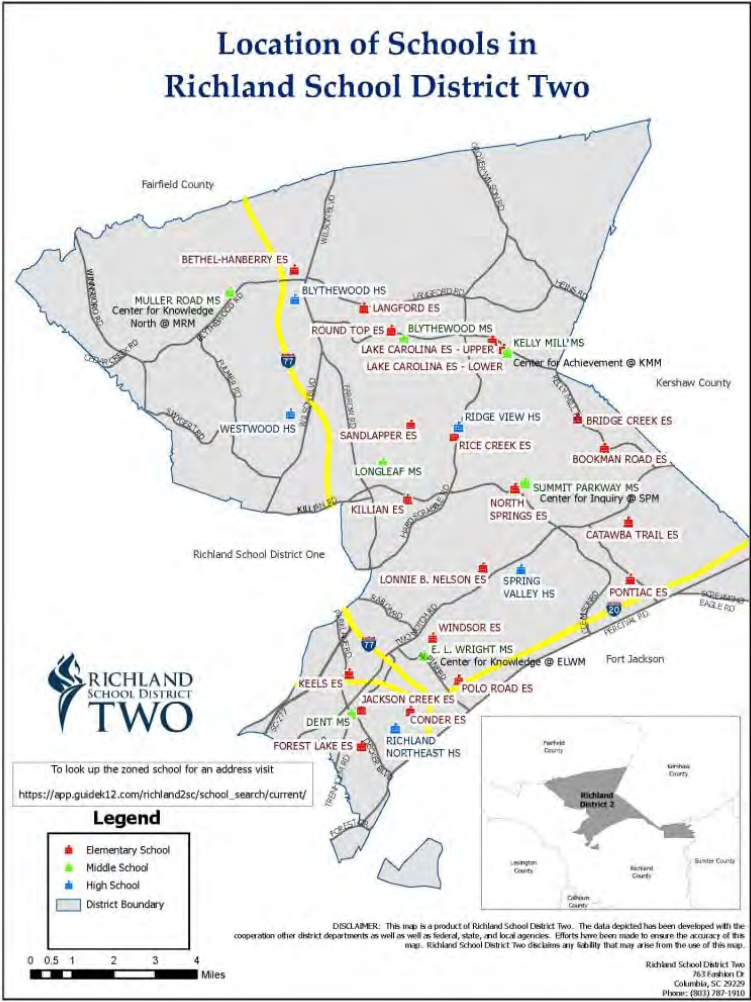
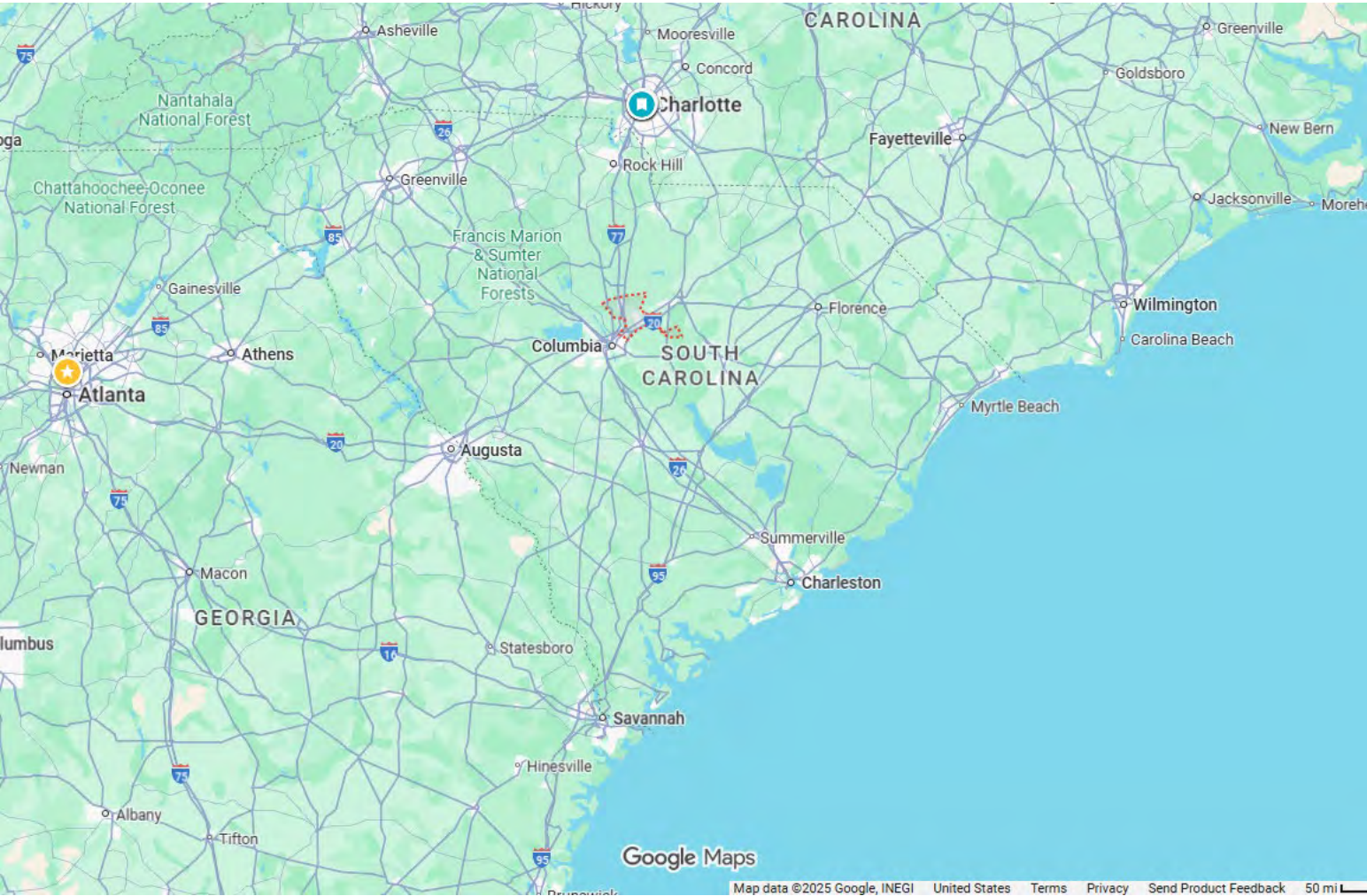
Aimee Eckmann

Firmwide PreK-12 Practice
Leader



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About Richland Two



Purpose Driven, Future Ready



I AM...

***CONNECTED.
ENGAGED.
SUPPORTED.
ACHIEVING.***

CORE VALUES

***BELONGING
LEARNING
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
JOY***

MISSION

***IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OUR
COMMUNITY, WE EMPOWER STUDENTS
TO DISCOVER THEIR POTENTIAL AND
PREPARE FOR A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE.***

FOUNDATIONS

***COMMUNITY & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT | TEACHING &
LEARNING | CULTURE & CLIMATE | HUMAN CAPITAL |
FINANCE & OPERATIONS***



**RICHLAND
SCHOOL DISTRICT
TWO**

Richland Two Fast Facts

- Total Enrollment – 28,887
 - African- American – 63%
 - White – 14%
 - Hispanic 14%
 - Asian – 3%
 - 58 Different Languages spoken
 - 7% Multilingual Learners
 - 14% students with IEPs
 - 21% of students changed school last year
 - 12% military affiliated
 - 64% Pupils in Poverty
 - 87% Graduation Rate
- 44 Schools and Centers
- 31 Nationally Certified Magnet Schools
- Employees – 3,887
- Budget
 - General Operating = FY26 \$388 million
 - Capital = FY26 \$45 million
- Look Ahead
 - Charter Schools, Vouchers, Choice
 - New Residents
 - New Businesses
 - Decrease in Funding but Increase in Needs

About Richland Two

Between 2005 and 2025, significant enrollment growth, peaking in the 2010s , leveling off in recent years.

