



2024 Project Awards

# Juanita High School

Lake Washington School District  
Kirkland, WA



# 01 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The new Juanita High School replaces an existing open plan high school, to meet the needs of today's diverse learning and adapts to the needs of future generations. This high performing facility reflects district educational goals while lowering operational cost and meeting strong sustainable design benchmarks.

The new high school provides flexible, innovative learning environments that enhance an

existing flourishing program. It is designed with a sophistication that is meant to convey respect for all students and staff, and supporting them to achieve success. Organized around a central student courtyard, public spaces and learning environments fluidly interconnect as a way of creating an awareness of the whole, enhancing the cultural life and work of the students.

## GOALS:

- 21st century learning spaces
- Cultivate community
- Healthy, adaptable, activated environment

## OUTCOMES:

- Shared learning spaces, STEM & STEAM classrooms
- Welcoming site & building organization
- Courtyard & connections to nature



*The school wraps the student courtyard, creating a central space for daily activity.*



## 02 SCOPE & BUDGET

Location: Kirkland, WA  
 Building Area: 217,000 SF  
 Site Area: 42.72 acres  
 Student Capacity: 1,800

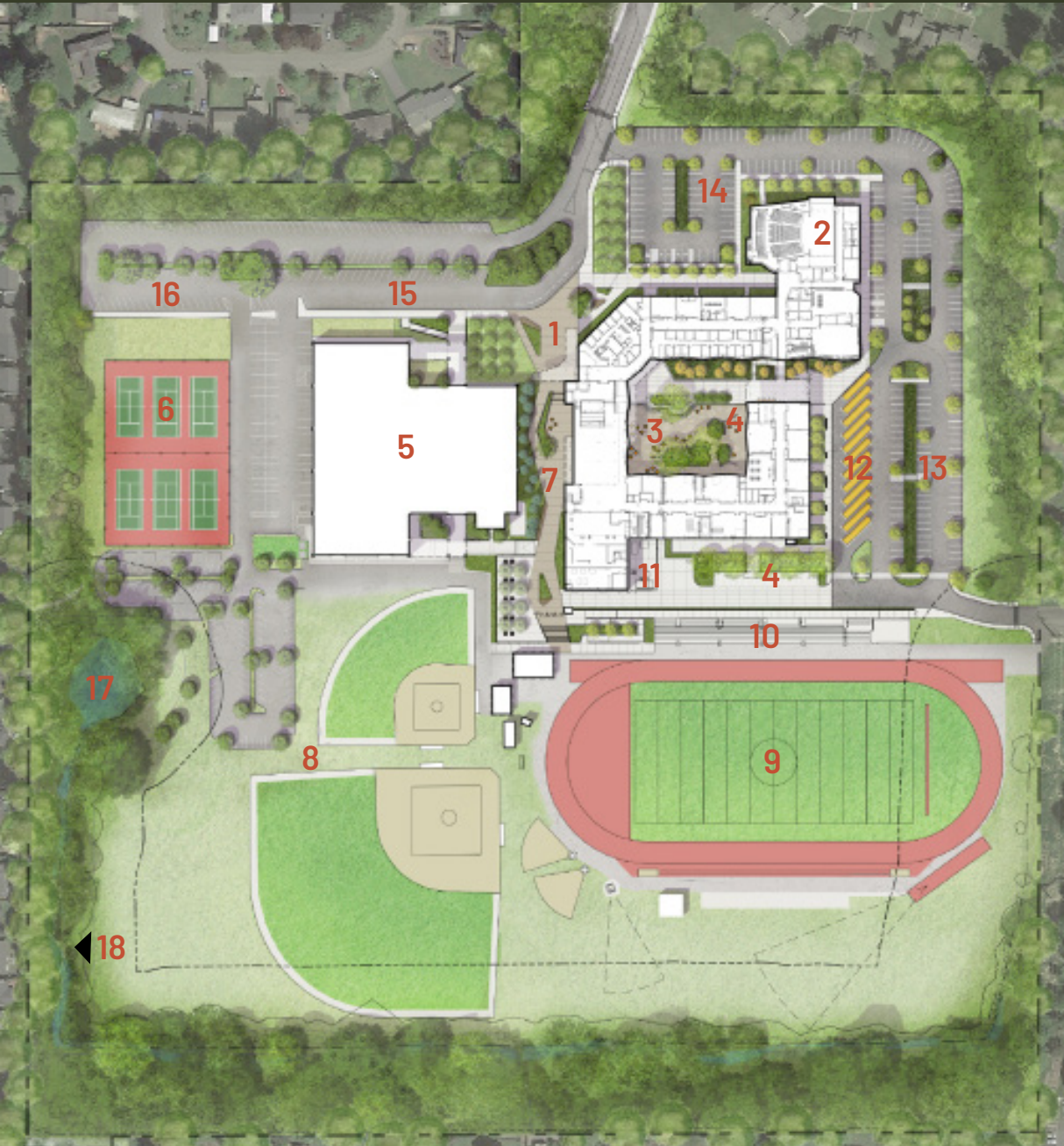
Grades Served: 9-12  
 Occupancy Date: Sept 2019  
 Project Delivery: GCCM

