

REDESIGN OF GUTHRIE CENTER COMP. ESSAY

GUTHRIE CENTER

SARAH SCHWARTZ & KATE DIERS

The expectations of collaboration. The success of innovative students. The importance of establishing future goals. These motives were all factors considered when we drafted the new Guthrie Future Career and Technology Education Center.

As briefly mentioned, one of our key focuses on the functionality of this building is collaboration. To increase teamwork and participation, each program offered has its own section to a building. Each division shares the floor with other relevant career paths, such as Graphic Design and 3D Animation. These two categories share similar interests in digitally designing, and placing the technological education departments in relative relation to each other allows for their projects to go hand in hand with each other. Besides collaboration, the departments were consolidated into noisy and silent environments to avoid distractions or headaches in the middle of a hushed classroom. When concluding our layout and separation throughout our building, collaboration and attention in class were our prime considerations.

The overall shape of our building wasn't settled into in the easiest fashion. We vetoed the idea of a regular shape such as squares, triangles, or rectangles off the bat when we were initially drafting our building due to the dullness our design would bring us through the unremarkable walls, design, and appearance. We recognize that our concluding shape of the school is, in fact, unnatural and outright weird, but we feel that this differentiates us from any other building, school, or career center. This intentional feature - as we call it, the inside-out circle - provides security of closing outside access. The new education building is rooted in the ideology of cooperative learning, a professional environment, and enjoyment among peers. This inspired open concepts such as our two-level architecture section, floor-to-ceiling glass windows, or our inviting courtyard. The outdoor area functions with intricate pathways for a good traffic flow, greenery, and a sunken amphitheater. One of our main focal points viewed from the inside of the courtyard is the skywalk. Our skywalks bridge between buildings not only for students to get from class to class but also appeals to the eye. What seems like glass floating over paths draws students into our facility until they say, "I want to go here," or merely enjoy their presence at this school.

Along with the satisfaction of the student body, we incorporated a unique layout into our building to avoid provoking the feeling of a closed-in, square space with little to no windows and straight, boring walls. The curved hallways and non-cookie-cutter classroom shapes take learning to a different level and appeal to the room's function. The inside-out circle was not just for design but for charming everyone going in and out of the building. When we established this new layout, we increased the wishes and needs of our teachers. The upgraded square footage allows for optimal space to integrate a professional environment such as our culinary arts section. Our culinary arts section consists of teaching kitchens for one on one learning, a restaurant, and Cafe to establish a working, career-accurate, real-life environment, and many more rooms for the benefit of the student.

When approaching Hammerly Boulevard from one of the busiest highways in Houston, Texas, your eye will suddenly be drawn to the fifty-foot, beguiling Guthrie Career and Technology Education Center. The building is accessible through the busy road by a circle drive for the hourly buses or the last-minute dentist appointments that students have to travel from, or accessible through the parking

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lots on all four corners of the building. Even though we have parking on all sides and emergency exits, we have one main entrance through the vestibule for safety. When entering the building, you are met with a glass panel separation between the front desk and anyone entering the building before crossing through another set of doors to add to safety. Once approved clearance through the vestibule, the building opens up to two grand stairs, a thirty-five-foot ceiling, thirty-five feet of glass straight ahead, a double-level auditorium on the right, two stories of closed-off staff areas on the left, and one classroom on the second floor intended for the internship program. Moving along, you are met with our courtyard filled with greenery, lights for the late-night teachers and staff, and a sunken-in amphitheater. From the center of this open space, you can see all three divisions of classrooms and skywalks branching over the passages. These inner classrooms have floor-to-ceiling glass for natural lighting and an open sense while learning. There are several restrooms and elevators on each floor and onlooking views from the second floor into the classrooms such as electrical, architecture, and NJROTC. Inside the building, on the left, when looking north, the IT rooms, 3D Animation rooms, fifty-foot Architecture classrooms with viewpoints to the second floor, and one of the Graphic Design classrooms lie on the first floor. While the second floor of this building gives us the other Graphic Design classroom, the Criminal Justice rooms, including a forensics lab and courtroom, and an Engineering specific area. Moving to the north building, there are the NJROTC and Electrical areas and rooms. The NJROTC area includes a shooting range, classrooms, an indoor two-story open space, and access to a gated outdoor area. The Electrical is wide open to accommodate any project and has garage doors for any shipment or need for an outdoor working area. Above these rooms lie the Pharmacy Tech and Business areas. To the right is the building with a large Culinary Arts section adjacent to the Student Center on the first floor. The second floor has a Salon overlooking the Student Center with a balcony view in a professional setting and has a Photography and Film area. The Culinary Arts provide anything necessary for professional culinary training, including an upfront area for ordering food from the Cafe or a sneak peek into the open kitchen from the Student Center. The Student Center displays our motto of "Discover, Apply, and Succeed" with the Guthrie logo for an inviting appeal. The intention of this design is to represent our motto.