Drivers of growth		SY 2005	SY 2025	Change
• Industry	Enrollment	20,968	28,887	7,919
	Schools	27	44	+17
• New families	Building Sq. Ft	3,510,807	5,738,436	+2,227,629
• New construction	# of Teachers	1,080	1,479	+399
	Poverty	46%	64%	+18%
	Non-White	66%	86%	+20%
Impact of growth				
• School overcrowding				
• Consideration of redistricting				
• Facility expansions				

QUACKENBUSH ARCHITECTS + PLANNERS



20+
Years of Experience

10
School Districts Served

130+
K-12 Projects

56
Design Awards *including*

33
K-12 Awards

Recipient of the
**AIA South Carolina
Firm Award** in 2025

**Since 1935, we've
believed that design
has the power to make
the world a better,
more beautiful place.**

Perkins&Will



Crow Island School
Winnetka, Illinois, 1940



Designing for the future of learning.

3,000+

School projects designed

860,000+

Students served and counting

#2 Education Giants

Interior Design, 2023

Top-Ranked in K-12 Architecture

Building Design + Construction, 2023

More AIA National Honor Awards

for Pre-K 12 schools than any other firm



Timeline: Perkins&Will and Quackenbush Architects' Collaborations

Blythewood
High School



Muller Road
Middle School



USC Center
for Health &
Well-Being

Piney Woods
Elementary School



Center for
Knowledge Magnet
Elementary School



USC Brain
Health Center

2005

2007

2011

2017

2018

2021

2022

2023

2025

2026

RICHLAND SCHOOL
DISTRICT TWO
LONG-RANGE
FACILITY STUDY
2007

Long-Range
Facilities Study

RICHLAND SCHOOL
DISTRICT TWO
DISTRICT-WIDE
EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES
ASSESSMENT AND
ENHANCEMENT PLAN
FINAL REPORT
8 MARCH 2018

District Assessment +
Enhancement Plan



Chapin
Middle School



EL Wright
Middle School

HGTC Nursing & Health
Sciences Institute

Timeline: Perkins&Will, Quackenbush Architects, and Richland Two's Collaborations

Blythewood
High School



Muller Road
Middle School



Center for
Knowledge Magnet
Elementary School



2005

2007

2011

2017

2018

2021

2022

2023

2025

2026

RICHLAND SCHOOL
DISTRICT TWO
LONG-RANGE
FACILITY STUDY
2007

Blythewood High School

Completion: 2005





RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT TWO LONG-RANGE FACILITY STUDY

2007

Muller Road Middle School

Completion: 2011



RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT TWO DISTRICT-WIDE EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES ASSESSMENT AND ENHANCEMENT PLAN

**FINAL REPORT
8 MARCH 2018**



EL Wright Middle School

Completion: 2023



Center for Knowledge Magnet Elementary School

Completion: 2024



Design Partnerships: **Regional Perspective**

- Deep understanding of **client preferences** and **standards**
- Proven experience with **regional construction** assemblies and materials (value & craftsmanship)
- Established knowledge of contractors and **project delivery procurement** strategies
- Trusted relationships and knowledge of **local and state permitting** authorities
- **Cultural and geographical insight** that reflect the unique traditions and character of the region



Design Partnerships: **National Perspective**

(Why we partner with **Perkins&Will**)

- Brings an **international perspective** to school design
- Deep resume of **exceptional school projects**
- **Innovative** programming process
- **Continuity** of team over decades
- Very **collaborative** – not obsessed with control or credit



Design Partnerships: Should you partner/hire a Partnered Team?

Is it **appropriate** for your **project**?

- Client Profile/ Scope (i.e., Programming)/ Scale/ Complexity

What are the **benefits**?

- Diverse perspectives/ Great value/ Richer designs

What makes a **great partnership**?

- Compatible culture & values/ long-term perspective/ trust & mutual respect



The Partnership: Perkins&Will, Quackenbush Architects, and Richland Two's Collaborations

Blythewood
High School



Muller Road
Middle School



Center for
Knowledge Magnet
Elementary School



2005

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2026

RICHLAND SCHOOL
DISTRICT TWO
LONG-RANGE
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RICHLAND SCHOOL
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District Assessment +
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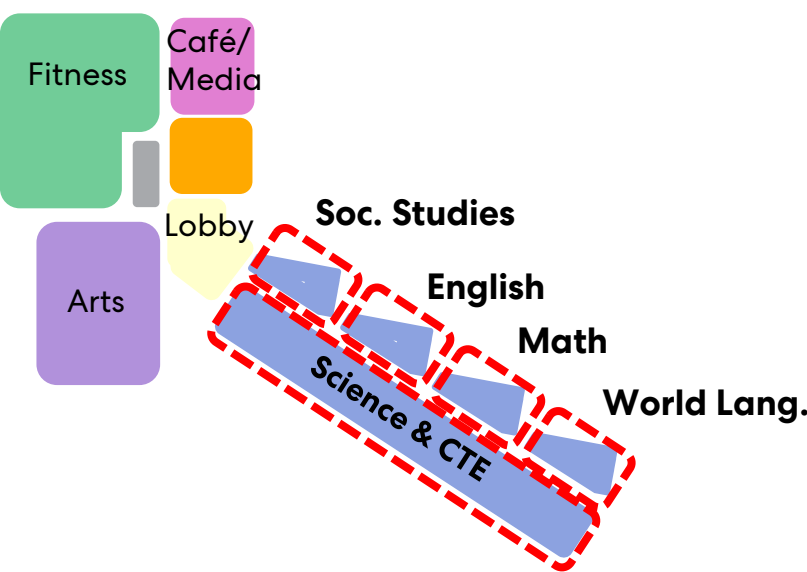


EL Wright
Middle School

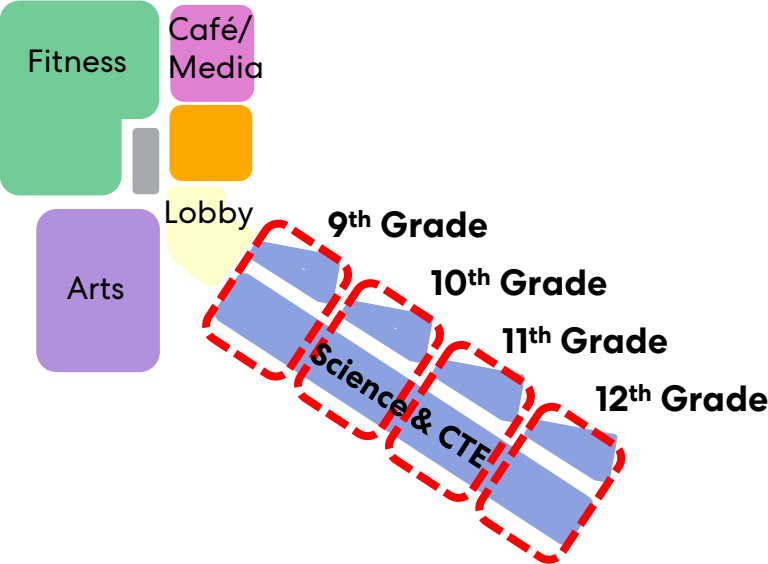


Planning Evolution:
Blythewood High School (2007)
Planning for Cross Disciplinary
and Curricular Flexibility