Final Construction Cost: \$106 M  
 Construction Type: Type II-B  
 Predicted EUI: 19.6 pEU

The Lake Washington School District is a high performing district serving several suburban cities east of Seattle. It is one of the fastest growing areas in the region and has experienced a large influx of new families, adding over 1,000 students every year, resulting in overcrowding. Accompanying this is a surge in the number of minority students, with now more than 100 languages spoken in District homes. With the student population growth came a rise in the number of students qualifying for free and reduced lunches.

In 2016, the District passed a capital bond campaign to reduce overcrowding and enhance student learning environments. Scaling back from an earlier plan to replace the entire campus, the scope for Juanita High School:

- Engaged the community to create a vision for a new high school facility.
- Developed a long-range master-plan for campus improvements, including replacement or renovation of the existing outdoor sports facilities, pool and field house.
- Designed and built a replacement facility for the academic and performing arts building.
- Designed for a phased construction to allow the existing program to remain on-site throughout the construction process.
- Developed a cohesive and meaningful place for learning and growth.



- |                               |                                      |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 Entry Plaza                 | 10 Existing Stadium                  |
| 2 Performing Arts Center      | 11 Service                           |
| 3 Student Plaza               | 12 Bus Drop-off                      |
| 4 Outdoor Learning areas      | 13 Staff Parking                     |
| 5 Existing Field House & Pool | 14 Visitor Parking                   |
| 6 Tennis Courts               | 15 Auto Drop-off                     |
| 7 Sports Plaza                | 16 Student Parking                   |
| 8 Existing Ball Fields        | 17 Wetlands                          |
| 9 Existing Track & Field      | 18 Juanita Creek & wetland preserves |





## 03 SCHOOL & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### JUANITA HISTORY

Juanita High School is the last of the District's four comprehensive high schools to be upgraded. The original facility was designed in the late 1960's, opening in 1971 around the concept of open classrooms. The 'Juanita concept' embraced innovative educational concepts, like respect for the student, mastery learning, performance based learning, credit for work completed, individualized instruction, and the development of lifelong learning skills.

The open concept facility was designed as a large 18' high open space surrounded by an auditorium, music area, science rooms, CTE program spaces, and the main office.

Eventually, in the 1980's, partitions were erected, creating a 'rabbit warren' of rooms with very few windows, ineffective mechanical systems, and difficult wayfinding. Despite a compromised educational facility, over the life of the school, staff and students have managed to sustain a vibrant and high performing Juanita High School community with a strong sense of community.

The opportunity for the design team was to work with the school community to craft a new school that supports a renewed vision for innovative education and especially connect the school to the beautiful natural wooded areas that grew around the original building.





## THE VISION

There was a strong feeling in the Juanita community that planning their new school around the District's vision for high-performing 21st century schools was simply not enough. They envisioned a new school facility designed to fundamentally strengthen their vital community, while also integrating the exciting opportunities provided by the District's educational vision.

Additionally, Juanita High School has several special programs that function as schools within the larger school:

- *Futures*: program for at risk youth with over 50 homeless students.
- *Transitions*: a comprehensive special education program.

