

# 2013 Exhibition of School Planning and Architecture

## Helen Keller Elementary School

Kirkland, Washington  
New Construction

# Helen Keller Elementary





# Be Joyful and Curious

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Through its design and pedagogy, Helen Keller Elementary School seeks to instill its 320 K-5 students with Helen Keller's voracity for learning and curiosity with the world around her.



Photo: Main Entry and Outdoor Play

# Be Inviting and Engaging

## Community Environment:

Sited in a residential area and thoughtfully placed on the site, Keller's exterior expression provides a cheerful human scale for students and the surrounding residents. A large continuous canopy at the main entrance reaches towards the neighborhood, inviting students, parents, and neighbors into the community "living room" - a vibrant, light-filled space that serves as a connector between parent drop-off and bus entries. The library was strategically located on the second-story perched above the living room, providing vistas to the neighboring Edith Multan Park and visibility to the community activity below.



Photo: Student Entry



## Be Inviting and Engaging



Photo: Community Living Room



## Be Inviting and Engaging



Photo: Gym / Commons / Stage

# Be Flexible, Transparent and Collaborative

## Learning Environment:

Organized by grade level, four “learning settings” composed of classrooms with shared instructional areas facilitate individualized attention and enhance student-teacher relationships while encouraging visibility and a sense of ownership. In the community science and art classroom, a sectional garage door opens to the outside, integrating indoor and outdoor learning space. The multi-functional commons room serves as the social hub of the school and, with operable glazing walls between the commons, living room, and science/art classroom, adapts to multiple programs and group sizes.





## Be Flexible, Transparent and Collaborative



Photo: Shared Instructional Area



# Be Inquisitive

## Physical Environment:

Just as the sensation of water finally engaged Keller with her surroundings, tactile artwork, sign language instructions, and oversized Braille dots in common areas and on exterior planers encourage students to read, touch, and interact with their surroundings. Keller's inspirational quotes flank students' paths to the four different learning communities, each with identifying themes that inspire students to be thoughtful citizens in their school and community.



Photo: Grand Stair



# Be Inquisitive



Photo: Art/Science Classroom

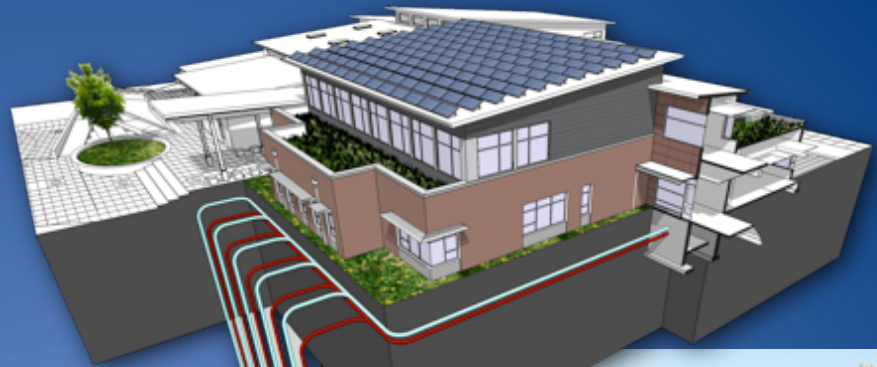


# Be Responsible

## Physical Environment *(continued)*:

Sustainable design strategies were a critical component of the planning process with the school district, and help to create healthy spaces for children to learn and grow:

- High performance building envelope system
- Extensive use of glazing and skylights for natural light infusion
- Displacement ventilation system
- Mechanical heat recovery system via heat exchanger
- 50KW rooftop photovoltaic array
- Preservation and relocation of existing trees



Photos *(clockwise from top right)*:  
3D Sketch; Main Entry Rain Gardens; Photovoltaic Panels

# Be Bold and Be Brave

## Planning Process:

Inherent in Helen Keller Elementary's design is the school's cultural heart and mission statement: Growth, Respect, Integrity, and Perseverance. Teachers and school district staff envisioned their school as the embodiment of Keller's strength of character and will to learn; passing on those lessons to students was at the core of the planning process between teachers, school district administration, and the design team, and was carried through the project's realization.