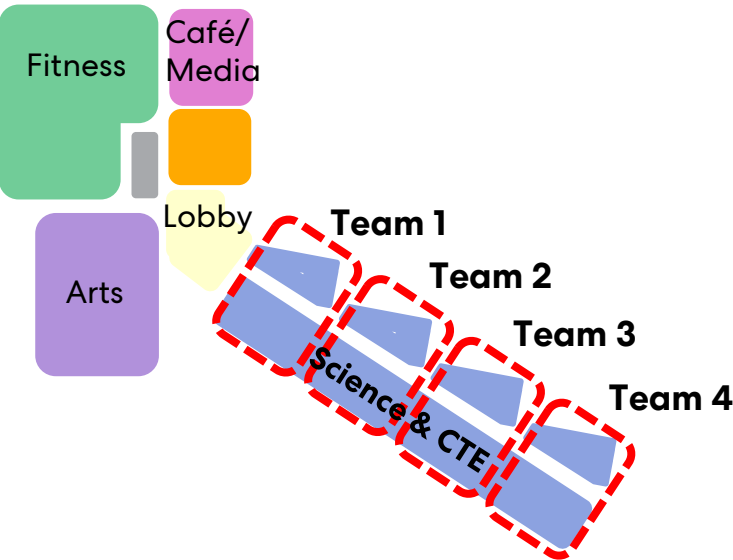
Departmental



Grade Level Teams

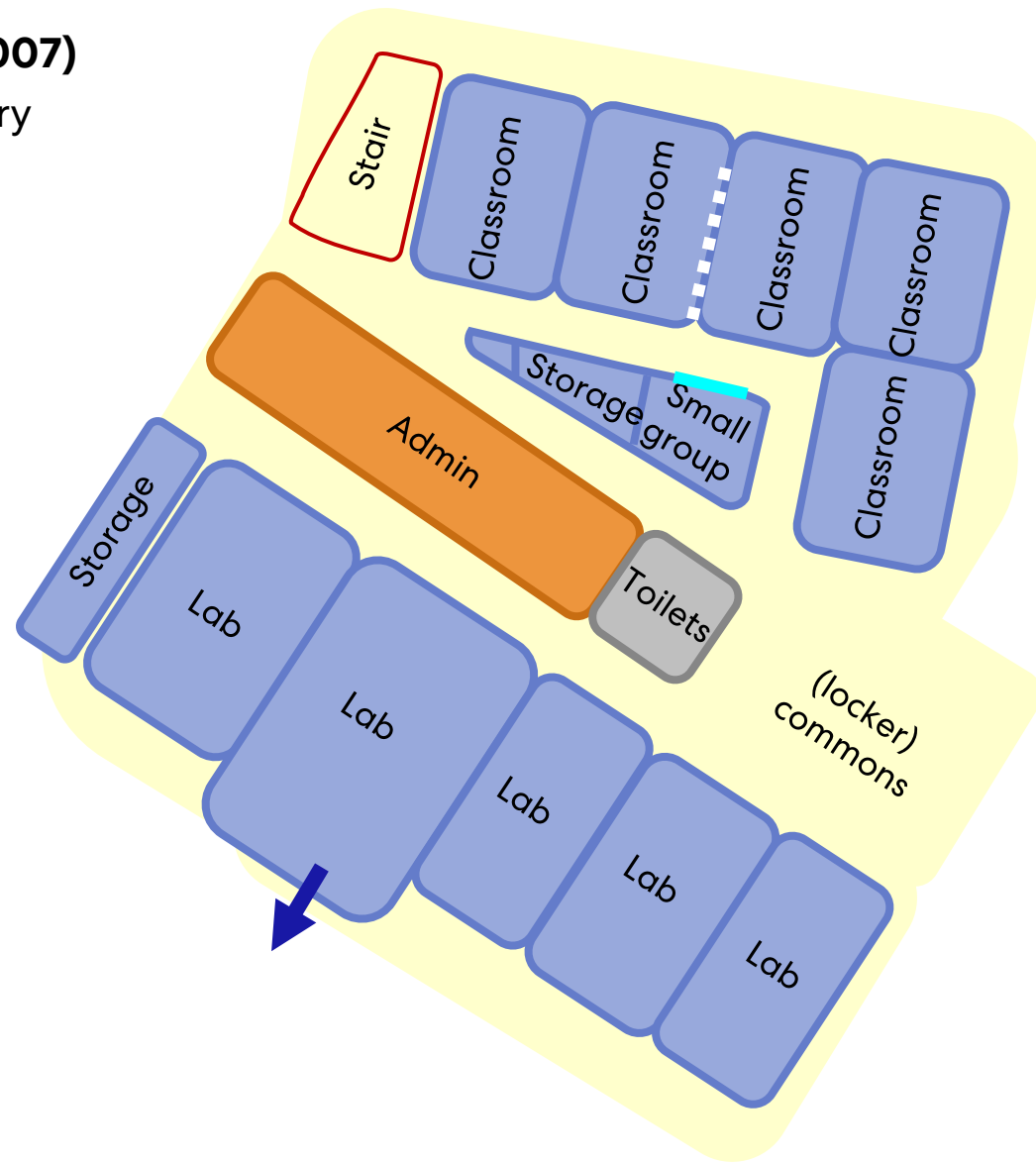


Thematic Teams



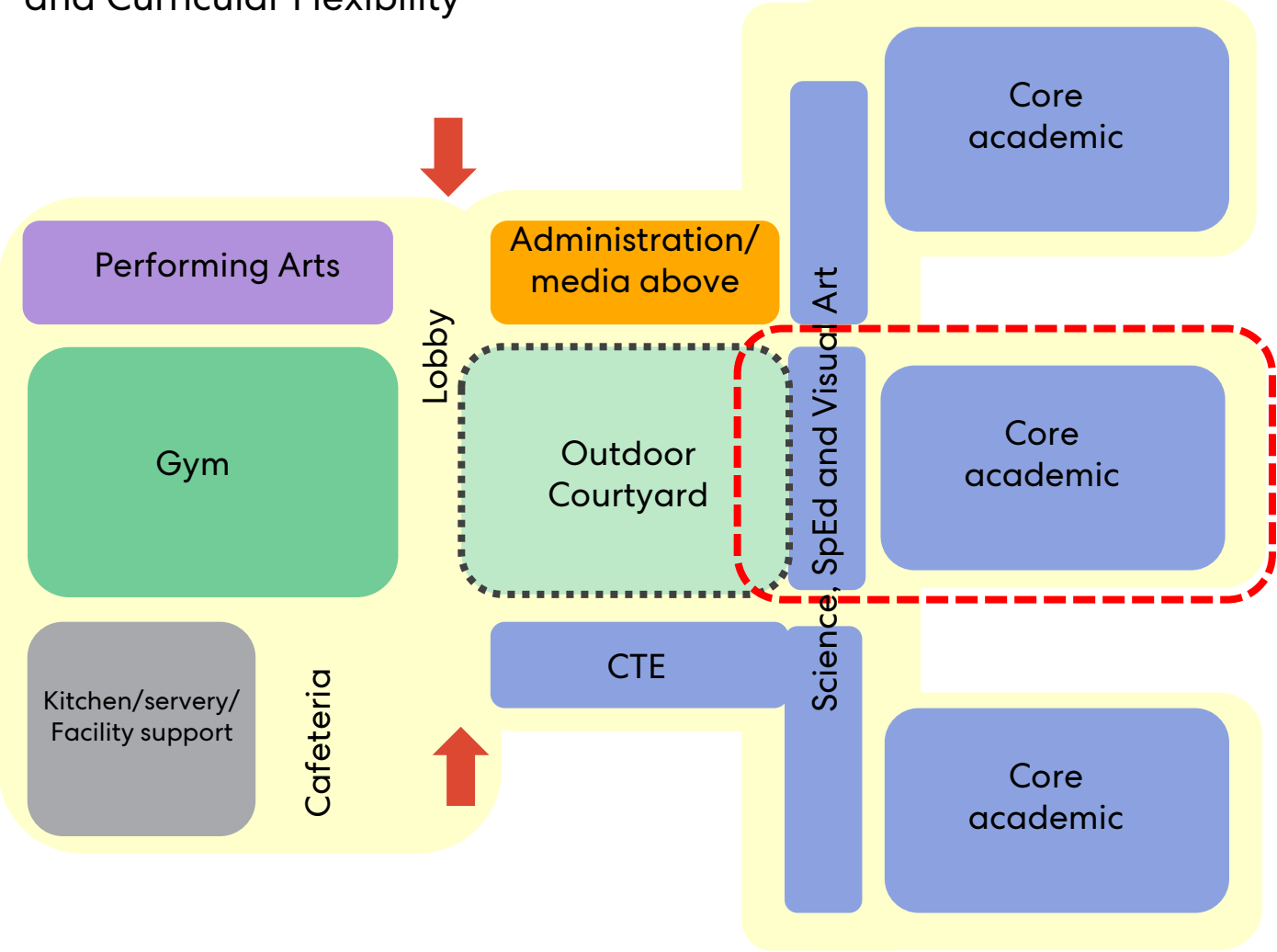
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Planning for Cross Disciplinary
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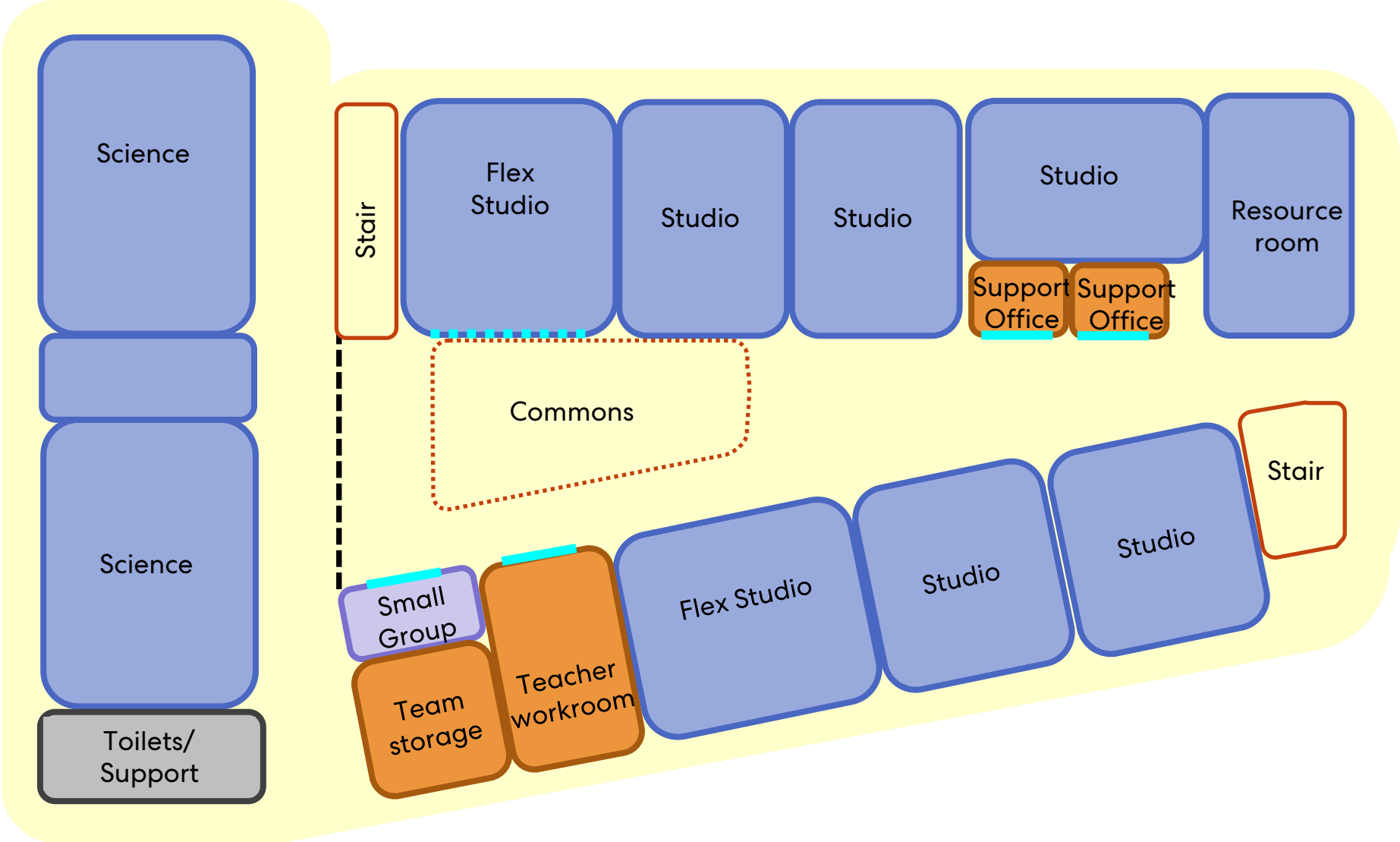


