

2012 Exhibition of School Planning and Architecture

DeKalb High School

DeKalb, Illinois

New High School

Project of Distinction Award – New Construction

ATS&R Planners/Architects/Engineers

DeKalb High School



Embracing the District's Rich History

Community Environment: The design of the high school was inspired by prairie style architecture in the region and Frank Lloyd Wright graphics, which served as the driving force behind many design decisions.

Located in the glass tower, the newly restored clock from their 1902 school proudly welcomes community members and students to the high school and reminds the community of its rich history. Visible from two sides, the tower serves as a focal point in both the entry and student dining area.

The custom logo, unique to the district and shown on the entry floor in this photo, tells a story of agriculture and barb wire and creates a new place with strong ties to its heritage.



Strong Community Ties

Community Environment: Student dining serves as a multi-purpose space for students, staff and community members enhanced by clerestory windows and refined acoustics. The space offers a variety of seating such as lounge chairs and high and low-topped tables and recessed screens and technology monitors.



Tech labs featuring a print shop and agriculture area provide students with real life experiences in these industries, allowing them to service the needs of the District and community.



"The best part is just being around and spend time with people who share the same passion as you."

Tricia Lantis
DeKalb High School Student

Flexibility Encourages Learning and Collaboration

Learning Environment: Flexible and malleable classroom clusters, which feature wireless technology and movable furniture, allow teachers and students to customize their environment and reconfigure the space as desired for individual work and collaboration.

Classrooms offer mobile and flexible furniture for easy reconfiguration to enhance the teaching and learning environment.

"Having flex areas gives you time to ask teachers questions and get your homework done."

Christinia Antonio
DeKalb High School Student



Learning Anywhere, Any time

Learning Environment: Forum rooms with wireless technology also serve as a great learning space for presentations and large group discussion for both the school and the community.

Clustering areas designed throughout the facility provide students and staff with places to gather for studying, collaborating, and socializing.



*"I like how every room has a smart board
and are more technological."*

*Zach Nailor
DeKalb High School Student*

A Variety of Spaces for All to Enjoy

Physical Environment: Staff, students and community members alike enjoy the 800-seat auditorium. Raised seating in the back provides for enhanced sight lines. The raised side alcoves enhance the overall design and provide a dignified approach for handicapped accessibility to the stage.

The cafeteria serves as a multi-purpose space for students, staff and community members. It can be easily reconfigured for school dances, performances, and community meetings.

"My favorite thing about the new high school is the music wing and the new auditorium."

*Claire Spahn
DeKalb High School Student*



Activities for the Body and the Mind

Physical Environment: The day lit, acoustically-controlled field house includes a competition indoor 200-meter track and field event space. Other athletic areas include a 2,500-seat competition gymnasium, a dance studio, practice gymnasiums and a wrestling room.

A large fitness area is devoted to weight training and aerobics with spinning.

"I like the color schemes in the rooms, I like the track and other athletic facilities."

*Colin Mar
DeKalb High School Student*



Community Engagement

Planning Process: It all started with a district-wide long-range facilities plan. The community was engaged in the process through the Facility Planning Committee (FPC). This group was charged with developing and evaluating district-wide solutions. Through this process, the committee determined that a new school was the best solution for the district. The FPC, typically numbering 45, drove the bond referendum movement and then provided checks and balances throughout the project.

"..the way the choir room was built really benefits our voices."

Raychael Ayres
DeKalb High School Student



Gathering Input

Planning/Design Process: A collection of focus groups, representing all of the different school areas, gave input into the majority of the design. These focus groups typically included staff, students and administration. Virtual tours and tours of other high schools served as inspiration for the planning process. On several occasions, the community participated as well with the Tech Ed Focus Group including the local farming community and the Auditorium Focus Group including the local community theatre members.

This process resulted in a facility that is positioned to support the community and its children while embracing its heritage.



Exhibition of School Planning and Architecture Project Data

Submitting Firm :	ATS&R Planners/Architects/Engineers
Project Role	Planners, architects, engineers
Project Contact	David M. Maroney
Title	ATS&R Partner
Address	8501 Golden Valley Road, Suite 300
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Joint Partner Firm:	
Project Role	
Project Contact	
Title	
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Other Firm:	Clark Engineering
Project Role	Structural Engineering
Project Contact	Tim LaBissoniere, P.E.
Title	Principal Engineer
Address	621 Lilac Drive North
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Construction Firm:	Nicholas & Associates
Project Role	Construction Management
Project Contact	Nick Papanicholas Jr.
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Address	1001 Feehanville Drive
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Exhibition of School Planning and Architecture

Project Details

Project Name	DeKalb High School
City	DeKalb
State	Illinois
District Name	DeKalb Community Unit School District 303
Supt/President	Dr. James Briscoe
Occupancy Date	August 2011
Grades Housed	9-12
Capacity(Students)	2500
Site Size (acres)	78
Gross Area (sq. ft.)	400,000
Per Occupant(pupil)	160
gross/net please indicate	gross
Design and Build?	
If yes, Total Cost:	
Includes:	
If no,	
Site Development:	
Building Construction:	\$73,900,000
Fixed Equipment:	
Other:	
Total:	

What a View



*"The new high school is awesome and
helps make senior year even better!"*

*Amber Kookan
DeKalb High School Student*

The new DeKalb High School became "a dream come true" through the support of a wonderful community, excellent staff and students and the dedication of hundreds of individuals.

A Cozy Retreat



Shared between the media center and cafeteria, the fireplace provides students with the perfect place to cozy up with a good book, catch up with friends, or study.

The Return of Football



"..it felt good to play on new turf and stadium with everyone watching."

*Dre Brown
DeKalb High School Student*

The new athletic fields allow the football team to once again play on the high school campus, something they have not done for the past 43 years.

Going Green



The large greenhouse sits adjacent to the tech lab areas of the high school. Gaining real life experience, students grow plants such as vegetables and flowers and sell them to community members.

Student Enrichment



"..we couldn't ask for much more. We have a lot of favorite things about our new nest."

*Anna Bidstrip
DeKalb High School Student*



Designed for the students, staff and community members, the high school provides a venue for student exploration and inspiration.