

COMPTON HIGH SCHOOL

COMPTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

A4LE PROJECT AWARDS





ON COMMON GROUND

Executive Summary

On the morning Compton High School reopened, pride filled the air—students, families, educators, and alumni gathered on a campus that stood not only as a collection of new buildings, but as a declaration of belief in what young people from Compton could become. That moment was years in the making. In 2012, Compton Unified School District confronted low graduation rates, aging facilities, and learning environments that no longer matched the district's rising academic ambition. Under the leadership of Superintendent Dr. Darin Brawley, the District launched a bold educational transformation centered on equity, college and career readiness, and renewed community pride. Graduation rates climbed, new programs flourished, and student aspirations rose—yet the physical campus lagged behind this progress. To sustain educational momentum, the District invited design teams to re-imagine Compton High School as a next-generation learning environment capable of matching instructional innovation with spaces that inspire dignity, belonging, and opportunity.

The resulting \$232-million, 223,650-square-foot campus is the physical embodiment of that educational vision. Designed around the guiding principle of “On Common Ground,” the new 34-acre school organizes learning, arts, athletics, and community life along the Academic Boulevard—a vibrant civic spine that makes learning visible and collaboration inevitable. Flexible learning suites support multiple modes of instruction; ground-level CTE studios place construction, robotics, media arts,

culinary programs, and engineering on display; and the Andre “Dr. Dre” Young Performing Arts Center and collegiate-caliber athletic facilities extend opportunity well beyond the classroom. Sustainable strategies, transparency-driven safety design, and a digital-first library reinforce a future-ready campus that places students at the center of every decision.

Today, Compton High School stands as both a launchpad for its 2,000 scholars and a beacon for the community that invested in its future. Funded through local bond measures and shaped by years of stakeholder engagement, the project replaces a deteriorating century-old campus with one that reflects the resilience, creativity, and ambition of Compton itself. More than a collection of buildings, the new school demonstrates how the built environment—when aligned with educational purpose—can elevate teaching, strengthen relationships, and expand what students believe is possible. This project's ultimate outcome is not measured solely in square footage or technology, but in the confidence of students who now walk onto a campus that tells them, unmistakably: you belong here, and your future is limitless.



SCOPE OF WORK AND THE BUDGET

Program Area, Square Footage & Budget

The project encompassed the complete demolition of Compton High School's 126-year-old campus and the transformation of the 34-acre site into a fully rebuilt, future-ready learning environment delivered through a carefully sequenced three-phase construction strategy. Phase One—executed concurrently with Phase Two—focused on the academic and student-life heart of the campus, including the 140,639-square-foot Academic Building, the Andre “Dr. Dre” Young Performing Arts Center, the gymnasium, half-size Olympic pool, football stadium, and multiple tennis and basketball courts, establishing the core spaces for instruction, arts, and athletics. Phase Two added the Field House, baseball and softball complexes, and practice soccer fields, extending Compton's storied athletic tradition and supporting year-round training and community events, while Phase Three completed the campus with an additional parking lot to enhance access, circulation, and public use during large gatherings. Funded through voter-approved bond measures and supported by a “Built by Compton” local hiring initiative, the multi-year effort mobilized nearly 200 workers daily and required close coordination between district leaders, designers, builders, and the community to deliver a comprehensive, modern campus that could immediately support new academic programs, expanded arts offerings, and collegiate-caliber athletics at full scale.

Total Campus Size: 223,650 SF

Site Area: 34 acres

Student Capacity: Approximately 2,000 students

Major Buildings & Program Areas:

Academic Building: 140,639 SF

Performing Arts Center: 40,868 SF

Gymnasium: 36,534 SF

Outdoor Learning & Community Spaces:

Total Project Budget:

\$232 million, funded through voter-approved bond measures, reflecting a long-term investment in educational equity, community revitalization, and durable, high-performance facilities.





SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Community

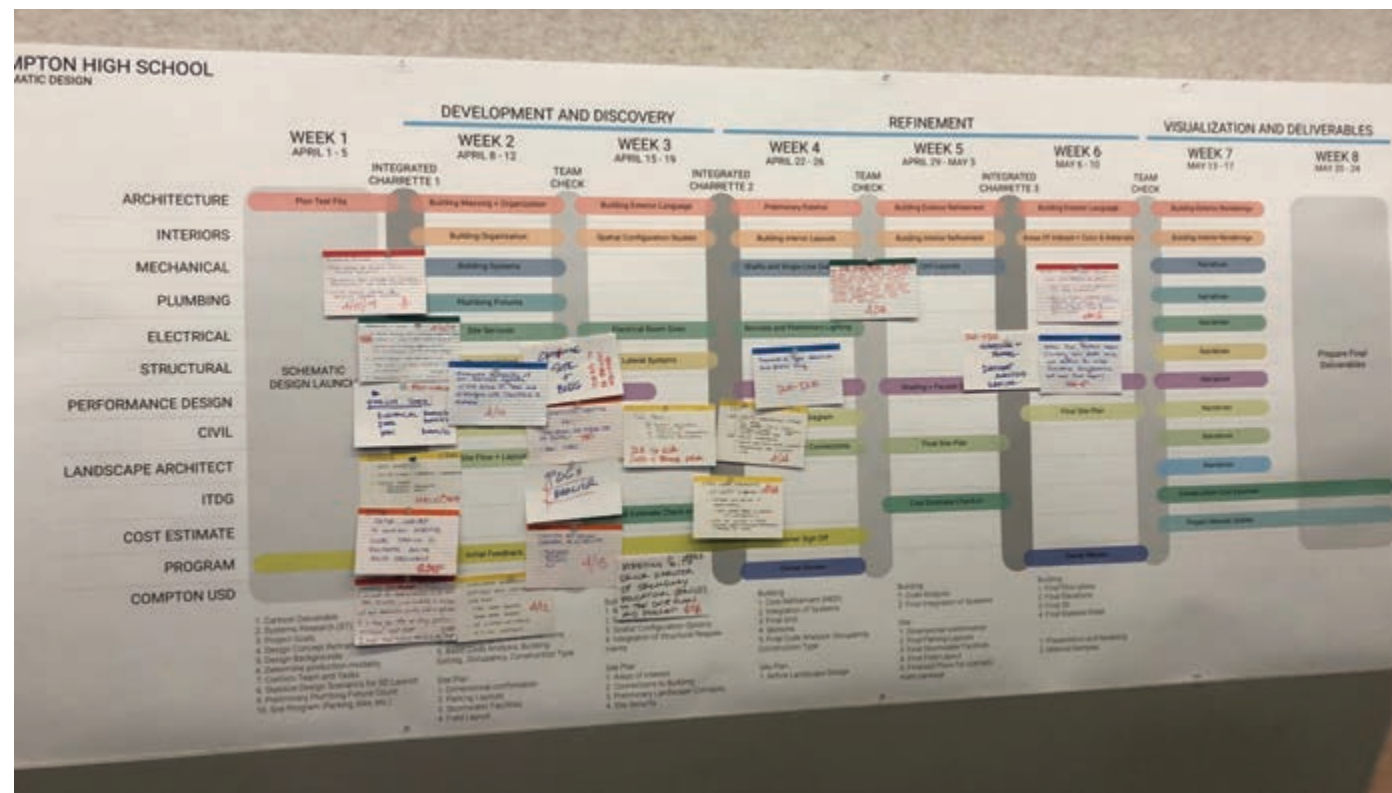
Compton is a city defined by resilience, creativity, and pride in its young people. The community has long seen education as a pathway to opportunity, and Compton High School has served for generations as a civic anchor reflecting the city's cultural fabric. Predominantly Latino and Black, families are deeply invested in the future of their children and proud to see their voices and resources contribute to a school that honors the past while preparing students for a bright, future-ready world. This is a community that celebrates achievement, values collaboration, and embraces the arts, athletics, and academics as essential expressions of identity and opportunity.



Stakeholders

The project engaged a wide range of stakeholders critical to its success. These included the Compton Unified School District Board of Education, Superintendent Dr. Darin Brawley, and the District Facilities team, as well as the school's Principal, teaching staff, students, and families. Advocates from the broader community also played a role, including Compton native Andre "Dr. Dre" Young, whose commitment to providing students with creative spaces elevated the performing arts as a cornerstone of the campus. Together, these stakeholders guided the project from a design competition through detailed planning, ensuring that the final campus reflected the vision, values, and priorities of the community.

COMPTON HIGH SCHOOL
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Challenges

Rebuilding Compton High School came with significant challenges. The existing campus, over a century old, no longer met safety, accessibility, or instructional needs. The project required replacing the entire site while maintaining public trust and aligning construction with complex educational objectives. The design also needed to balance multiple priorities—academic spaces, athletics, arts, and community access—while creating a campus flexible enough to evolve with future teaching practices and student needs.

Available Assets



The Value of Process and Project to the Community at Large

collective investment, empowerment, and opportunity, providing a place where students can excel academically, creatively, and athletically, while the community sees its values and aspirations physically and proudly embodied.