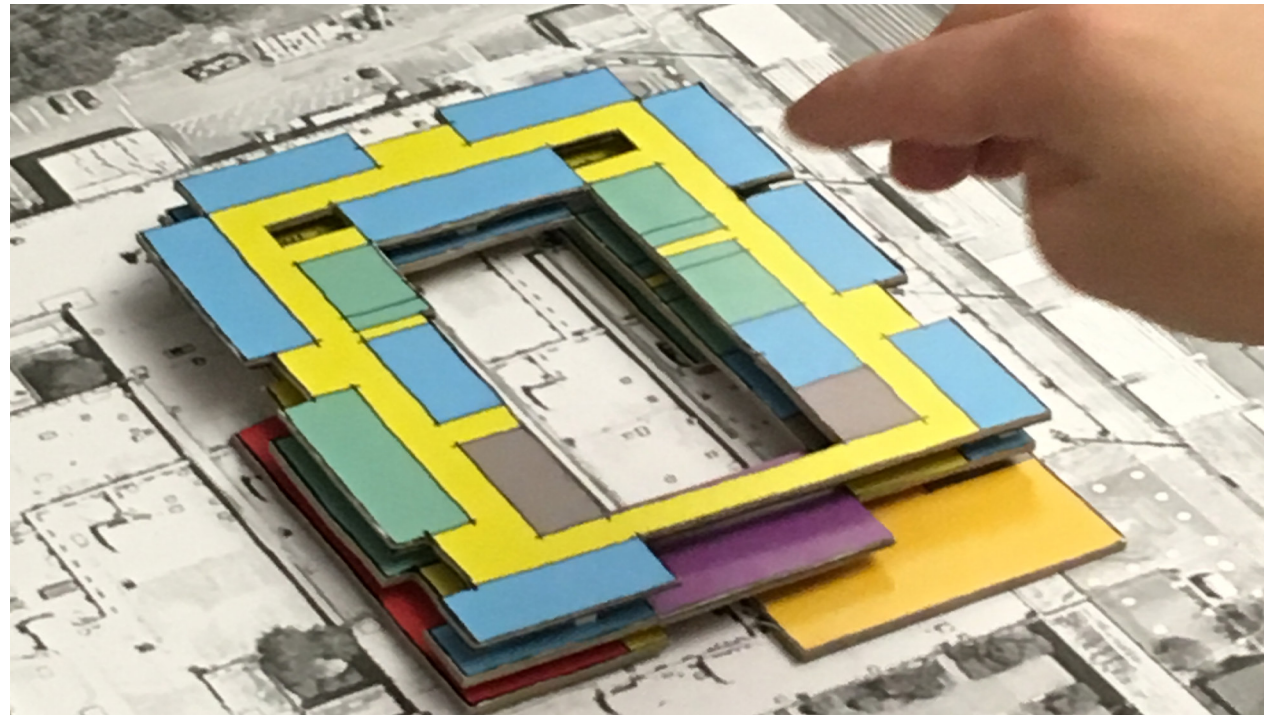
The new Juanita High School building provides students in these programs a new home, designed to be readily accessible to the exterior, function independently, and to be an integral part of the larger school.

## PLANNING PROCESS

The district and the design team worked hand-in-hand with the School Construction Input Team (SCIT) that included students, school staff, parents, community representatives, principals, and District staff. SCIT assisted in formulating a design that reflects the community and school's culture, representing the Juanita culture to the design team, establishing design objectives, and assisting the design team explore design opportunities and optimal space adjacencies.

Multiple meetings with the SCIT identified project goals and frameworks, mapped out site resources, tailored and confirmed program areas, and tested a wide range of building and site organizations before arriving at a preferred solution.

Additional student engagement exercises were held to listen to how the students see their school, themselves, and their learning experiences.