**Planning Evolution:
Muller Road Middle School (2011)**

Planning for Cross Disciplinary
and Curricular Flexibility



Planning Evolution:
Muller Road Middle School (2011)
Extended learning and transparency



RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT TWO **DISTRICT-WIDE** **EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES** **ASSESSMENT AND** **ENHANCEMENT PLAN**

FINAL REPORT
8 MARCH 2018

PERKINS+WILL



QUACKENBUSH ARCHITECTS + PLANNERS



Case Study:

EL Wright Middle School & Center for Knowledge Elementary School

Facilities Plan Recommendation



BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- Built: 1961; Addition (Cafeteria): 1990; Addition: 2004

KEY CHALLENGES:

- Site topography is challenging; landlocked for play space
- Age of buildings; single-story buildings occupy much of the site
- Site traffic - 2 lines of cars
- Multiple buildings introduce safety and accessibility challenges

PROGRAM DEFICIENCIES:

- No flexible collaboration space
- No maker space
- Need for more flexible furniture

RECOMMENDATION: Re-build except for latest 3-story building (limited renovation)



Prestwick Cir

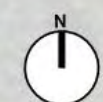
Appleby Ln

EL WRIGHT
MIDDLE
SCHOOL

Aintree Dr

Alpine Rd

Windsor Lake Blvd



E L Wright Middle School
Existing Site Analysis



Bus drop off and new parking



Appleby Ln

New car drop off and parking - long queuing



EL WRIGHT
MIDDLE
SCHOOL

Aintree Dr

Repurpose for CFK/LAW
program

Alpine Rd



CFK/LAW Drop off

Windsor Lake Blvd

Legend



Parking - Student



Parking - Faculty



Loading Facilities



Bus Drop-Off



Vehicular Drop-Off



Play Fields

Area of Concern
Pedestrian

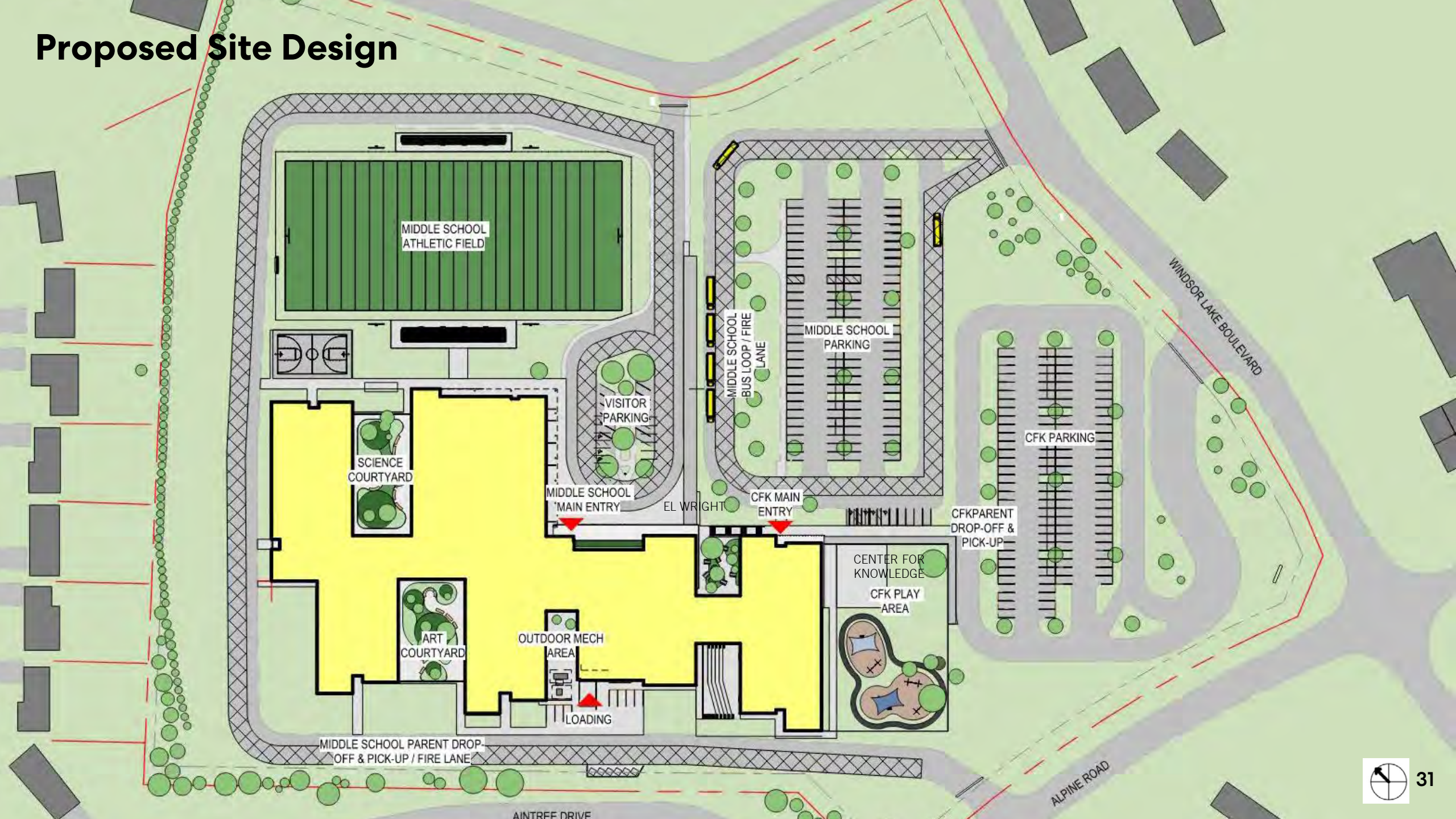
Area of Concern
Water

Area of Concern
Vehicular



E L Wright Middle School
Proposed Site Analysis
Rebuilding Option, Limited Phasing

