

2014 Exhibition of School Planning and Architecture

A.G. Bell Elementary School

Lake Washington School District
Kirkland, Washington

A.G. Bell Elementary School



A.G. Bell Elementary School



Community Environment

A.G. Bell Elementary sits directly on the Kirkland Trail System, a unique community feature in Kirkland, Washington, which was interrupted by the previous school's placement and site layout. Bringing restoration to the fractured site, careful planning allowed these trails to be fully utilized on the school site: improving their function and increasing the walkability for students to and from the school, in addition to connecting trails for community use.

By creating a strong focal point around the school's entry – both outside the building and within it, the indoor/outdoor commons creates a focal hub for community activity – be it outside activities on the grounds of the school, or interior programs most-utilized by the public, such as the administration office, gym, cafeteria/performing arts space and library.



Community Environment *(continued)*

Within the school, a sense of community has transpired throughout the school – driven by exceptional visibility, shared educational spaces (encouraging collaboration among teachers), and a central commons space directly through the entrance.



Learning Environment

In crafting the classroom pods, the architect listened carefully to the District advisory team, ensuring each classroom has equal access to shared space. Implemented through transparent flexible nana-walls, teachers are encouraged to collaborate and utilize movable furniture and spaces to most-effectively deliver education. Within each four-classroom pod there are seven separate spaces available for teaching, varying in size for four to thirty students – each with multiple points of visibility and supervision. Additionally, each classroom is provided two edges of natural daylight.



Learning Environment (continued)

A.G. Bell's library is given particular prominence in the school, clad in reclaimed cedar wood and hovering above the lobby and administration office. Both in the library and throughout the school, signs and markers allow the building to be utilized as a teaching tool – sharing information about materials, building systems, and structural components.



Physical Environment

The existing site was complicated and fractured. Although the forest was an amenity close at hand, occupation of the site did not celebrate or acknowledge this rare opportunity. The physical design responds specifically to the three main areas of Lake Washington School District's goals: Challenge, Value and Connection. For example, the site's challenging elevation changes, forests and wetlands were integrated into the site design - maintaining the integrity of the site and leaving those natural features intact. Energy strategies to maximize value include the use of closed-cell foam insulation sprayed onto the entire envelope.

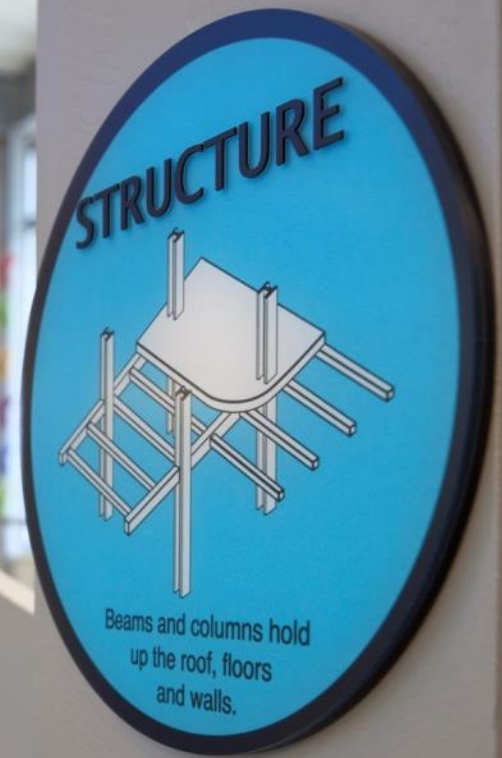


Physical Environment (continued)

The paths that are part of the Kirkland Trail System were integrated into the school, connecting it to the surrounding forest. Through the use of roof canopies and staggered levels, the new building complements the nearby vegetation and maximizes natural daylight - further reinforcing a transparent learning environment.

Per District standards, the school features durable, low-maintenance materials such as concrete floors, metal siding and galvanized steel, accented by warm wood accents and a color palette representative of the surrounding forest. Exposed systems and signage throughout the building provide opportunities to learn and better understand the physical attributes of A.G. Bell Elementary.

A number of sustainable technologies and strategies were drafted to make A.G. Bell exceed WSSP (Washington Sustainable School Protocol) criteria including: solar panels, high-efficiency boilers, rain gardens, sun shades, light-diffusing glass and deliberate orientations that allow for maximum sun control and daylighting.



Planning Process

A.G. Bell Elementary was fully operational throughout construction – a task that required diligent phasing and preparation of site work. By constructing (and temporarily enclosing) the covered play first to utilize it as a gym, demolition and construction moved forward in strategic phases – ultimately reconfiguring the school's orientation and allowing the best use of a unique site.

Participating stakeholders were brought into the design process on three different levels to allow for successful buy-in and fulfillment of user group desires. The Leadership Group met on a frequent basis to finalize big picture decisions, budget, schedule and quality. The Design Advisory Committee was comprised of faculty, staff and community members to advise on school-specific criteria such as culture and implementation of District-level standards. Broad touch-points were made with the greater community on multiple levels at a design-share open house, and again at events such as the A.G. Bell Elementary School picnic.



Planning Process (continued)

During the course of construction, there were two changes in leadership concluding with a new principal at A.G. Bell Elementary, Heidi Paul. However, even with these major adjustments, the school remained true to project's vision, and the new facility allowed for a successful transformation of school culture and alignment with educational goals.

"Exceptional visibility allows collaboration and connectivity."

"This is the safest I have felt in any building."