*Early in design our team worked with stakeholders to explore design opportunities & spatial adjacencies.*





## GUIDING PRINCIPALS

---

- Welcoming / Safe
- Cultivate Community
- Culture / Pride
- Long / Healthy Building Life
- Activated Environments
- Easily Navigable
- Student Life Integrated into School Day
- Healthy Environment





*On the following page are the key project challenges.*

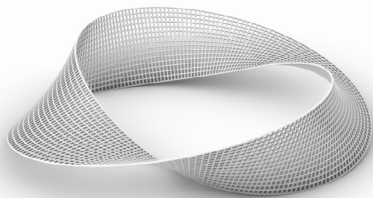
## **CHALLENGE 1**

**Provide a new home for a tight knit high school community to foster and grow their strong spirit and identity while lowering the district's operational cost.**

By listening to the community's values, the importance of visual connections, places to pause to extend learning, and choice in movement became key drivers in the design of Juanita. Thus, the school is organized around a new central student courtyard with an emphasis on human scaled in indoor and outdoor public spaces. This enhances personal experiences and sense of connectedness within the school community and surrounding wooded landscape. The student commons bridges between the sports plaza and the central student courtyard, connecting it visually and physically

to these outdoor social spaces. The overall sophistication of the design conveys the community's aspiration for the students. Inspiring them to think larger about their abilities and prospects for the future in this new home for Juanita.

Leveraging the opportunities that accompany a new facility for learning, goals for building performance were established as well. Basic sustainable design principles of Reuse, Recycle and Reduce were key filters in the design that also served to lower the operational costs of the high school.



***The building circulation was designed to embody the character and feeling of a Mobius strip, the simplest non orbital surface.***





## CHALLENGE 2

Integrate District's vision for innovative 21st Century learning into a new facility representative of Juanita's unique culture.

The School District's vision for Innovative 21st Century Learning focuses on core values around Innovation, Well-being, and Equity.

The design team wove these values into a school that is reflective of the strong Juanita High School community.

Innovative learning environments are realized in classroom groupings that include project based studio spaces supporting hands on learning, with overhead power, access to water, and flexible space. Hands on learning is also supported with distributed science rooms for inter-curriculum collaboration and robust food science, the fine arts, computer science and maker spaces.

Supporting student health and well-being - visual connections between spaces are emphasized including connections between third floor hallways and the library on the second floor, classroom groupings prioritize visual connections to other learning spaces, and administrative areas are located to welcome and connect throughout the school day.

Equitable experiences are prioritized, an example is how the design provides a similar arrival experience for all students regardless of whether they arrive by car, bus, bike or foot. All days begin and end by traveling through the courtyard and commons where they have access to food, academic support, social spaces, and quiet study areas and vibrant daylight.





### CHALLENGE 3

#### Re-imagined Future: Changing the Mascot

The growing diversity of the student population led to acknowledgment of how identity and visual representation impacts everyday experience and learning. The district directed a change in mascot from the “Rebels” to a mascot that better represents everyone in the student body.

Integrus was already creating environmental graphics for the new school, and our role expanded to collaboratively design the new mascot and Juanita identity: The Ravens. The district and students wanted something that was “fierce” and a mascot that they would be proud to wear.

Creating not only a graphic they could embrace, but a family of graphics that worked together. This allowed individual sports teams and other school entities to have their own graphic, but a graphic that still worked with the overall school identity. The original rebel shield and “J” graphic was important as a bridge between the old and new, and was incorporated into the new identity.

While some members of the community advocated for a Native America look for the mascot, the NCAI (National Congress of American Indians) views Indian motifs in sports mascots as harmful and intolerant. Making sure that all members in the community were heard, educational graphics were created within the school that describe the Raven and its connection with Indigenous culture.



Original Mascot Graphic





## CHALLENGE 4

Revitalize the high school campus while maintaining continuity of programs was students remaining on site.

A major challenge was to maintain continuity of the high school program on-site while also building the new facility within the footprint of the original school.

Following the goals set in the master plan, the funding for a new high school building provided the opportunity to begin the process of creating a new human, scaled campus strengthening linkages to the community and the site.

Phased construction on an occupied site often leads to a campus that is disconnected and does not provide a welcoming and unified community presence. With the central courtyard, a thoughtful placement of the theater, and new school building relative to the existing athletics building, a cohesive campus was developed. One that used building placement

to facilitate the required phased construction and ultimately result in human scaled outdoor learning and gathering spaces such as the central courtyard, entry plaza, and theater entry. Creating a school that is able to create a new cohesive vibrant hub for learning.