Proposed Site Design



Existing Site

**E.L. Wright
Middle School**

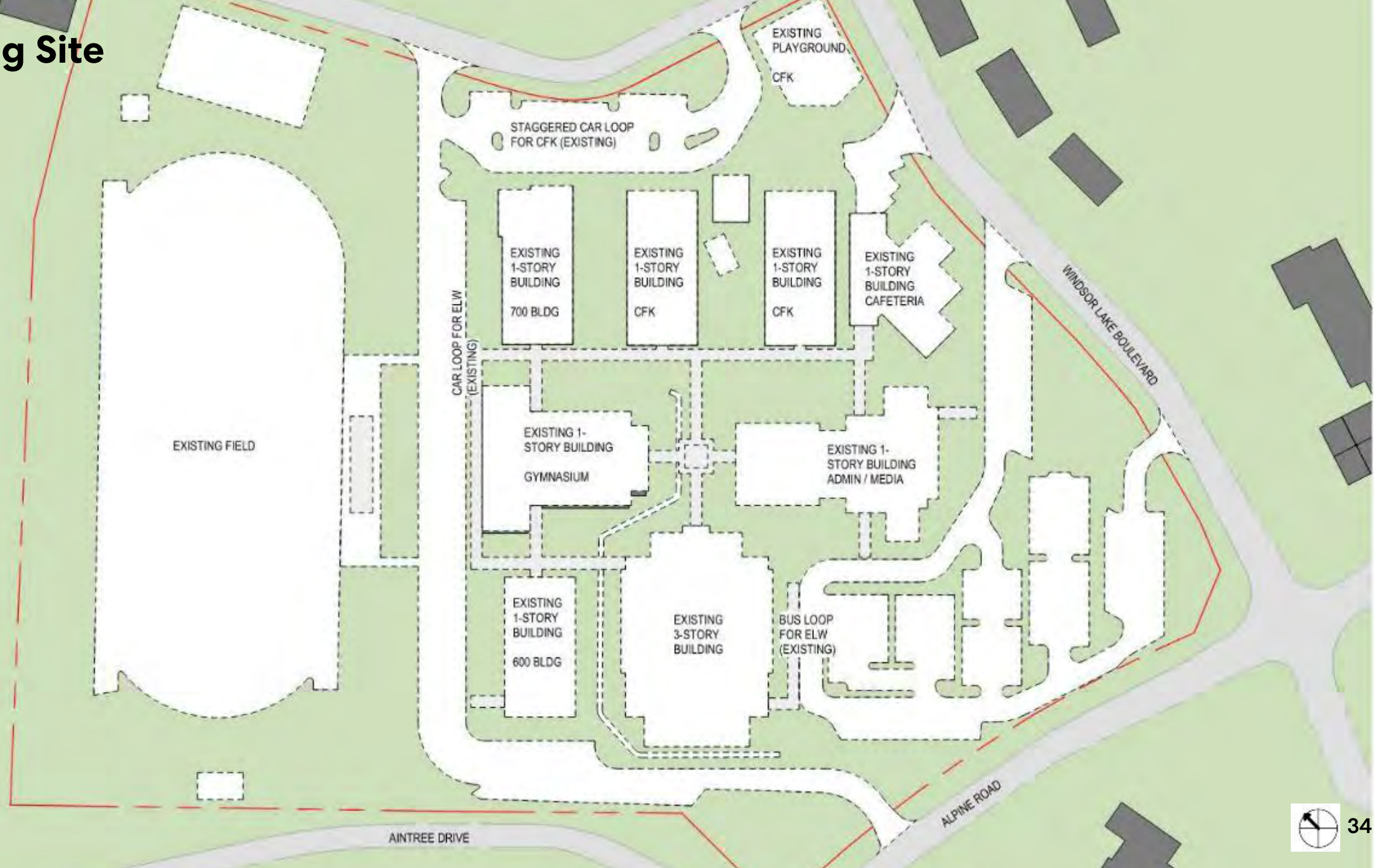
**Center for
Knowledge**



EL Wright Middle School + Center for Knowledge Elementary School



Existing Site



Phasing Concepts

GRAPHIC LEGEND

- BUS LOOP
- CAR DROP-OFF LOOP
- CONSTRUCTION RAMP
- CONSTRUCTION FENCE

Phase A-1

June 2020 to Dec 2020



Phase A-2

Jan 2021 to Dec 2022



Phase B-1

Jan 2023 to May 2023



Phase B-2

April 2023 to Dec 2023



Phase C

Jan 2024 to Feb 2024



Phase D

Mar 2024 to Aug 2024



June 2020 to Dec 2020



Jan 2021 to Dec 2022



Phase B-1: Demo old MS

Jan 2023 to May 2023



Phase B-2: Construct ES

April 2023 to Dec 2023



Phase C: Demo old ES

Jan 2024 to March 2024

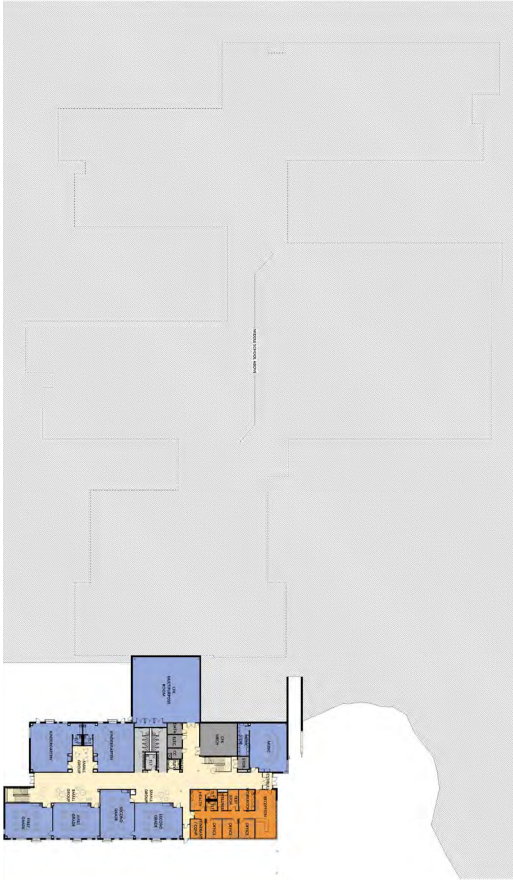


Phase D: Complete site

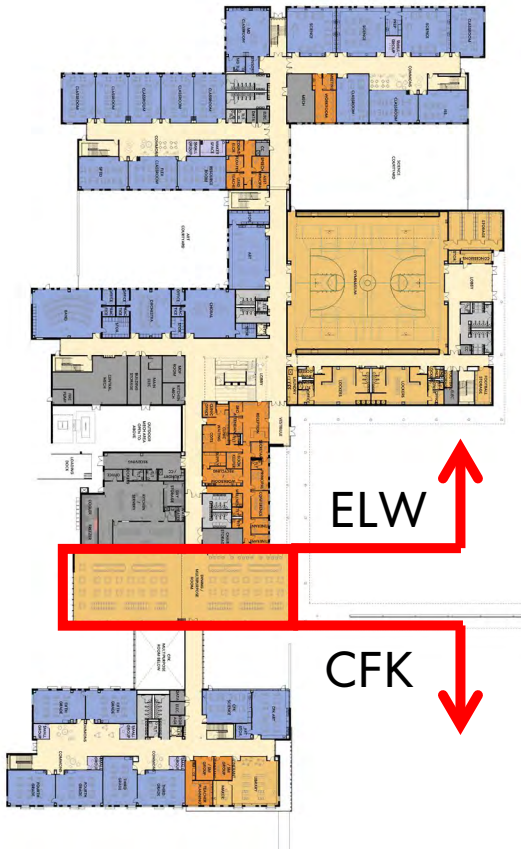
March 2024 to Aug 2024



Floor Plans
EL Wright MS and CFK (2023/24)



