

2015 Exhibition of School Planning and Architecture

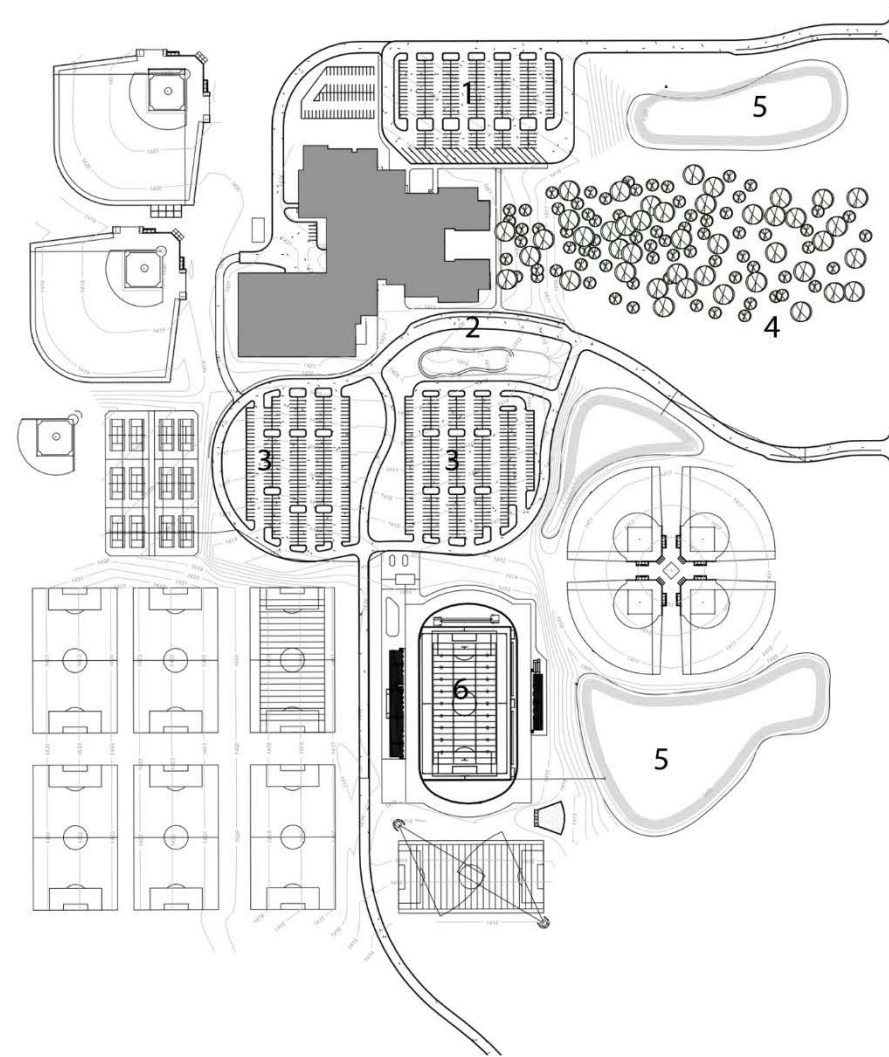
Alexandria Area High School

New Construction

Alexandria School District 206
Alexandria, Minnesota



ALEXANDRIA AREA HIGH SCHOOL



Site Plan

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Bus drop-off | 4. Existing tree grove |
| 2. Drop-off | 5. Storm water holding pond |
| 3. Parking | 6. Fields |



“We see an inviting and sustainable community that mirrors the District’s rich tradition, provides a flexible digital learning environment and serves as a regional center for academics, the arts, and activities for all ages.” – Vision Statement



Alexandria Area High School

The Alexandria Area High School educational program called for a comprehensive high school supporting an enrollment of 1,400 students in grades 9-12. The bulk of the academic programming is offered in four ‘academies’ in a pair of nearly identical 3-story academic wings—small learning environments that feature a vast array of flexible learning spaces bathed in natural light and drenched in technology, along with a variety of specialized hands-on learning labs.



**Community
Environment**



The Design Team held “Opportunity Forums” centered on themes that the School Board had identified as important: Performing Arts, Activities, Sustainability and Community Partnerships. All members of the community were invited to participate in the process and share their desires for incorporating these themes into the new school.