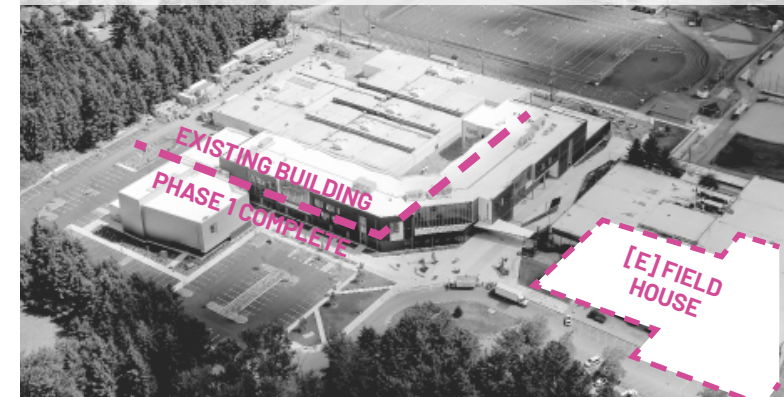
MAY 2017

AERIAL PHOTO OF EXISTING BUILDING & FIELD HOUSE OCCUPIED



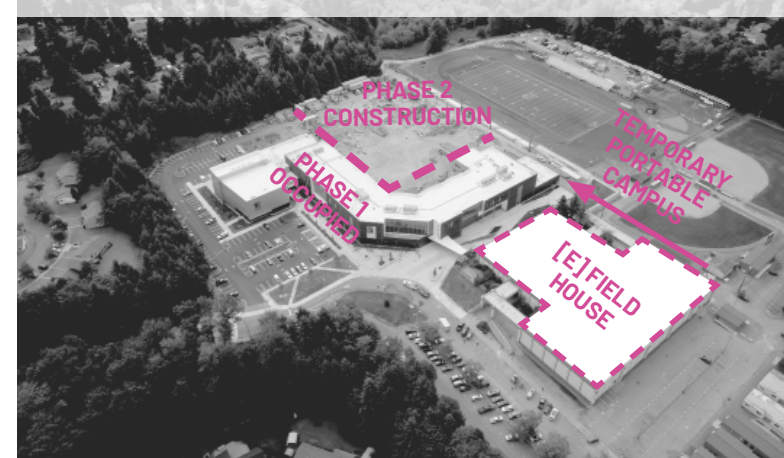
JUL 2019

AERIAL PHOTO SHOWING PHASED CONSTRUCTION WITH EXISTING BLDG OCCUPIED



AUG 2019

AERIAL PHOTO SHOWING PHASE 1 COMPLETED



AERIAL PHOTO SHOWING COMPLETED HIGH SCHOOL AUG 2020





## 04 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

### SANCTUARY IN THE TREES

Located in Kirkland, Washington, (northeast of Seattle) in a regional greenbelt of native northwest landscape, the site feels removed from surrounding development. Ringed by substantial mature woodland buffers, immediately east of the school is an extensive wetlands system feeding Juanita Creek which runs along the southern edge of the site. The main access to the school is from a major arterial, proceeding through a dense stand of trees, giving a feeling of leaving the busy suburban traffic behind.

A significant aspect of the project was integrating the new school facility with this natural setting. The new building establishes strong indoor/outdoor connections, creating linkages with strategically placed openings and human-scaled plazas stimulating a vibrant hub of activity.

### CENTER FOR THE COMMUNITY

The new academic building and central courtyard set the stage within the overall master plan to accommodate an enhanced commons with focused indoor and outdoor athletic facilities. The campus is designed with exterior plazas to welcome the community and allow for a field house and pool addition to further integrate into a cohesive school campus.







third floor plan



second floor plan

***The building configuration provides a continuous flow of movement around the central courtyard, helping with wayfinding and more importantly, strengthening a sense of school community.***



first floor plan



## STUDENT COURTYARD: THE POWER OF PLACE

The three-story building defines the central student courtyard, a focal point of student / school life. Moving around the school, there are many moments of visual connection, directly into the courtyard and through the teaching spaces, which strengthen the sense of interconnection for students

and teachers. This contributes to establishing an active courtyard with a strong presence.