COMPTON HIGH SCHOOL
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EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

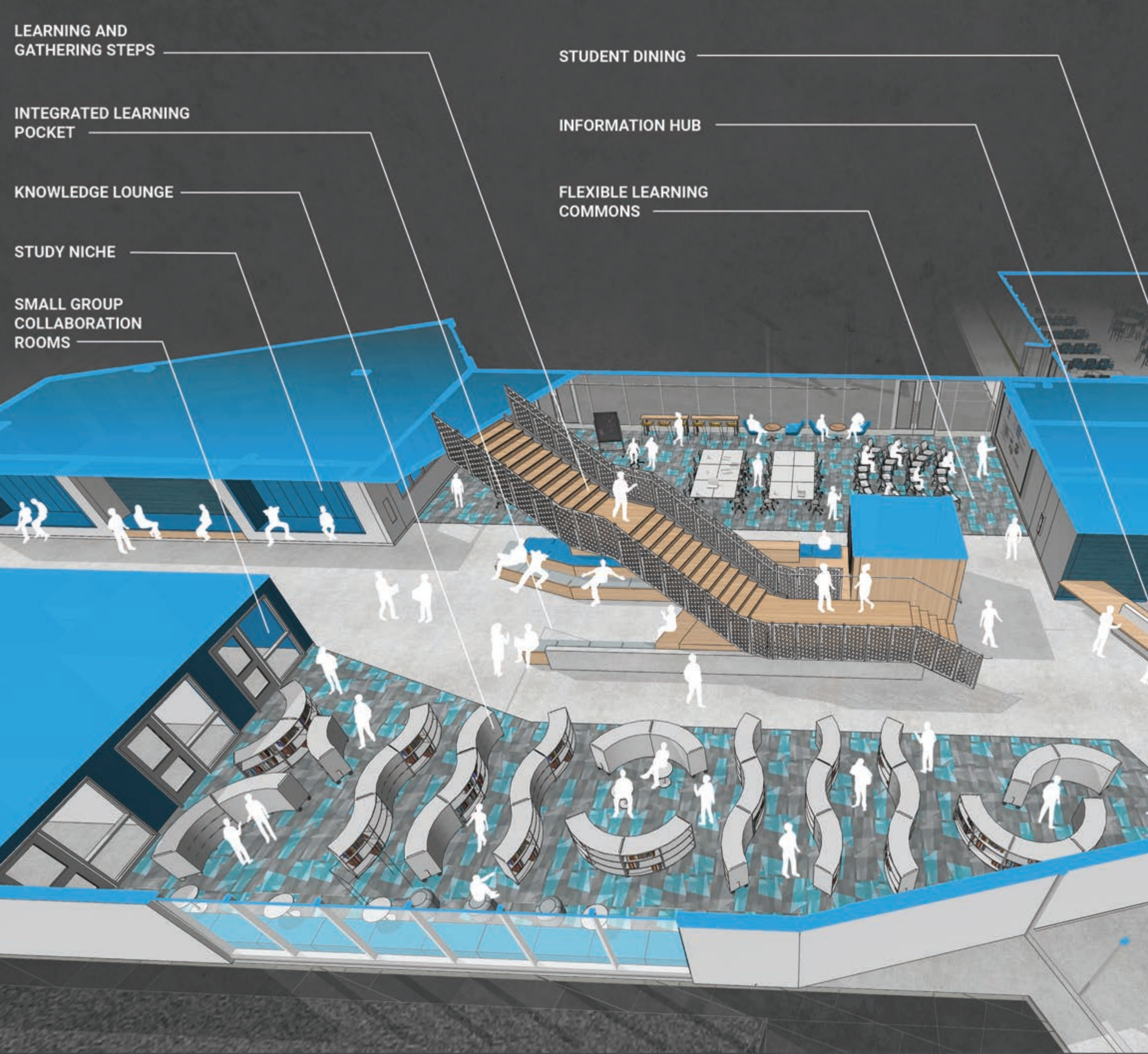
The Educational Vision and Goals of the School

Compton High School's educational vision is to empower every student to realize their full potential through rigorous academics, career and technical education, and creative exploration. The goals are ambitious: to provide pathways to college and careers, foster personal growth, and develop critical, innovative thinkers ready to engage with a rapidly changing world. Guided by the principle of "On Common Ground," the school seeks to nurture a sense of belonging, collaboration, and pride, ensuring that students not only achieve academically but also thrive socially, emotionally, and creatively. This vision positions Compton High as a launchpad where students from historically underserved communities can access opportunities equal to the best in the nation.

How the Environment Supports the Curriculum

The campus design directly reflects and amplifies the school's curriculum. Flexible learning suites accommodate project-based and interdisciplinary instruction, while ground-level CTE studios showcase programs such as Construction, Manufacturing, Robotics, Media Arts, Culinary Arts, and Engineering. These spaces extend learning into visible, hands-on experiences that encourage curiosity and skill development. The Academic Boulevard serves as a central spine, connecting classrooms, arts, and athletic facilities, creating informal gathering spaces where students collaborate, present projects, and engage in real-world problem-solving. By making learning visible and interactive, the environment reinforces the curriculum's emphasis on college readiness, career pathways, and applied learning.





EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The Environment Supports a Variety of Learning & Teaching Styles

Compton High accommodates multiple learning and teaching modalities, recognizing that students learn best in different ways. Flexible learning suites allow for collaborative group work, independent study, presentations, debates, and demonstrations. Classrooms are connected to adjacent spaces, enabling teachers to create extended learning experiences for both small and large groups. The digital-first library and open-air Academic Plaza provide alternative learning settings for research, creativity, and peer collaboration. These varied environments encourage personalized learning, support differentiated instruction, and allow educators to adapt teaching strategies to the needs of their students, whether in traditional lectures, hands-on labs, or creative arts experiences.

The Environment is Adaptable and Flexible

Adaptability is embedded throughout the campus design. Learning suites can be reconfigured for multiple group sizes and instructional formats, supporting evolving curricula and future pedagogical innovations. CTE studios, connected to communal spaces and the Academic Boulevard, allow students to showcase their work to the school and community while also accommodating different project scales. Outdoor learning areas, covered spaces, and the Academic Plaza expand instructional possibilities beyond the walls of the classroom. Even athletic and performing arts facilities are designed for multi-use, community engagement, and future growth. The campus embodies a resilient, flexible learning environment, capable of evolving alongside Compton High's students, programs, and educational ambitions.

LEARNING STUDIO SETTING:
PRESENTATION

LEARNING STUDIO SETTING:
SEMINAR / SMALL GROUP

LEARNING STUDIO SETTING:
CONNECT

LEARNING STUDIO SETTING:
DISCUSS / DEBATE

LEARNING STUDIO SETTING:
DISCUSS / DEBATE

FACULTY CO-LAB

STUDENT CO-LAB
AND COMMON
LEARNING HUB

BIO / WET LAB:
EXPLORATORIUM

LEARNING
STUDIO SETTING:
PRESENTATION

BIO / WET LAB:
EXPLORATORIUM

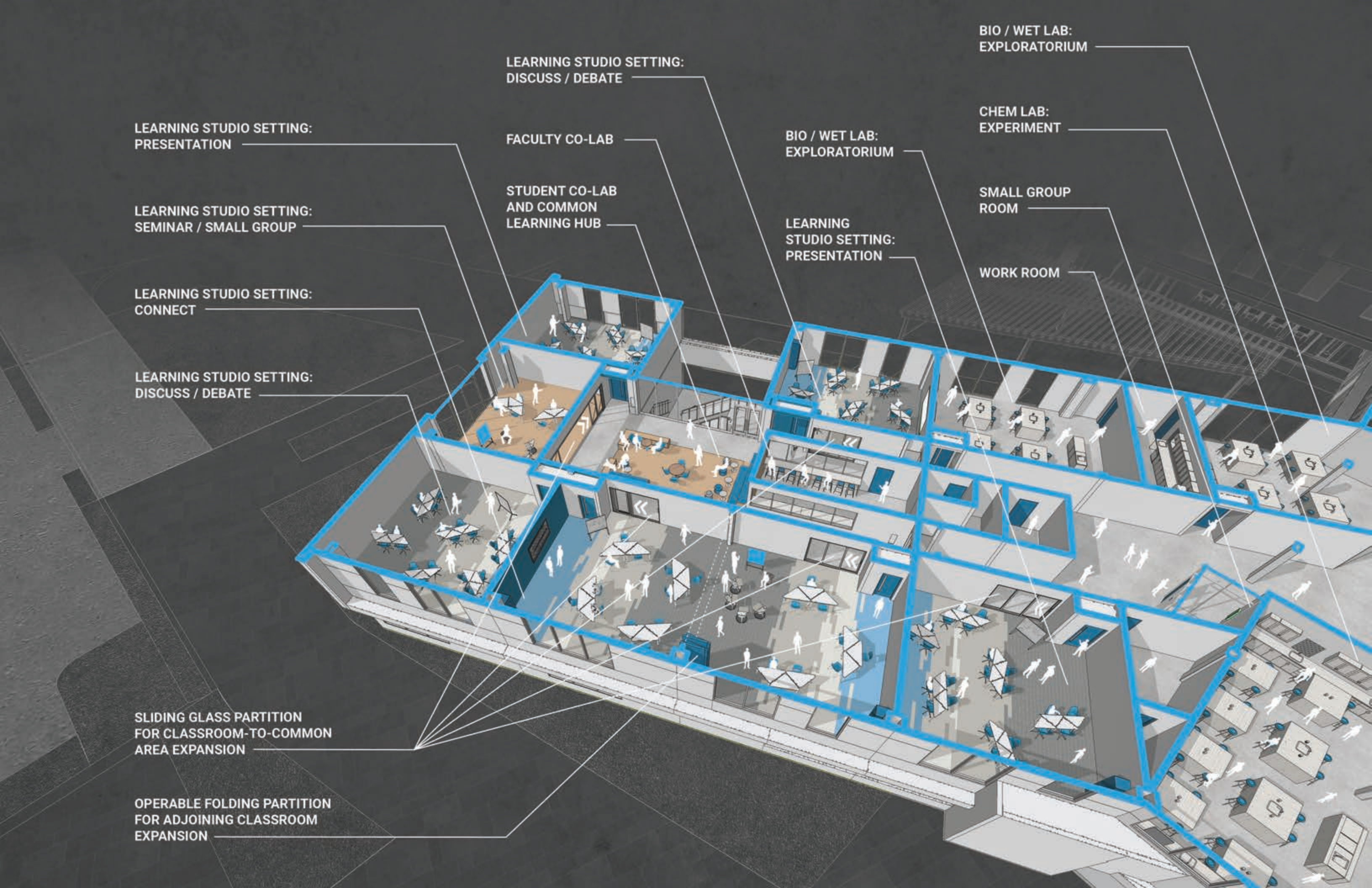
CHEM LAB:
EXPERIMENT

SMALL GROUP
ROOM

