

THREE CREEKS K-8 SCHOOL

Association for Learning Environments | LEsolutions Awards 2018





Three Creeks K8 School

Candelas’ Three Creeks K8 school is intended to be a neighborhood school. As such, it has been designed specific to the site, to the neighborhood and to the overall area of northwest Arvada. Historically, this area of Colorado was the gateway to the mountains for man and beast alike. These gateways were made possible by the waterways created in the valleys and canyons of the foothills, including Clear Creek to the south, Coal Creek to the west, and Boulder Creek to the north. Each of these water ways has a unique story and history.

The design of the building is drawing from the natural phenomena of these waterways. The exterior building materials of brick and metal panel are utilizing the color palettes of the canyons, the brick pulling from the colors of the earth and the metal panel from foliage that grows and is given life from water way. The exterior and interior pedestrian circulation recognize that the flow of water varies in speed and size, providing both areas for quick circulation and areas where students and parents can pull off and talk or meet, like an eddy.

School & Community Involvement:

Successful planning activities included visioning sessions using interior and exterior precedent character images, and brainstorming with staff about what their school should be like. Community meetings involved voting on priorities that ranged from Sustainable Design and 21st Century Learning Environments to Community Connections. The D.A.G. and the Design Team also toured various new school facilities throughout the state in order to help visualize the final project. Challenges included creating a school with character in a relatively new community neighborhood. Tying to the region’s natural history proved a successful approach to integrating the school with it’s community.

Educational Environment:

- Design Goals:
- Every space is a learning space.
 - Flexible to meet the needs of all learners while maintaining function for all grade levels.
 - A Community amenity
 - A model for future Jeffco schools.

- Ubiquitous technology.

The school provided a variety of learning spaces from classrooms to break-out spaces that flow into the exterior classroom space. The design team took advantage of every nook within the school to give it purpose. Even the space underneath the stair that would generally go unused was designed to provide benches with warm woods to provide an inviting feel. The classrooms were provide with the best technology and flexibility for a variety of tasks within the classrooms. The furniture selection was made with the users in mind that not every student learns in the same way and to provide options for each student to learn best.

Flexibility was key for this school. The commons is used not only as their cafeteria, but as an auditorium for performances, and a large gathering space for students to use throughout the day. Special care and consideration were given in integrating the exterior and indoors. Gathering spaces such as student breakout rooms flow into outdoor classrooms, art classrooms have outdoor creation patios, and the cafeteria/commons opens up to an outdoor lunch patio. Learning extends to the playgrounds through etched boulders, sidewalk graphics and other motifs which tell the story of the surrounding natural and cultural environment, framed around the three creeks.

Wall graphics brought the vision and mission of the staff/faculty to life by incorporating THEIR quotes into visual interest for students throughout corridors.

Physical Environment:

The exterior and interior pedestrian circulation recognize that the flow of water varies in speed and size, providing both areas for quick circulation and areas where students and parents can pull off and talk or meet, like an eddy. The floor plan of the school is organized around three academic wings that branch off of a main north to south circulation zone. Building upon the design concept, each of the academic wings represent one of the three water sheds and the main north to south is the ‘Platte River’ that these water sheds ultimately feed. Off of the main circulation are all of the shared amenities and classrooms, anchored on the north by the Learning Commons (Library) and by the Commons (Cafeteria) to the south. The classrooms were all oriented North-South to provide optimal daylighting and heat/solar gain for the classroom wings. Natural daylight and strategic views to the mountains were always at the forefront of the design when locating key spaces and glazing opportunities.





Community Environment:

As noted previously, Three Creeks is located in the heart of the Candelas neighborhood and near to a community bike trail. The community will be able to take advantage of all the great amenities of the school including the gymnasium and commons as well as the beautiful exterior playgrounds and playfields. The site is situated at the base of the front range mountains and visible from many locations within the school. The design intent was to provide an ease of flow from interior to exterior. This is shown with selections in finishes and outdoor classrooms located adjacent to break-out spaces inside, each with a unique character representing the three nearby creeks.

Results of the Process & Project:

The intensive use of the “in-between” spaces throughout the school has proven to be an indicator of the successful accomplishment of “every space a learning space.” One of the most telling examples of the design process success is that the School District ended up naming the school based on the “Three Creeks” concept developed by the tdesign team and expressed throughout the architecture.