Level 00 CFK



Level 01 CFK / ELW



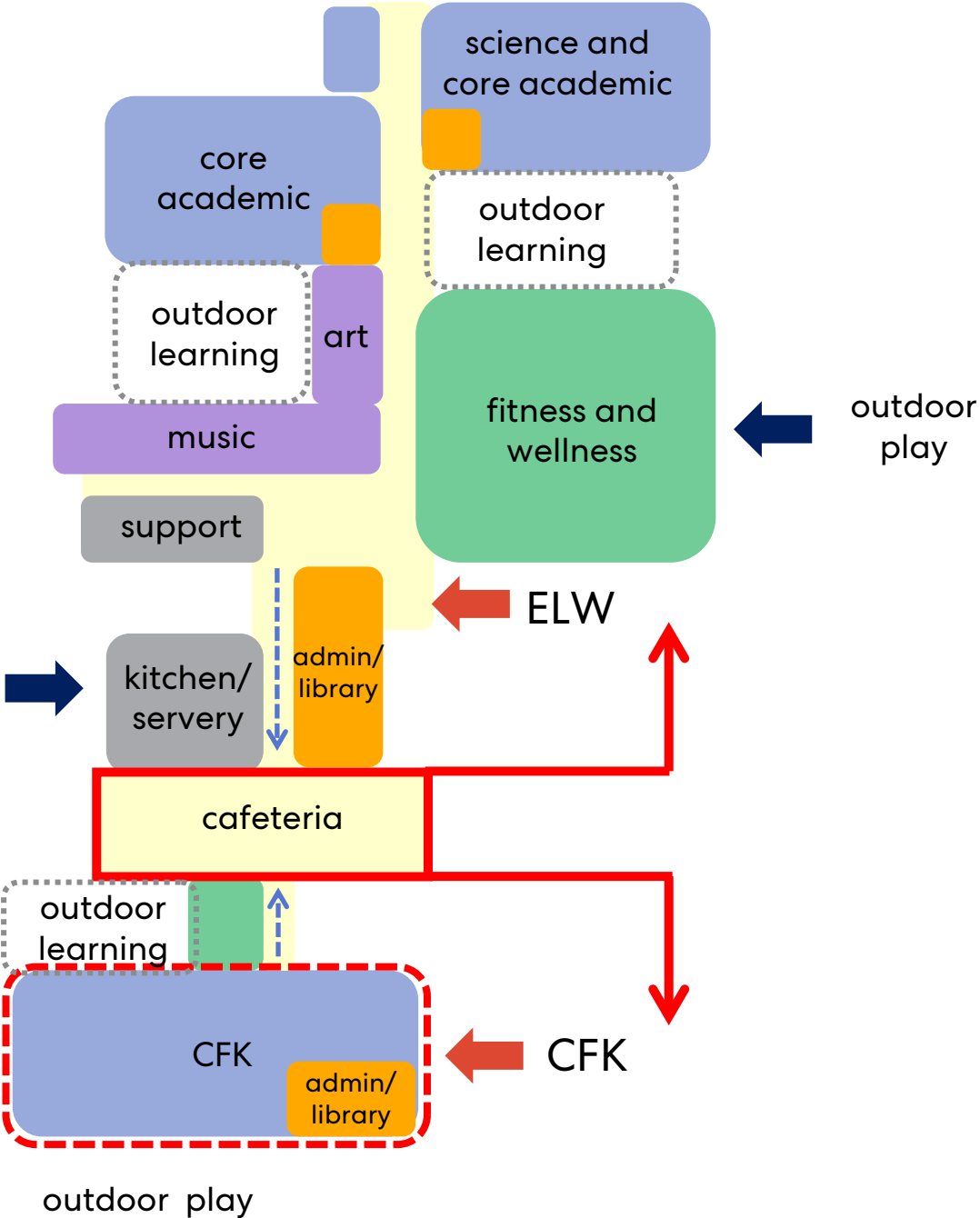
Level 02 ELW



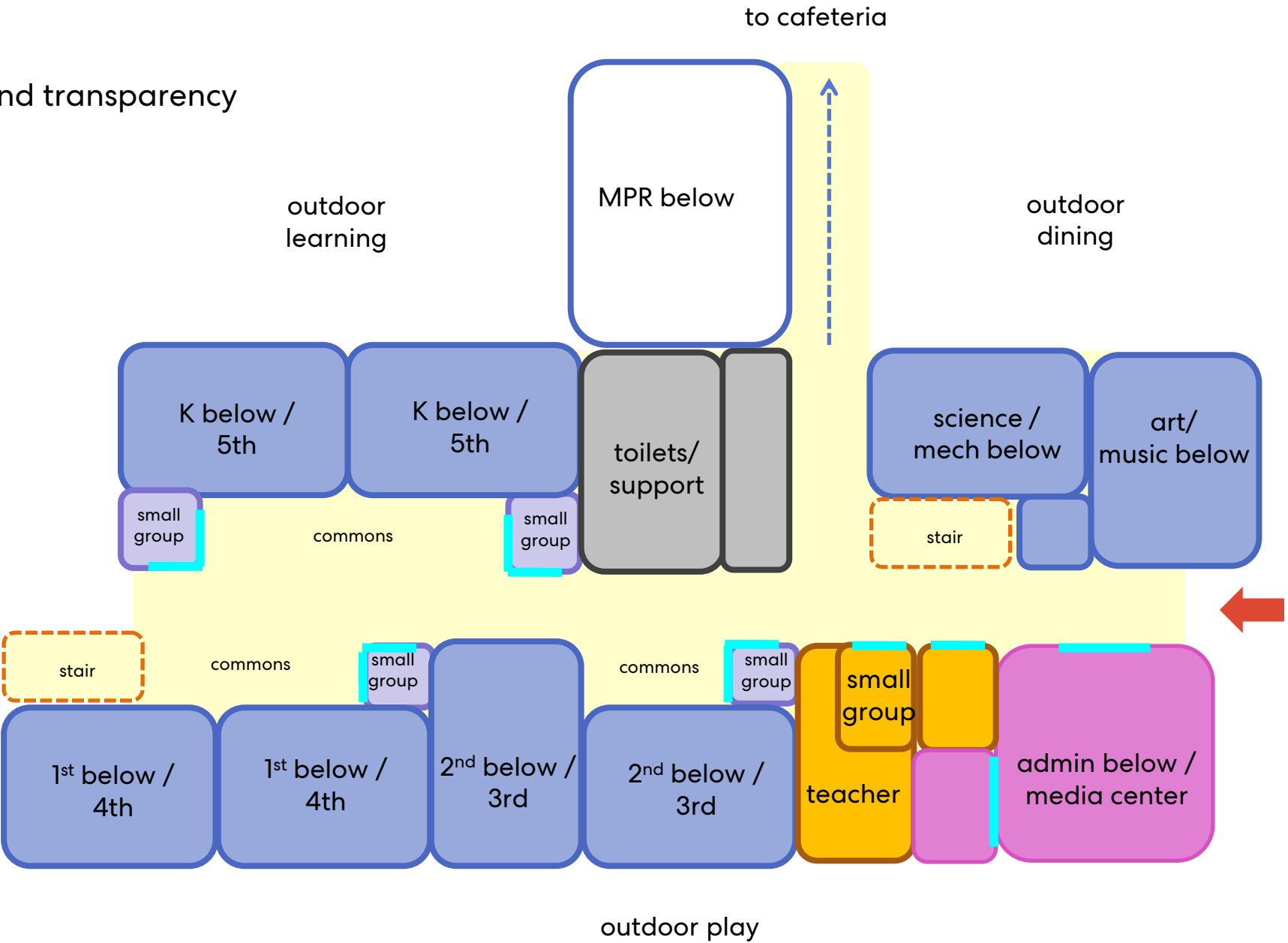
Level 03 ELW



Planning Evolution:
EL Wright MS and CFK (2023/24)
Extended learning and transparency