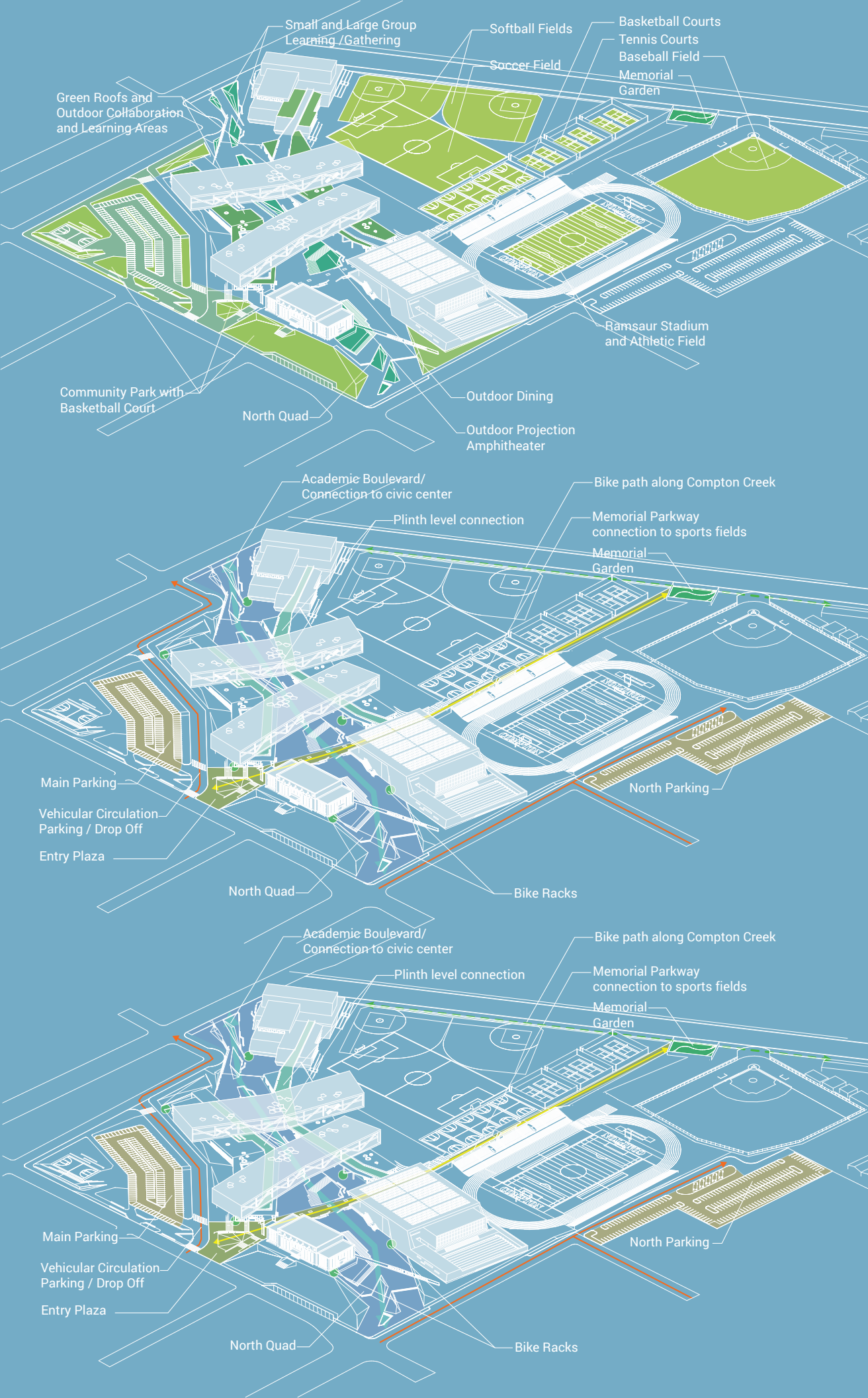
WORK ROOM

SLIDING GLASS PARTITION
FOR CLASSROOM-TO-COMMON
AREA EXPANSION

OPERABLE FOLDING PARTITION
FOR ADJOINING CLASSROOM
EXPANSION







Inspiration and Motivation

Every element of the campus is designed to inspire and elevate the student experience. Expansive glazing, abundant natural light, and colorful, flexible learning spaces convey a sense of openness, possibility, and pride. The performing arts center celebrates Compton's rich musical legacy, including a mural of Dr. Dre, symbolizing that students can pursue greatness in academics, arts, or athletics. Athletic facilities, cutting-edge CTE studios, and the digital-first library encourage students to explore, experiment, and excel. The environment communicates a simple but powerful message: this is a place where ambition is nurtured, creativity is celebrated, and every student can become the best version of themselves.

High Performance and Sustainability

Sustainability and high-performance design are foundational to the campus. Buildings are oriented to maximize daylighting and solar energy collection, reducing energy costs while creating bright, engaging learning spaces. Water efficiency is achieved through low-flow fixtures and purple-pipe-ready infrastructure, while white reflective roofing and extensive native landscaping reduce heat-island effects and enhance thermal comfort. The campus targets CHPS (Collaborative for High Performance Schools) verification, ensuring measurable energy, water, and environmental performance outcomes. Beyond metrics, these strategies create healthier, more comfortable, and inspiring spaces for students and staff, demonstrating that environmental responsibility and educational excellence are mutually reinforcing.



MAINTENANCE YARD

33

W MYRRH ST

NORTH PARKING

25

BUS DROP-OFF

27

BASEBALL

24

6

FIELD HOUSE

32

TENNIS

31

BASKETBALL

28

SOFTBALL

23

30

29

SOCCER

22

21

26

15

14

ENCLOSURE

ACADEMIC PLAZA

13

12

ACADEMIC BUILDING

1

CULTURAL PLAZA

17

2

PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

18

16

8

9

7

11

3

GYM

19

POOL

5

20

BASKETBALL

4

10

VEHICULAR DROP-OFF

COMMUNITY WALK

W Myrrh St

W Indigo St