Co-Creation

Community Environment:

The community lacked space to come together, and they saw the High School as an opportunity to build their community around their students. Discussions emphasized the importance of developing strong community partnerships and finding ways for local businesses and individuals to get directly involved in school planning and student development. In addition to the Opportunity Forums, the Design Team led two multi-day Community Design Workshops with participation by more than 100 members of the community, including students, parents, teachers, business partners and District leadership. The project was a community effort and focused not only on developing a new space for the students, but also on creating a space that everyone in the community could call their own. Over 5,000 community members attended the school's open house, showcasing the pride and excitement that was associated with bringing 21st Century learning environments to the community.



"It's an example of what we need for the future: A community supporting the school and the school supporting the community."

- Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar

Achieving Community Goals

Community Environment:

The success of the community engagement process is paying dividends, as nearly every part of the school is activated by the greater community: business partners get directly involved in educating the future workforce and local residents enjoy participating in community education courses and attending events and performances. As construction neared completion, the Principal was inundated with calls from the community asking how they could be involved with the following programs.



During the Opportunity Forums, two additional gymnasiums were added to accommodate Athletic Tournaments to spur the local economy.

32 members of the community have volunteered to mentor the Freshman class. At the end of the semester the students produce a personal ten year plan.



Adult choral and drama groups are hosted in the Performing Arts wing.



A cooking demonstration series is taught by members of the hospitality community in the Culinary Arts Lab. Students sell their own food creations as lunch options in the A La Carte Store.



Members of the manufacturing community visit the Design Build Lab weekly to discuss their current work and to help the students with their assignments.





**Learning
Environment**

The Academies of Alexandria

Learning Environment:

Alexandria Area High School is organized into Small Learning Communities collectively known as the Academies of Alexandria. The four academies are located in two identical wings that feature an open building design. In each wing, a different academy is located on the first and third floors, with shared space located on the second floor. A set of “Learning Stairs” is located in each wing that provide flexible learning space, assembly space for viewing speakers or performances, or just space to hang out.