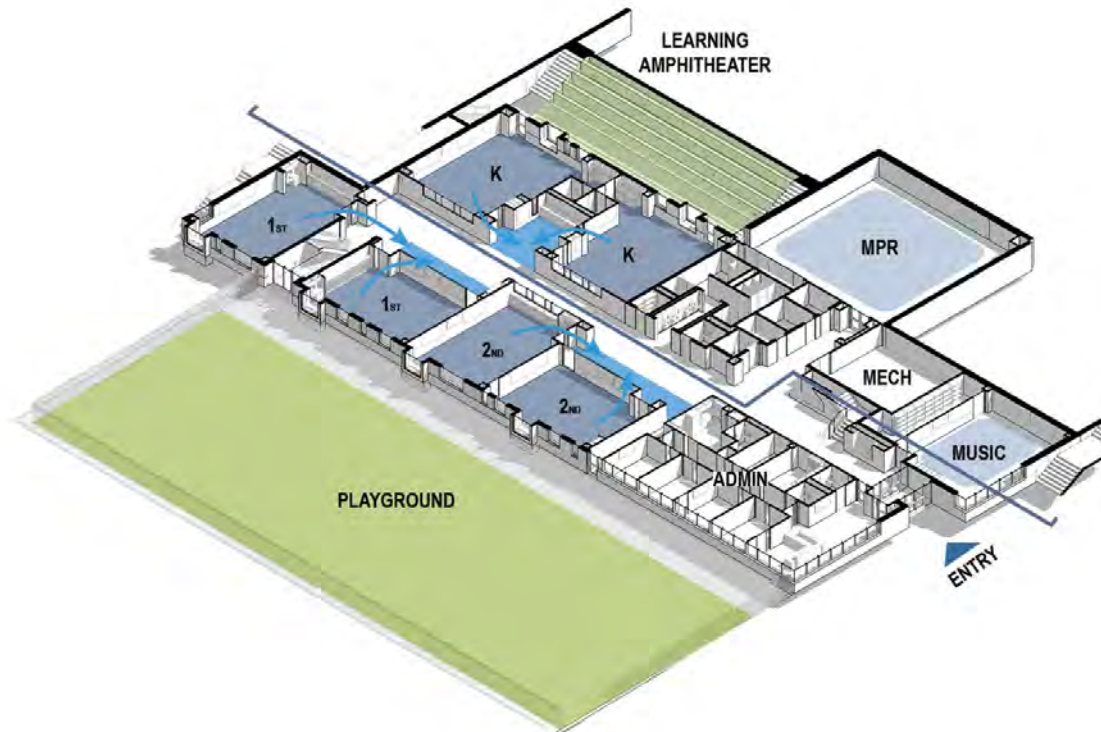
Planning Evolution:
CFK (2024)
Extended learning and transparency



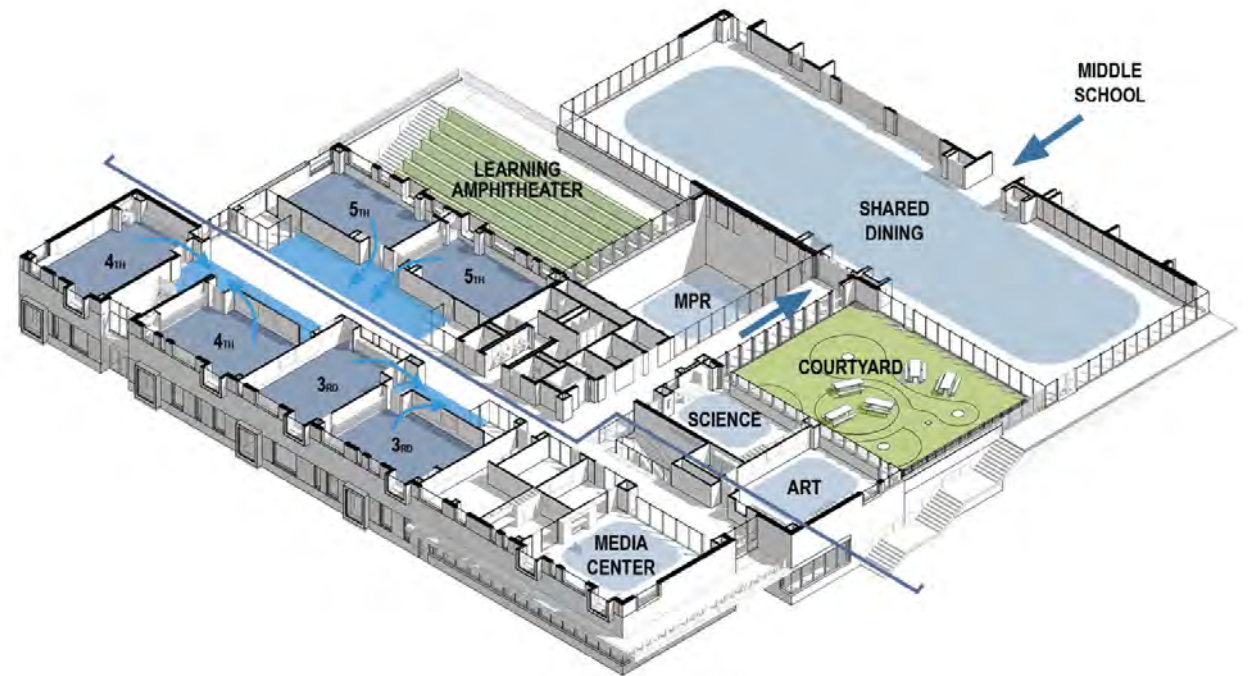
Planning Evolution:

CFK (2024)

Extended learning and transparency



Level 01 Diagram



Level 02 Diagram



E.L. WRIGHT MIDDLE SCHOOL























CENTER FOR KNOWLEDGE



CENTER
FOR
KNOWLEDGE





Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

1 2 3 4 5
6 7 8 9
10 11 12

FOCUS WALL

PROBLEM SOLVING

- I can identify the problem.
- I can think of a plan.
- I can try my plan.
- I can check my work.
- I can explain my solution.

LEARNING

- I can listen to my teacher.
- I can follow directions.
- I can work with my friends.
- I can ask for help.
- I can help my friends.

READING

- I can read a story.
- I can read a book.
- I can read a newspaper.
- I can read a magazine.
- I can read a comic book.

WRITING

- I can write a story.
- I can write a letter.
- I can write a poem.
- I can write a song.
- I can write a play.

SCIENCE

- I can observe.
- I can measure.
- I can record.
- I can graph.
- I can conclude.

SOCIAL STUDIES

- I can identify.
- I can describe.
- I can compare.
- I can contrast.
- I can evaluate.

ARTS

- I can create.
- I can perform.
- I can exhibit.
- I can appreciate.
- I can critique.

PE

- I can move.
- I can play.
- I can exercise.
- I can compete.
- I can cooperate.