W Cypress St

S Alondra Ave

Cocoa St

Alondra Blvd

Alondra Blvd

ALONDRA BLVD

Alondra Blvd

W Cocoa St

Baron Ave

S Alondra Ave

S Alondra Ave

W Indigo St

S Center Ave

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Campus Design and Attributes

The new Compton High School campus is a striking blend of modern architecture, purposeful planning, and vibrant community identity. Spanning 34 acres, the 223,650-square-foot campus features a 140,639-square-foot Academic Building, a 40,868-square-foot Performing Arts Center, a 36,534-square-foot Gymnasium, and world-class athletic fields, pools, and courts. Central to the design is the Academic Boulevard, a wide, welcoming spine that connects classrooms, arts, athletics, and communal spaces, creating a dynamic, interactive campus where learning, collaboration, and social engagement are visible and celebrated. Flexible learning suites and hands-on CTE studios are situated to open directly to the boulevard and outdoor spaces, allowing students to move seamlessly between instructional settings, showcase their work, and engage with peers and visitors.

Integration with the Community

The campus is intentionally embedded within the fabric of Compton, respecting the city’s history while acting as a hub for civic pride. At its northern edge, the athletic fields connect to a community entry quad and the City’s civic center, while the Andre “Dr. Dre” Young Performing Arts Center anchors the southern end along Alondra Boulevard. Outdoor plazas, covered gathering spaces, and the Academic Boulevard create visual and physical connections that invite families, residents, and community members to participate in campus life. The design prioritizes transparency, visibility, and access, ensuring that the school feels welcoming, open, and inseparable from the community it serves.

1 Academic Building

General classrooms
Science labs
Career & Technical Education (Construction, Manufacturing, Media Arts, Robotics, Culinary Arts, Engineering, EMR, Game Design)
Student services and collaboration spaces

2 Performing Arts Building

Theater and performance spaces
Music, dance, and drama classrooms
Media and audio production spaces