Project Data

- Location: **Arvada, CO**
- Specific Use: **Public School serving Kindergarten through Eighth grades, , designed for approximately 800 students.**
- Project Scope: **A new, two-story K-8 school and associated site amenities**
- Occupancy Date: **August 2017**
- Project size:
 1. Site Size: **24 acres**
 2. Gross Area: **96,650 GSF**
 3. Area per student: **120 GSF per student at full capacity**
- Project Costs:
 1. Site development & Building Construction: **\$27,214,000**
 2. Cost/sf (just building, no landscaping or furnishings): **\$260 / sf**



- PARKING LOT / SCHOOL ENTRY
- MONUMENT SIGN
- STREETSCAPE / TURF
- BUS DROP-OFF WITH WIDENED WALK (8 BUS TOTAL)
- MAIN ENTRY PLAZA
- PEDESTRIAN TABLE
- PARKING LOT (114 SPACES)
- STUDENT DROP-OFF
- ART PATIO
- LANDSCAPE ISLAND PLANTINGS, 2-RAIL WOOD ESTATE FENCE
- SECONDARY ENTRY PLAZA
- PEDESTRIAN TABLE
- BICYCLE PARKING (FENCED)
- 40' BERM / BUFFER
- DINING PLAZA
- UTILITY YARD
- DUMPSTER ENCLOSURE
- EQUIPMENT STORAGE SHED
- BERM / BUFFER

- NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTION
- BOULDER CREEK EDDY INDOOR / OUTDOOR CONNECTION & BREAKOUT AREA
- BICYCLE PARKING
- PLAY COURT AREA
- BOULDER CREEK EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING TRAIL
- NORTH PLAY AREA ENLARGEMENT PLAN
- PRE-SCHOOL / KINDERGARTEN PLAY AREA
- PRIMARY PLAY AREA
- COAL CREEK EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING TRAIL
- INTERMEDIATE PLAY AREA
- CLEAR CREEK EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING TRAIL
- CLEAR CREEK EDDY INDOOR / OUTDOOR CONNECTION & BREAKOUT AREA
- PLAY COURT AREA
- SOUTH PLAY AREA ENLARGEMENT PLAN
- FLATIRONS OUTDOOR CLASSROOM / GATHERING AREA
- 6' SOFT SURFACE TRAIL

FUTURE TOWNHOME DEVELOPMENT

EXISTING CELL TOWER

BALLFIELD
200' FOUL LINE

MULTI-USE FIELD
160'X300'

SITE PLAN

SITE PLAN

First Floor Plan













DEPARTMENT COLOR SCHEME

- ADMIN./ FAC. SUPPORT
- BREAKOUT
- CAFETERIA/COMMONS
- CIRCULATION
- CLASSROOM
- GYM
- LIBRARY
- SPECIALTY CLASSROOM
- SUPPORT
- TOILET ROOM

Second Floor Plan



DEPARTMENT COLOR SCHEME

-  ADMIN./ FAC. SUPPORT
-  BREAKOUT
-  CAFETERIA/COMMONS
-  CIRCULATION
-  CLASSROOM
-  GYM
-  LIBRARY
-  SPECIALTY CLASSROOM
-  SUPPORT
-  TOILET ROOM

Open spaces along the corridors are dedicated to breakout instruction





Transparency captures western views and provides a visible connection to the community.

Learning Commons, located at the front of the school.



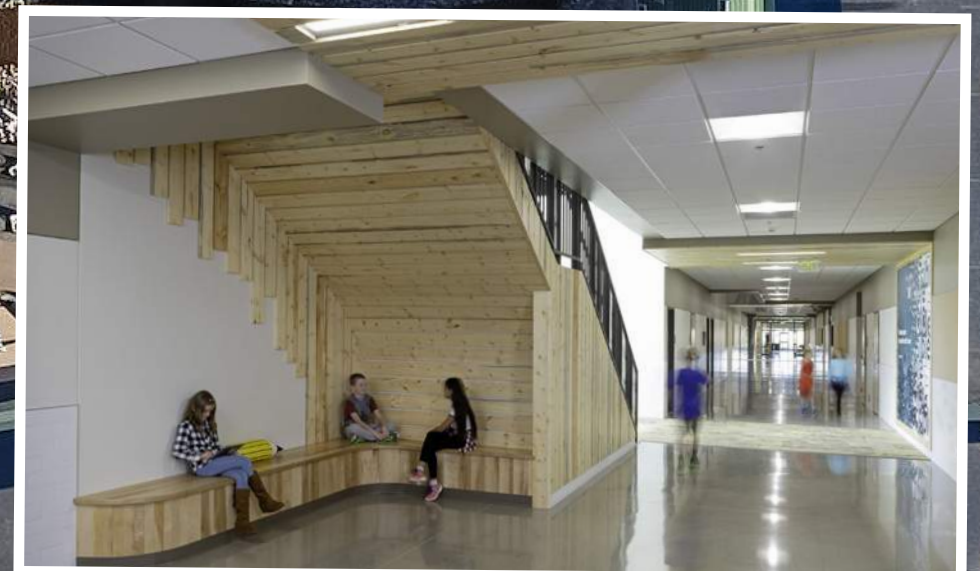
Each of the courtyards provides an educational space in the form of an outdoor classroom

The paths from the building wings to the playground are given character by each telling the history of one of the namesake's three creeks.





Indoor-Courtyard-Outdoor Flow,
from above



Site aerial, Candelas
neighborhood, and Western views