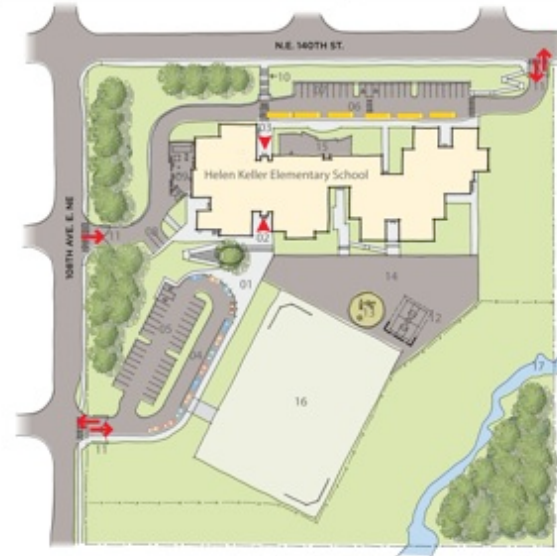


Photos: Entries to Learning Settings



# Site and Space Plans

Helen Keller Elementary School

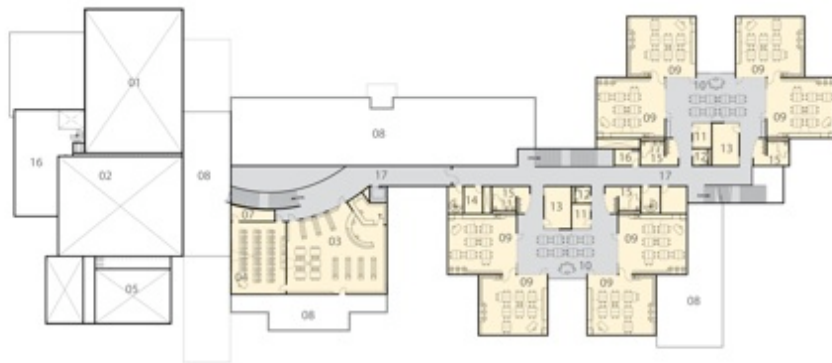


- 01 Entry Plaza
- 02 Main Entry
- 03 North Entry
- 04 Parent Drop-off
- 05 Visitor Parking
- 06 Bus Drop-off
- 07 Staff Parking
- 08 Service Parking
- 09 Service Yard
- 10 Stairs
- 11 Gate
- 12 Covered Play Shed
- 13 Big Toy Area
- 14 Hard Surface Play
- 15 Pre-School Play
- 16 Sand Play Fields
- 17 Juanita Creek
- 18 Edith Moulton Park

site plan



Helen Keller Elementary School



Second floor plan

- |                    |                                  |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| 01 Gymnasium Below | 08 Roof Below                    | 15 Student Toilets   |
| 02 Cafeteria Below | 09 Classroom                     | 16 Mech / Electrical |
| 03 Library         | 10 Shared Instructional Area     | 17 Hallway           |
| 04 Computer Lab    | 11 Small Group Instruction       |                      |
| 05 Stage Below     | 12 Staff Toilet                  |                      |
| 06 Storage         | 13 Teacher Work / Prep / Storage |                      |
| 07 Media Storage   | 14 Custodian                     |                      |



Helen Keller Elementary School



first floor plan

- |                            |                                  |                            |                           |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 01 Gymnasium               | 08 Preschool                     | 15 Student Toilets         |                           |
| 02 Cafeteria               | 09 Classroom                     | 16 Reception               |                           |
| 03 Community Living Room   | 10 Shared Instructional Area     | 17 Hallway                 |                           |
| 04 Food Service            | 11 Resource                      | 18 Administration / Office | 22 Kindergarten Classroom |
| 05 Stage / Music Classroom | 12 Small Group Instruction       | 19 Staff Lounge            | 23 Main Entry             |
| 06 Storage                 | 13 Teacher Work / Prep / Storage | 20 Mech / Electrical       | 24 Bus Drop-Off Entry     |
| 07 Art / Science           | 14 Staff Toilet                  | 21 Main Distribution Frame | 25 Custodian              |



# Exhibition of School Planning and Architecture

## Project Data

Submitting Firm :	BLRB Architects
Project Role	Architect
Project Contact	Lee Fenton, AIA
Title	Managing Principal
Address	1250 Pacific Avenue, Suite 700
City, State or Province, Country	Tacoma, Washington 98402 USA
Phone	253.627.5599
Joint Partner Firm:	
Project Role	
Project Contact	
Title	
Address	
City, State or Province, Country	
Phone	
Other Firm:	
Project Role	
Project Contact	
Title	
Address	
City, State or Province, Country	
Phone	
Construction Firm:	Cornerstone General Contractors
Project Role	General Contractor
Project Contact	Bryan Gormley
Title	Project Manager
Address	11807 N. Creek Parkway S. #102
City, State or Province, Country	Bothell, Washington 98011
Phone	425.481.7460



# Exhibition of School Planning and Architecture

## Project Details

Project Name	Helen Keller Elementary School
City	Kirkland
State	Washington
District Name	Lake Washington School District
Supt/President	Dr. Traci Pierce
Occupancy Date	September 2012
Grades Housed	K-5
Capacity(Students)	550
Site Size (acres)	9 Acres
Gross Area (sq. ft.)	56,528
Per Occupant(pupil)	102.78 SF/Student
gross/net please indicate	gross
Design and Build?	No
If yes, Total Cost:	
Includes:	
If no,	
Site Development:	
Building Construction:	\$17,705,000
Fixed Equipment:	
Other:	
Total:	