The courtyard, open to the bus loop on the northeast quadrant, with a variety of human-scaled features and landscapes provides an inviting sense of place with many varied opportunities for students to

gather. The main entry lobby and Commons have direct connections to the courtyard, linking the public front of the building to this vital center of the school. Outdoor learning areas are provided directly outside the art classrooms in the southeast quadrant of the courtyard, and the school store is located under the covered entrance way from the bus drop-off.

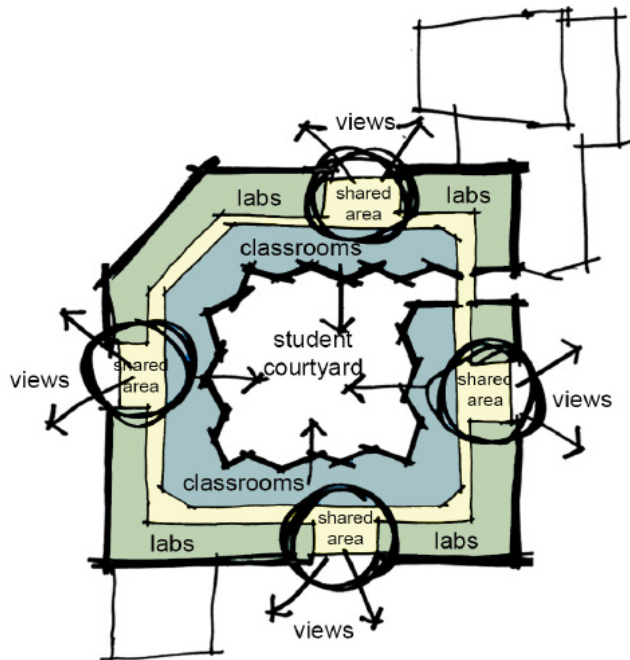
***Providing a vibrant home for informal learning, outdoor socializing, eating, large group gatherings, outdoor learning, presentations & performances.***





## HEART OF THE SCHOOL: INSPIRING THE LIFE OF THE STUDENT

Designed as the heart of the school, the Commons provides a vibrant home for informal learning, indoor and outdoor socializing, eating, large group gatherings, presentations and performances. Located adjacent to the main entry, it is intimately connected to the student courtyard with garage doors that open-up for large community events and to bring in fresh air. The Commons is well daylit with large glazed areas and connected to the second floor library with a large forum-style seating area, which also serves as an additional informal student gathering space. The two primary interconnected two-story spaces of the Commons and the Library are linked together as a way to vertically connect all three floors of the school.



*The Commons & the adjoining outdoor spaces are crafted with a variety of settings to allow each student to find their own space for themselves & their friends.*





## CONNECTIONS & WAYFINDING

Through the visioning process there emerged a strong belief that the Juanita community is one of feeling connected and the new facility needed to reflect this principle. Design concepts with the school as a combination of 'dead end' wings were rejected in favor of a continuous loop that creates a cohesive sense within the larger school community:

- Wayfinding: always knowing where you are
- Rich variety of visible programs
- Sense of sharing work and success
- Public spaces that fosters gathering and learning

## EQUITABLE EXPERIENCES

- *Arrival*: whether by bus, car, or dropped off by parents, all students arrive in the main entry
- *Reinforcing connections*: continuous circulation patterns the encourage interaction and engagement between and among students
- Writable surfaced walls throughout the school are a culturally responsive strategy to support student expression.





## 05 EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

### EDUCATIONAL VISION & GOALS

In the initial project visioning, a fresh look was given to the District's educational specifications, incorporating their new 2020 Vision and Juanita's specific needs. The design provides for new curriculum and pedagogy models, such as nursing, legacy and technology focused CTE, rooted in project based learning.

### LONG TERM FLEXIBILITY

With an eye toward creating a 100 year high school facility, having a large variety of lab-sized spaces goes a long way toward long term flexibility that allows the program to evolve over time without necessitating extensive renovation. Science labs are located together on two floors on the south wing, but also integrated within four learning suites so that both departmental and inter-disciplinary collaboration are supported.

### A SENSE OF PLACE & COMMUNITY

Extensive windows provide ample daylight and views outward to the community and the natural wooded perimeter surrounding the site. Much attention was given the scale of the spaces, as well as crafting the built elements to provide an inviting atmosphere for study and growth. Interior glazing provides essential visual connections from each classroom to shared learning areas, increasing engagement and use.