– Heidi Paul
Principal, A.G. Bell Elementary



Floor plan



Exhibition of School Planning and Architecture

Project Data

Submitting Firm :	DLR Group
Project Role	Architecture, Engineering (MEPS), Planning, Interiors
Project Contact	Noah Greenberg
Title	Principal-in-Charge
Address	51 University Street, Suite 600
City, State or Province, Country	Seattle, WA 98101
Phone	206-461-6000

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, Inc.
Project Role	Contractor
Project Contact	Bryan Gormley
Title	Project Manager
Address	11807 N Creek Parkway S, #102
City, State or Province, Country	Bothell, WA 98011
Phone	425-481-7460

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Project Details

Project Name	A.G. Bell Elementary
City	Kirkland
State	Washington
District Name	Lake Washington School District
Supt/President	Dr. Traci Pierce
Occupancy Date	September 2013
Grades Housed	Pre-K through 5
Capacity(Students)	550
Site Size (acres)	11.42 acres
Gross Area (sq. ft.)	65,306 SF
Per Occupant(pupil)	118.7 SF
gross/net please indicate	Gross
Design and Build?	Design-Bid-Build
If yes, Total Cost:	
Includes:	
If no,	
Site Development:	\$3M
Building Construction:	\$16M
Fixed Equipment:	\$1M
Other:	
Total:	\$20M

Supporting/Supplemental Images

A.G. Bell Elementary School

(former school)



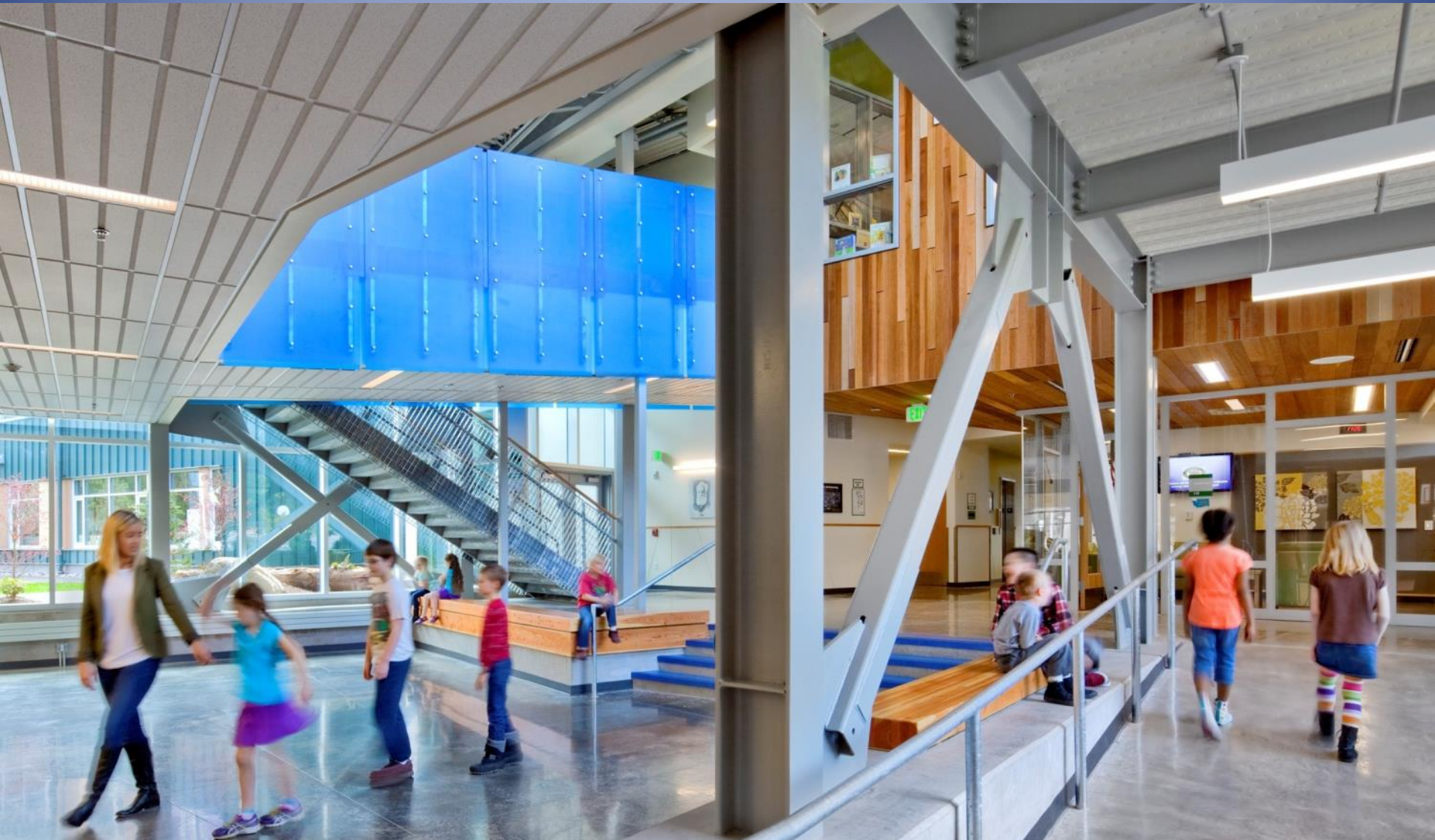
A.G. Bell Elementary School

(former school)



A.G. Bell Elementary School

(new school - lobby)



A.G. Bell Elementary School

(new school - library)