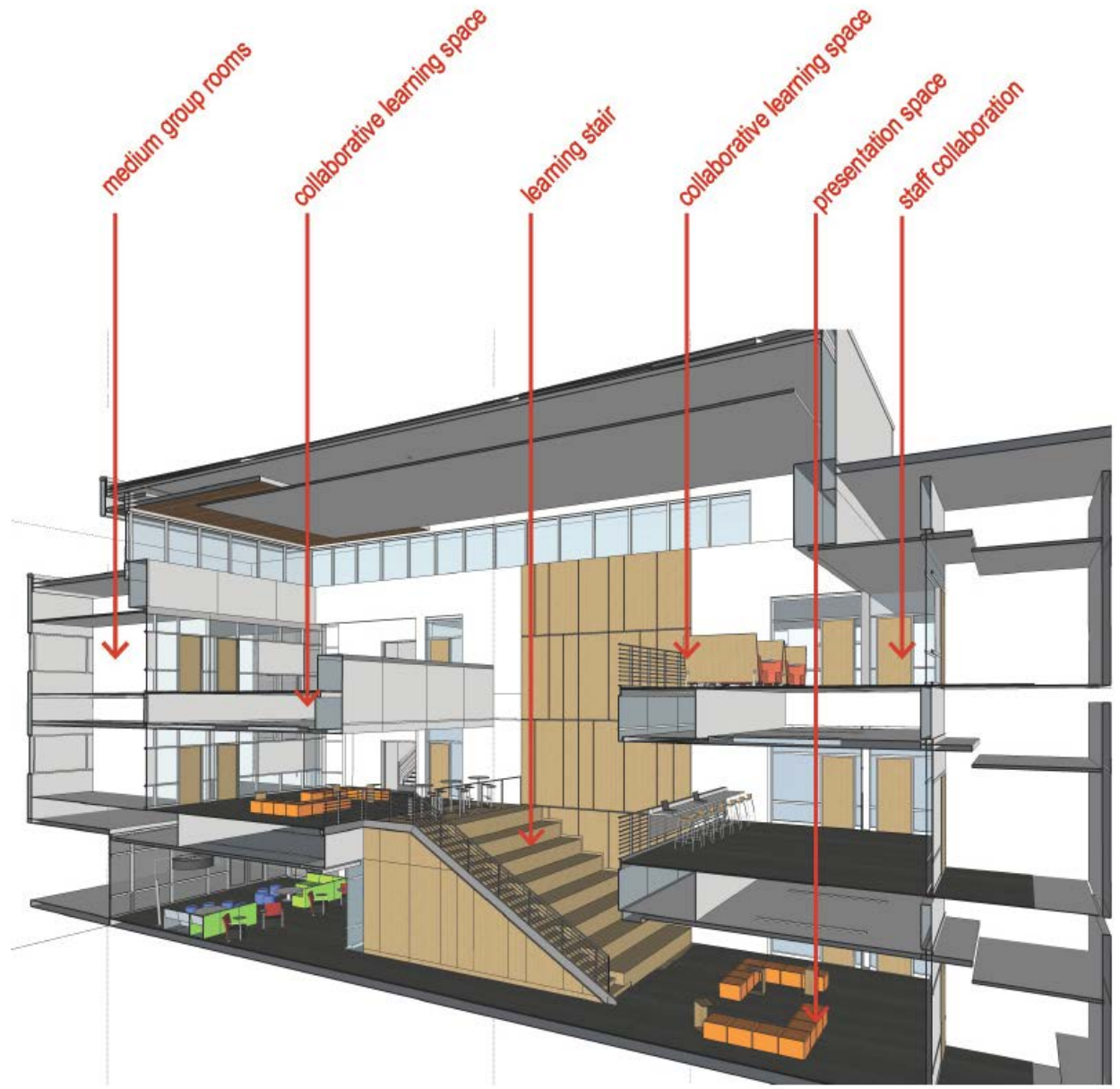
Collaborative Settings

Learning Environment:

The classrooms feature walls made of glass panels that are easy to pop out and change to allow learning spaces to be reconfigured as needed in order to adapt as technology and students' needs change. Furniture also plays an important role in the success of 21st Century Learning Environments.

Flexible furniture options empower students and teachers to reshape the environments to support a wide range of learning activities throughout the day. For this project, the students were an active part of a selection committee that tested the furniture for a year before making their final recommendations.





Hands-On Specialized Learning

Learning Environment:

Designed as a “Community Center,” nearly every part of the school is activated by the greater community. Local medical professionals share real world application with students in the Health Sciences and Human Services academy. Local engineers present their work and assist students with projects in the Design Build Lab. Local chefs and other members of the hospitality community offer assistance in the Culinary Arts studio. With these partnerships, students have hands-on opportunities to learn about different fields from actual practitioners.



Design Build Lab



Music Classroom



Culinary Arts Studio



Physical Environment

Flexible Environments

Physical Environment:

Teachers no longer had their offices in classrooms, allowing the rooms to be used by various classes and other staff throughout the day. All teachers in each academy have their offices in one main area within that academy. The open office concept allows for more collaboration and team networking. A staff lounge area also offers staff members a place to go for breaks during the day.

Rather than student desks, classrooms are equipped with rolling tables and chairs that can easily be moved or stored. The flexible, open room designs provide optimal learning environments for different styles of teaching and learning.



Community Commons

Physical Environment:

The community commons is the heart of the school. It serves as an informal gathering space that connects students and community. Alexandria, Minnesota is known for its resort character and is a large hospitality community. The design of the Commons celebrates this “north woods resort” character with abundant wood columns and beams that reflect the trees of the area and terrazzo floors in a pattern of a beach and lake with ‘docks’ extending into the space. The grand day-lit space creates a sense of student belonging and connectedness with a variety of informal and flexible places to gather.



Connectivity

Physical Environment:

The design of the school focused on open and connected learning spaces, including connections to the outdoor environment. The Learning Studio wings were designed to surround an existing grove of oak trees that were preserved in the development. This grove encloses an exterior courtyard, which is used as an additional learning space in spring and fall.