***Shared learning spaces are crafted to engage students & encourage a more self-directed & collaborative approach to learning.***



## LEARNING SUITES- FACILITATING 21ST CENTURY LEARNING

Each of the seven academic learning suites are designed for an integrated, interdisciplinary curriculum. The learning suites are designed to facilitate self-directed learning, allowing for more extensive hands-on, project-based, and cooperative learning experiences. Organized with four classrooms set on the courtyard and two flexible lab-sized project classrooms on the exterior perimeter, central shared areas function as hubs for each learning suite. This supports a more independent and collaborative learning activities, as well as a more social environment appropriate for high school.

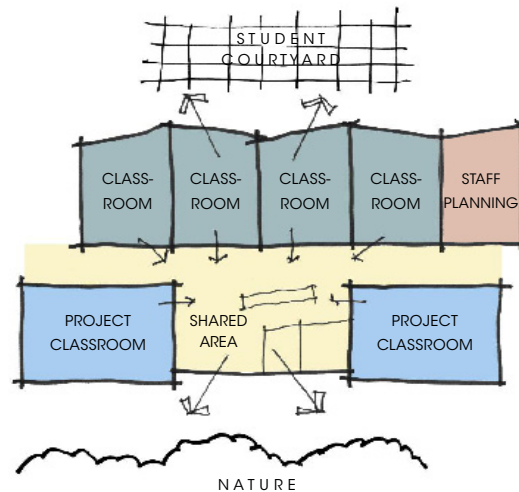
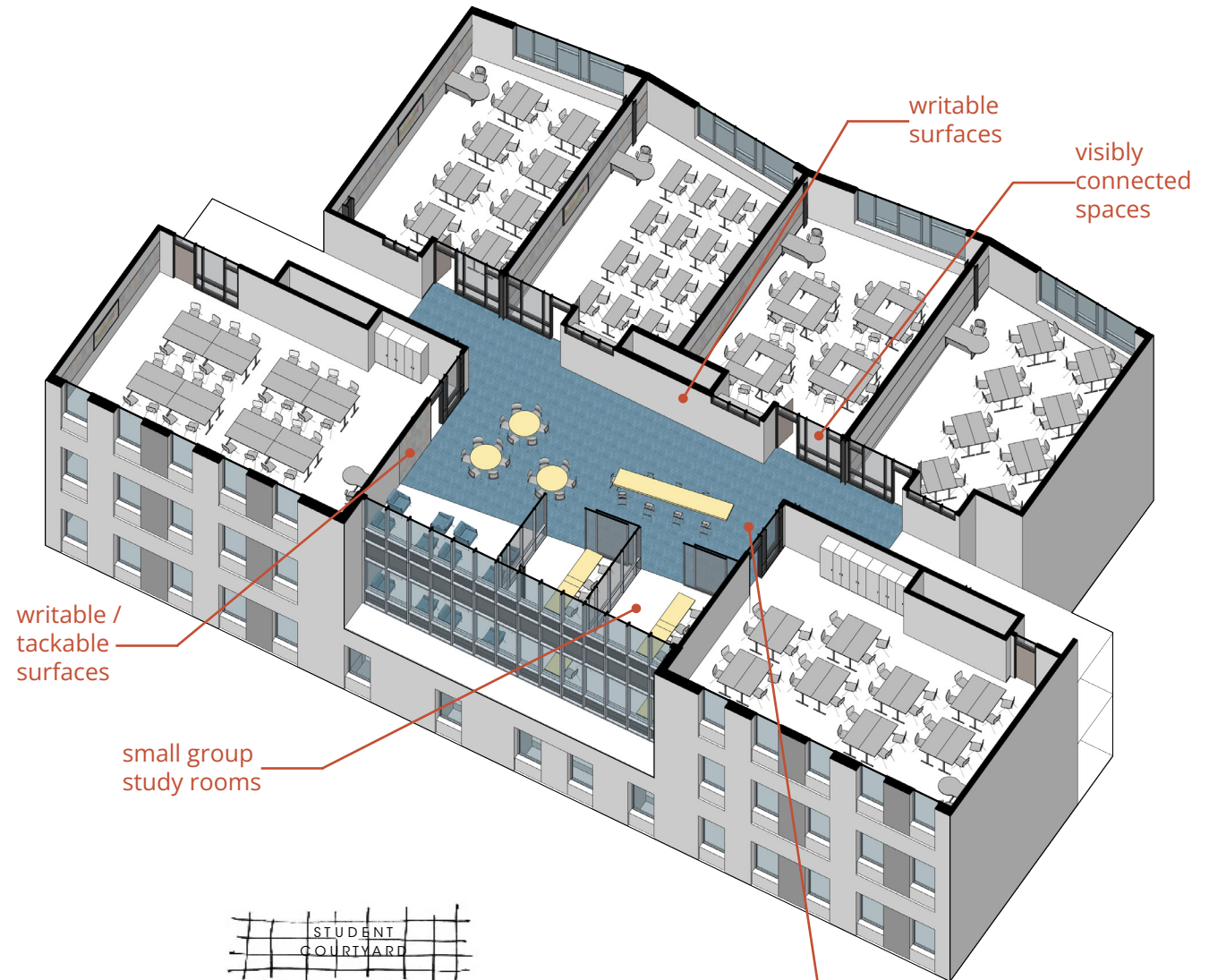
Designed with flexibility and variety in mind, the shared areas have both fixed and movable furniture, with small group areas designed for student use, access to infrastructure and surfaces that support student-led learning.