3 Gymnasium Building

Competition gym
Physical education and athletic support spaces

4 Locker Rooms and Support Spaces

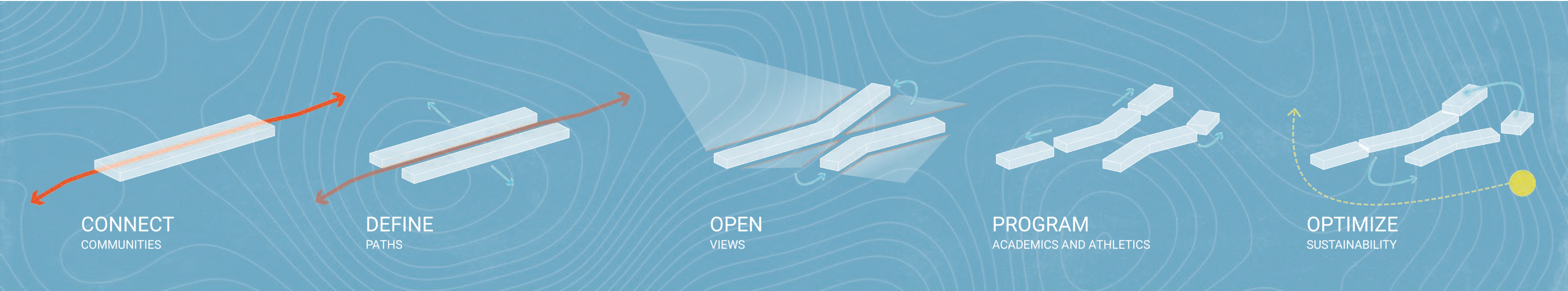
5 Pool Support Building

6 Fildhouse Building

Locker rooms
Weight lifting space
Offices and storage

Site Features

- 7 Entry Plaza
- 8 Student Drop-Off
- 9 Visitor Parking
- 10 Community Walk
- 11 Athletic Plaza
- 12 Outdoor Dining
- 13 Outdoor Learning for CTE Programs
- 14 Step Seating with a Performance Stage
- 15 Service and Delivery Yard
- 16 Stage Prop Workshop - Performing Arts Parking
- 17 Cultural Plaza
- 18 South Community Quad
- 19 Half Olympic-Size Pool
- 20 Basketball Court
- 21 Culinary Garden
- 22 Memorial Parkway
- 23 Sports Concessions
- 24 Student Athletes Plaza
- 25 North Staff Parking and Bus Parking
- 26 Community Walkway
- 27 Baseball Field
- 28 Softball Field
- 29 Practice Soccer Field
- 30 Memorial Rose Garden
- 31 Basketball Courts
- 32 Tennis Courts
- 33 Districtwide Maintenance and Operations
- 34 South Parking



ACADEMIC BUILDING - LEVEL 1



Collaboration Begins Here

Inside, the journey of learning begins with flexible spaces that spark collaboration—where students gather, surrounded by hands-on programs that bring real-world skills to life.