Sustainability

- 1 Chilled beams
- 2 Operable windows
- 3 Joint use of facilities- facilities are shared with City of Alexandria
- 4 Daylight – clerestory windows
- 5 Rainwater harvesting for irrigation – no potable water for irrigation
- 6 Existing trees preserved – serve as a windbreak

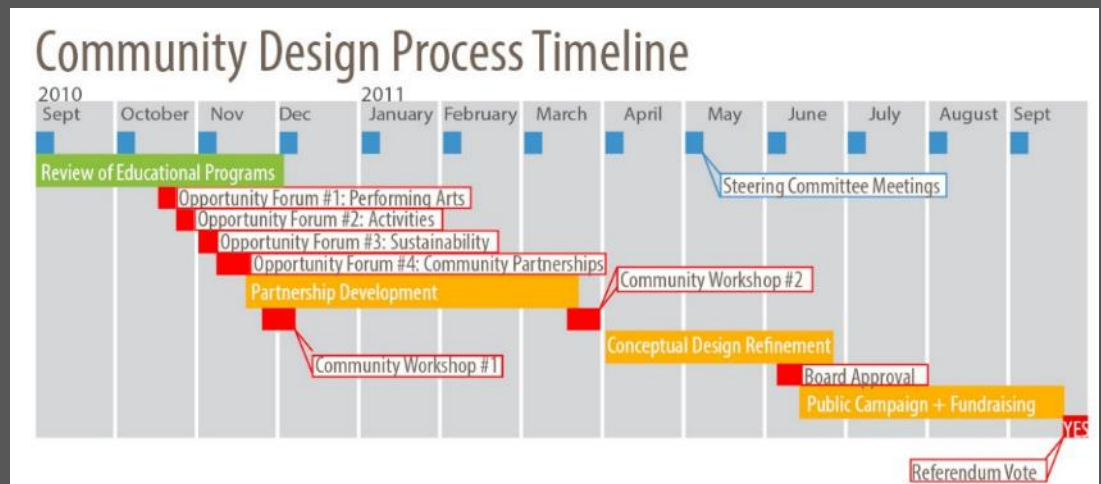


Planning Process

Community Design Workshops: “We See...”

Planning Process:

The Design Team kicked off the planning process with two multi-day design charrettes with students, parents, teachers, business partners and District leadership. The first step focused on co-creating a shared vision that involved being clear about individual expectations. An extensive community engagement effort was integrated into both the planning and design phases of the project. Participants were invited to individually write “I see...” statements indicating their personal visions for the new school. The individual statements were discussed in small groups to be incorporated into “We See...” statements. From here, one member from each of the small groups formed a new group charged with combining the statements into a final comprehensive “We See” statement that captures the essence of the common ground of the group.



Think Outside the Blocks

Planning Process:

“Think Outside the Blocks” is an exercise in which all participants were split into small groups and given a set of multi-colored blocks. The blocks represent program areas and groups were asked to design the adjacencies of the program areas on the site. After reviewing all schemes, two clear concepts emerged. They were dubbed the “linear” and the “heart” schemes. From here, the Design Team created 3D models of each, and after presenting to the larger group, it was decided the “heart” scheme better met their priorities and vision. This became a defining element for the organization of the school on the site.