## PERSONALIZATION

Extensive use of tackable surfaces and whiteboards throughout the school invites students to personalize their school and help create a culturally responsive climate in the school.

## STAFF COLLABORATION

Each learning suite has a staff planning room with a workstation for each teacher, a coffee area, and a telephone room for private communication.



variable height &  
flexible furniture to  
support various study  
types & activities



## INTERCONNECTED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Public spaces throughout the school are interwoven vertically and horizontally around the school, orienting students and connecting in such a way that student life is integrated throughout school day. This provides places to inspire self-directed learners and student teams outside of the traditional, formal teaching spaces.

## INSPIRING LIFE-LONG LEARNERS

The Career Center is located front and center at the main student and public entrance and adjacent to the Commons, reinforcing the value of students post graduation ambitions. Open and welcoming, the Career Center expands perspectives on preparing for life, career or higher levels of education.

Fundamental to integrating a more comprehensive STEAM-oriented approach, many adaptable lab-sized learning spaces for hands-on, project-based learning are available throughout the school for more subject areas. These spaces are integrated within the core of the seven learning suites, making them readily accessible to all students.

Specific STEAM-focused labs are featured on the ground level, taking advantage of their location to connect to complementary outdoor learning areas accessed through garage doors.

***The new school is designed to inspire students & encourage them to take ownership to achieve success as life-long learners.***



***The inviting, student-friendly Career Center is located right at the main public entrance & adjacent to the Student Commons***





## 06 RESULTS OF THE PROCESS & PROJECT

Juanita High School partially occupied the first phase of the completed building in the fall of 2019 and had six months of in-person classes before the world-wide pandemic resulted in its use being suspended for thirteen months. Yet in its initial six months, the design of the facility was extremely well received by its community, the staff and students.

### *Key feedback:*

- The design achieves the right balance between structure the environments vs. inviting personalization allowing the spaces to reflect who the students really are.
- The outward architectural expression has a public stature that the community appreciates, while the internal courtyard is inviting, light and airy, and a safe and secure space for students throughout the day.

### **UNINTENDED RESULTS**

The adaptable design allowed for the building to successfully support the school's reopening in the Spring of 2021:

- The student courtyard was valuable outdoor space where several covered spaces were created for gathering.
- Adaptable- the arrangement of staircases in the building corners allowed separation.
- The learning clusters' shared areas were able to be utilized as additional classrooms.
- The dedicated outside air system was able to provide additional fresh air to improve healthy air quality.

### **DISTRICT GOALS MET**

The sustainable strategies integrated into Juanita High School project have already demonstrated that the school is highly efficient and will make a dramatic impact on lowering the operational needs for this site into the future.





***"I'm more focused on school in the new building, it inspires me to work a lot harder and to be more successful in my life."***

- JHS Student