ACADEMIC BUILDING - LEVEL 2



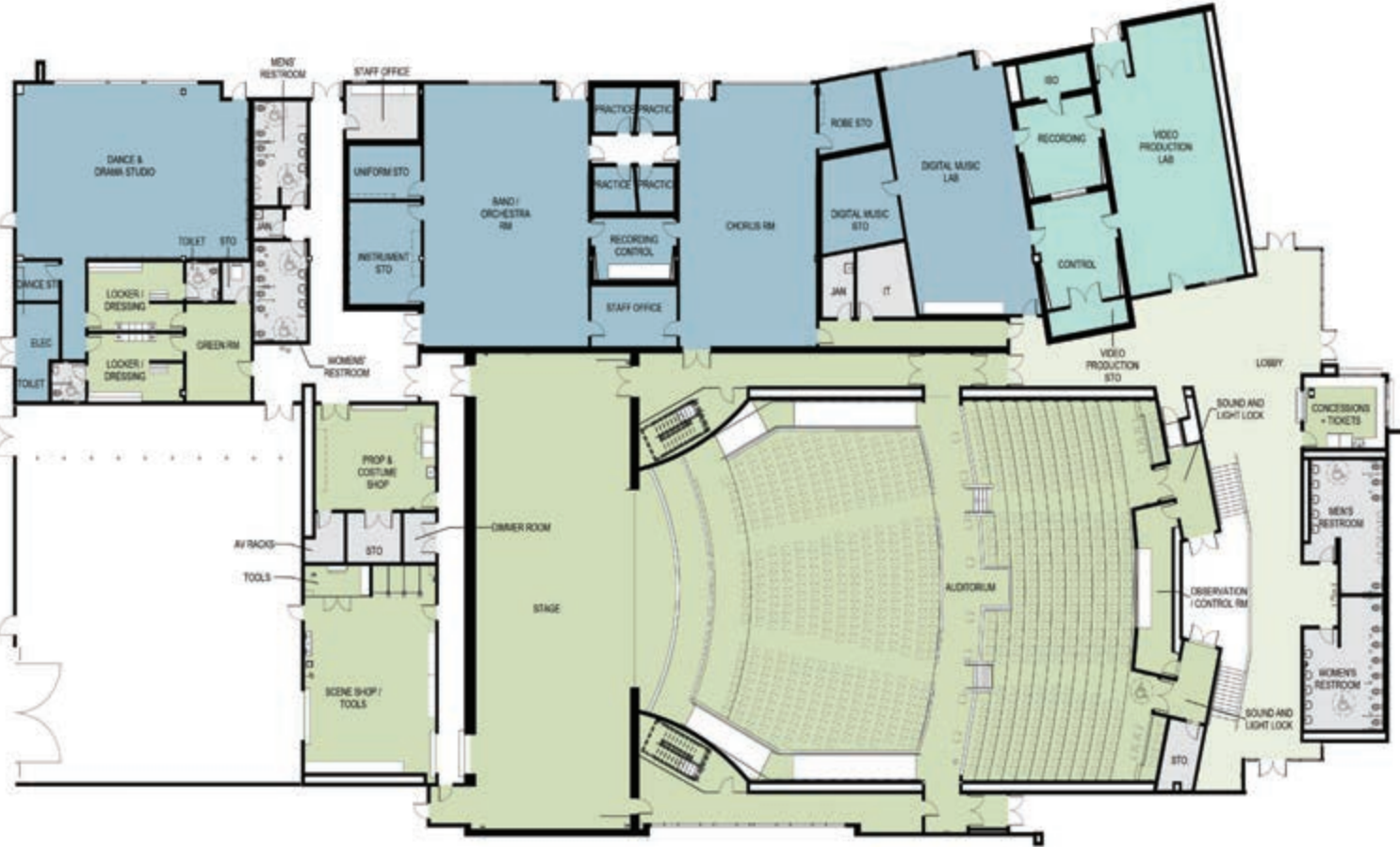
Where Learning Comes To Life

Upstairs, classrooms open to each other in adaptable suites, where students shift seamlessly between focused study, group projects, and cross-disciplinary exploration.

Welcoming Academic Plaza



PERFORMING ARTS CENTER



- LOBBY
- MUSIC/DRAMA/DANCE
- OPEN CLASSROOM
- TECHNICAL ARTS
- THEATER
- UTILITY

Stage For Every Story

At the south end of campus, music, theater, and media arts come alive in a world-class Performing Arts Center—where students not only perform but also learn the tools of the trade.

Performing Arts Center Theater



Performing Arts Center Theater - View From The Stage



Recording Studio Near Video Production Lab and Digital Music



Digital Music Lab



Dance Studio



Video Production Lab



Main Gymnasium



GYMNASIUM



Weightlifting and Fitness Spaces with Direct Access to Outdoor Exercise Area.



Legacy In Motion

To the north, athletics take center stage with a new gymnasium and Compton's first public pool—creating space for champions to grow, train, and shine.

Gymnasium



A Field Of Pride

At the heart of the north end, the stadium stands as a proud symbol of school spirit—where the community gathers, athletes rise, and legacies are made under the lights.



Fieldhouse with Concession Stand and Support Spaces.



Half Olympic-Size Pool





The campus mural became a powerful symbol of aspiration, mentorship, and community pride. Our design team developed the initial graphic concept as a tribute to Dr. Dre, whose transformational contribution to the Performing Arts Center extended far beyond the building itself—supporting future collaborations with educators, student workshops, and real-world creative programs that expose learners to professional pathways in the arts. To bring the vision to life, the team partnered with a local artist whose work resonated with the spirit of Compton and its youth. Over two weeks of continuous on-site painting, the wall evolved into a vibrant narrative of talent, perseverance, and possibility—an inspiring daily backdrop for students as they enter a facility designed to elevate their voices and nurture their ambitions.

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Cultural Plaza





While the campus was still under construction, Compton USD and the design team launched an extensive series of educator workshops to ensure the new environments would be fully aligned with instructional practice from day one. Early sessions focused on furniture selection and classroom configurations, allowing teachers to shape spaces for flexibility, collaboration, and student-centered learning. As the project progressed, workshops expanded into hands-on training for faculty and staff, exploring how flexible learning suites, shared instructional spaces, and new technologies could support evolving pedagogy. In this model, teachers do not “own” individual classrooms; instead, they work from dedicated educator collaboration suites—office-

style environments designed for lesson planning, interdisciplinary coordination, and professional learning communities. Conducted across multiple rounds and continuing even after opening, the workshops resulted in a series of user handbooks that document best practices and empower educators to confidently adapt spaces over time, reinforcing a culture of innovation, shared ownership, and continuous growth.

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The background of the entire image is a topographic map. It features a solid blue color with intricate white contour lines that flow across the frame in various directions, creating a sense of depth and movement. The lines are more densely packed in some areas and more spread out in others, typical of a topographic representation.

CONNECT.

UNIFY.

ELEVATE.

ON COMMON
GROUND.