Wednesday, October 23, 2024

10-23-24

qu th

30 52

27

Short i- McCloud's Class

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milk
zipper
H
under













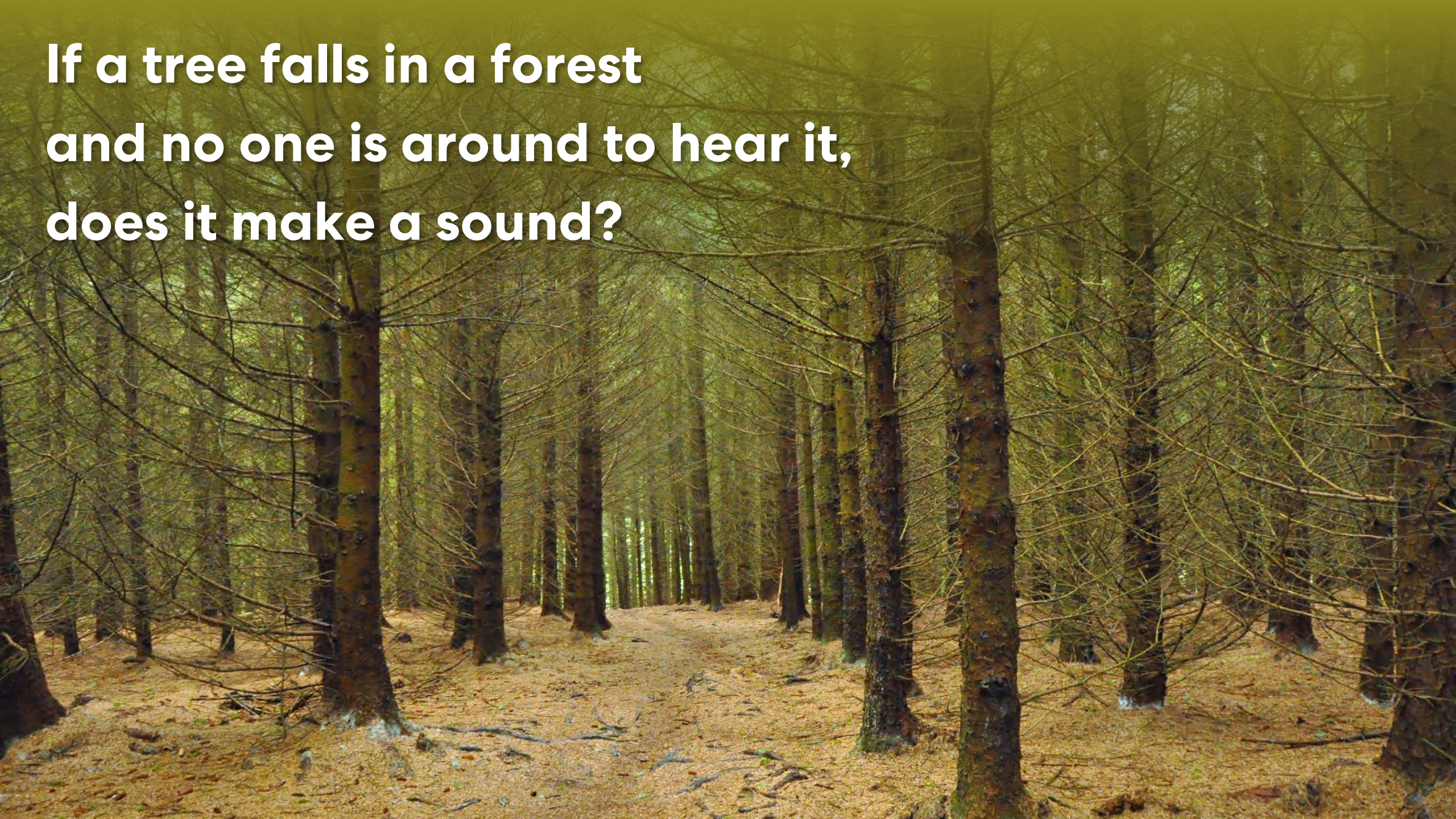








**If a tree falls in a forest
and no one is around to hear it,
does it make a sound?**



- Understand what is working, what can be improved, and why
- Take steps to make improvements in the existing facility
- Take steps to improve design in future facilities
- Opportunity to tweak, to educate and to improve



Survey Structure

Rating Scale



Open Ended

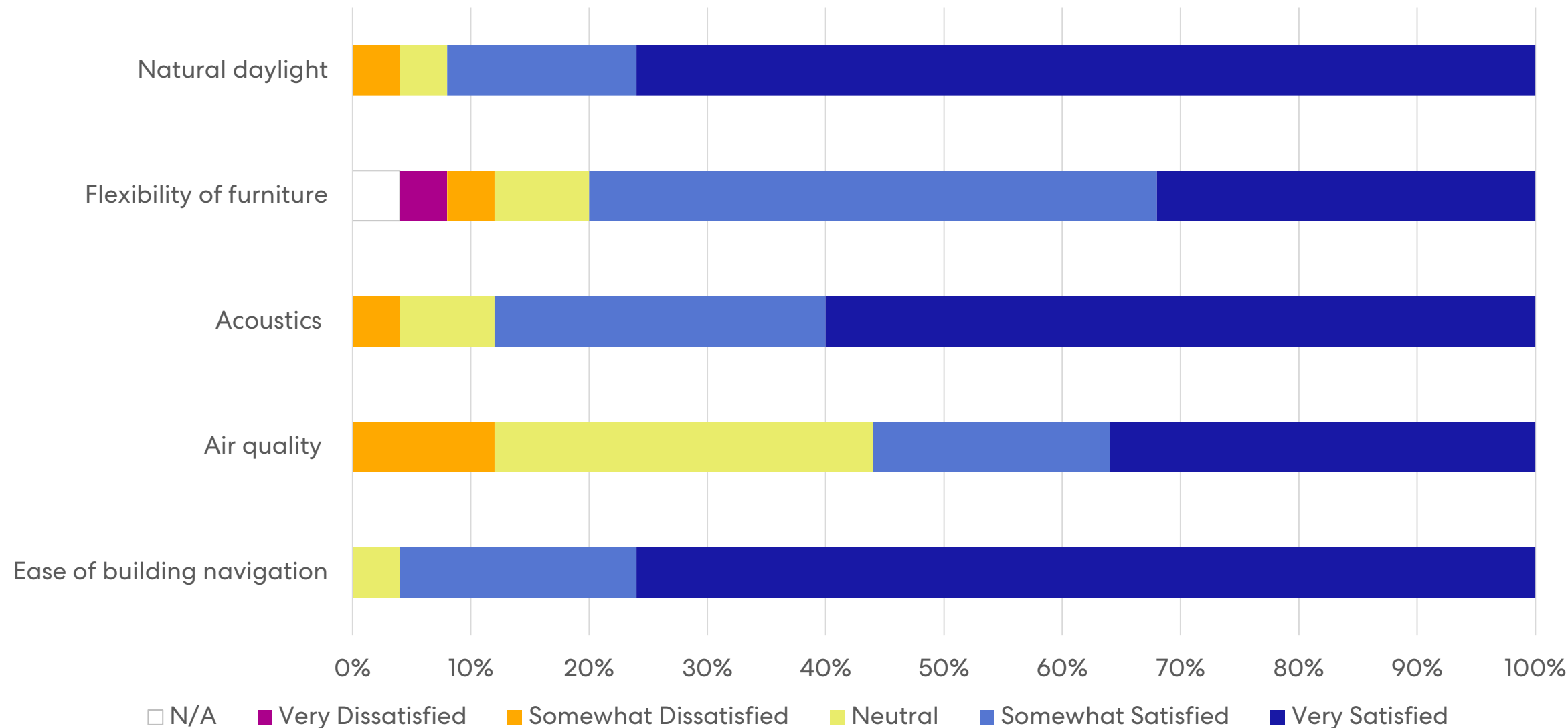


25 out of 26 staff responded

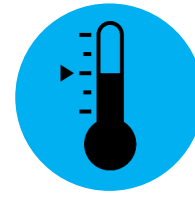


A word cloud featuring the words 'Bright', 'Clean', and 'Modern' in large, bold letters. Surrounding these are various descriptive terms in different colors and sizes, including: 'Gorgeous', 'small', 'space', 'Aesthetic', 'empty', 'Welcoming', 'white', 'airy', 'big', 'simple', 'functional', 'storage', 'open', 'large', 'together', 'cozy', 'Well', 'Fresh', 'hot', 'appealing', 'formal', 'friendly', 'neat', 'organized', 'nice', 'kid', 'new', 'spacious', 'Beautiful', 'Structured', and 'modern'.

Sample of results



Survey take-aways



Implementable remedies:

- Add storage (furniture)
- Mitigate acoustical issues (music room to art)
- Plant hedges at playground to limit visibility from parents in carpool line
- Add shade structures playground
- Lockdown procedures

Future project considerations:

- Improve amphitheater access
- Increase library and conference room size
- Add after school care storage space

Lessons learned

- Leadership transitions / continuity of administrators and staff
- Training / PD to use the spaces as designed
- Lockdown plan / safety expectations
- Project budget - GMP established 5 years before completion (2018)
- Mechanical systems commissioning and staff training (consider phasing complexities)
- Plan for flex offices / meeting rooms for changing staff counts
- **Students will meet the expectations (in use of the learning environment) of the leaders**



Our building is direct contributing factor to our school's community and culture. The space is inviting, captures opportunities for collaboration, and meets the needs for safety and security within our environment.

Space is **used innovatively**

Center for Knowledge **has a powerful effect on creating a strong sense of school community.** Because the building is smaller and more intimate than many schools, it allows students, staff, and families to truly know one another.

The new building **gives us an identity** and it is especially nice to have everyone under one roof. **The signage and the cohesiveness of color is so well done.**