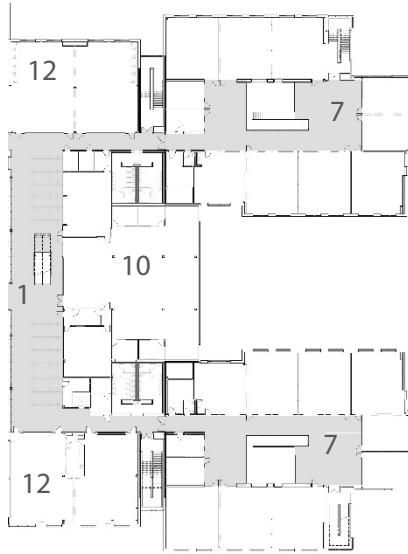


AERIAL VIEW FROM NORTHEAST: HEART SCHEME



AERIAL VIEW FROM NORTHEAST: LINEAR SCHEME

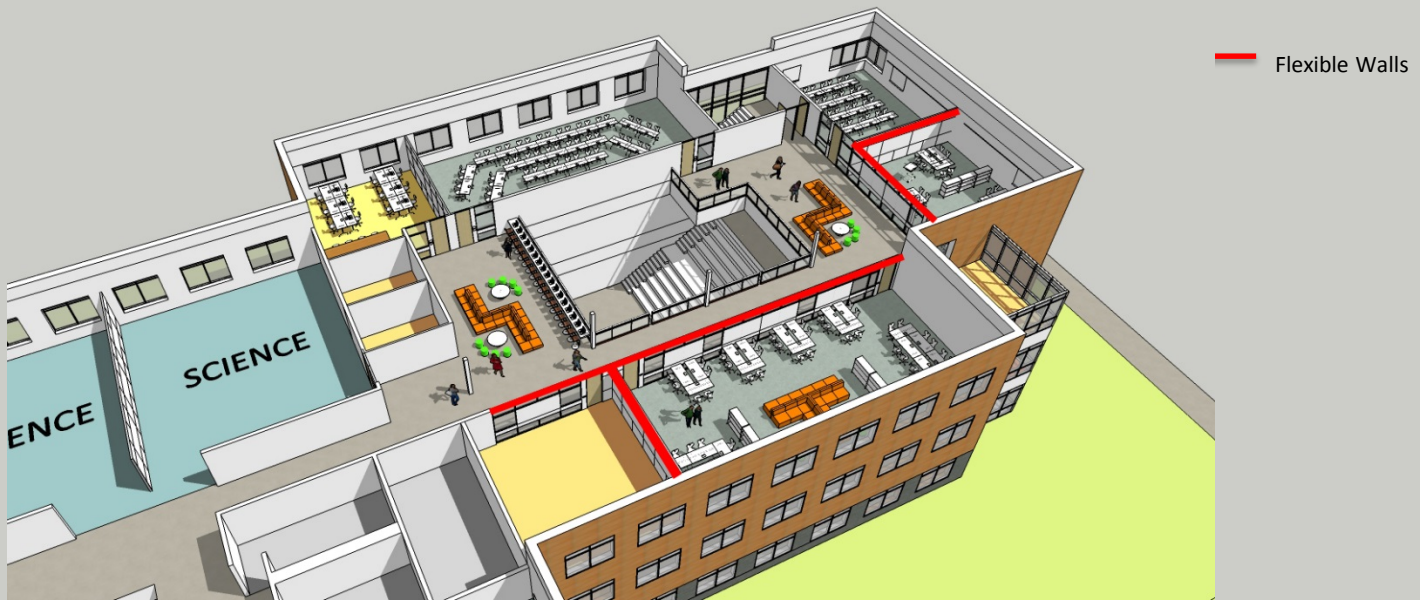




level 2 floor plan



level 3 floor plan





Life Long Learning

Alexandria Area High School is a community hub for learners of all ages and strengthens the District's capacity to support adult and community education programming.

Exhibition of School Planning and Architecture

Project Data

Submitting Firm:	Cunningham Group Architecture, Inc.
Project Role	Lead Architect of Record
Project Contact	John Pfluger, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP
Title	Principal
Address	201 Main Street SE, Suite 325
City, State or Province, Country	Minneapolis, MN 55414
Phone	612 379 3400
Joint Partner Firm:	JLG Architects
Project Role	Associate Architect
Project Contact	Daniel Miller, AIA
Title	Architect
Address	525 Broadway Street
City, State or Province, Country	Alexandria, MN 56308
Phone	320 759 9030
Construction Firm:	Kraus-Anderson Construction Company
Project Role	Construction Manager
Project Contact	Chad Rettke
Title	Senior Project Manager
Address	8625 Rendova Street Northeast
City, State or Province, Country	Circle Pines, MN 55014
Phone	763 792 3670

Exhibition of School Planning and Architecture

Project Details

Project Name	Alexandria Area High School
City	Alexandria
State	Minnesota
District Name	Alexandria School District 206
Supt/President	Dr. Terry Quist (former); Julie Critz (current)
Occupancy Date	August 2014
Grades Housed	9-12
Capacity(Students)	1,400
Site Size (acres)	137 Acres
Gross Area (sq. ft.)	304,348 square-feet (gross)
Per Occupant (pupil)	217 square-feet (gross)/ Student
gross/net please indicate	282,000 square-feet (net)
Design and Build?	No
If yes, Total Cost:	
Includes:	
If no,	
Site Development:	\$9,000,000
Building Construction:	\$43,868,400
Fixed Equipment:	\$1,500,000
Other:	\$15,891,600
Total:	\$70,260,000