

**The Counterintuitive  
Middle School:  
Doing the “Right Thing”  
by  
Doing “Everything Wrong”**

**A4LE Northeast Regional Conference  
Philadelphia, PA**

LAVALLEE  
BRENSINGER  
ARCHITECTS

Windham Raymond Schools

**RSU4**



# An Experience in 4 Parts

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Introductions

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The *Right Thing* but *Everything Wrong*

Question for Participants

2

Background + Complications

3

The Process

Visioning Workshops

Scheduling

Space Needs

Question for Participants

4

The Design Solution

Question for Participants

Closing

Questions from Participants



The diagram features four stylized hands, each with a different color and a corresponding callout box. From left to right: a yellow hand with a yellow callout box labeled 'Educators'; a red hand with a red callout box labeled 'Designers'; a light blue hand with a light blue callout box labeled 'Administration / Facilities'; and a light green hand with a light green callout box labeled 'Others'. The hands are simple line drawings with no shading, set against a dark teal background.

Educators

Designers

Administration  
/ Facilities

“Others”

# Introductions

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CHRIS HOWELL

Superintendent RSU 14



DREW PATIN

Principal Windham MS, RSU 14



JAY DOHERTY

Principal, Lavallee Brensinger Architects



Dr FRAN LOCKER

Locker Education + Architecture Planning



# Introductions

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Windham Raymond Schools

# RSU14



Part



*The Right Thing  
but Everything Wrong*

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# STANDARD MS



CORE ONLY  
TEACHER  
TEAMING

DIFFERENT  
PLANNING  
TIME

SEPARATED  
"SPECIALS"

DICTATED  
BELL  
SCHEDULE

**DISCONTINUITIES  
FOR TEACHERS  
+ STUDENTS**

# STANDARD MS



CORE ONLY  
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SCHEDULE

DISCONTINUITIES  
FOR TEACHERS  
+ STUDENTS

# RSU14 MS



ALL  
TEACHER  
TEAMING

PLANNING  
TIME  
TOGETHER

"SPECIALS"  
PART OF  
THE TEAM

SCHEDULE  
BY TEACHER  
& PROJECTS

CONTINUITIES  
FOR TEACHERS  
+ STUDENTS

What would be the most difficult aspect of this to implement on your (most recent) school? And WHY?

The *Right Thing* but *Everything Wrong*

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# Background + Complications

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# DISTRICT HISTORY

Pre-RSU14

Separate but unequal Middle Schools  
One (6-7-8) MS + another (5-6-7-8) MS

2009

RSU14 Formed

Post RSU14 Consolidation

Separate but unequal Middle Schools  
One (6-7-8) MS + another (5-6-7-8) MS

2015

Proposal Close Jordan Small Middle School

2016 + 2020

Raymond Withdrawal Proposal from RSU





## Jordan-Small Middle School



Serves Students: Grades 5 – 8  
Location: Raymond  
Enrollment: 166 Students  
Opened pre-1967 as an  
Elementary School

## Current RSU14 MS's Windham Middle School



Serves Students: Grades 6 – 8  
Location: Windham  
Enrollment: 598 Students  
Opened in 1977 as a  
Junior High School



# Proposed New Site



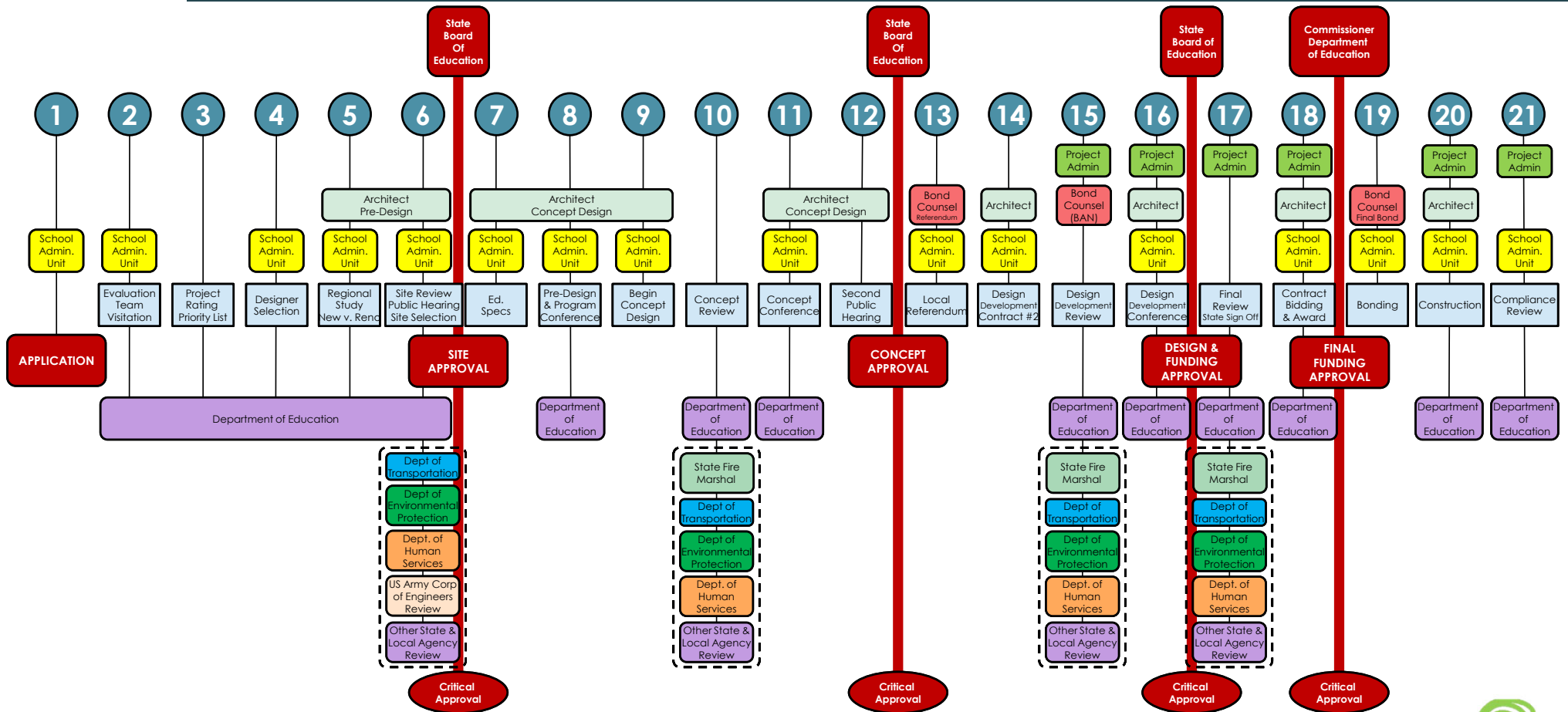
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# "Simple" 21 Step State Building Aid Process



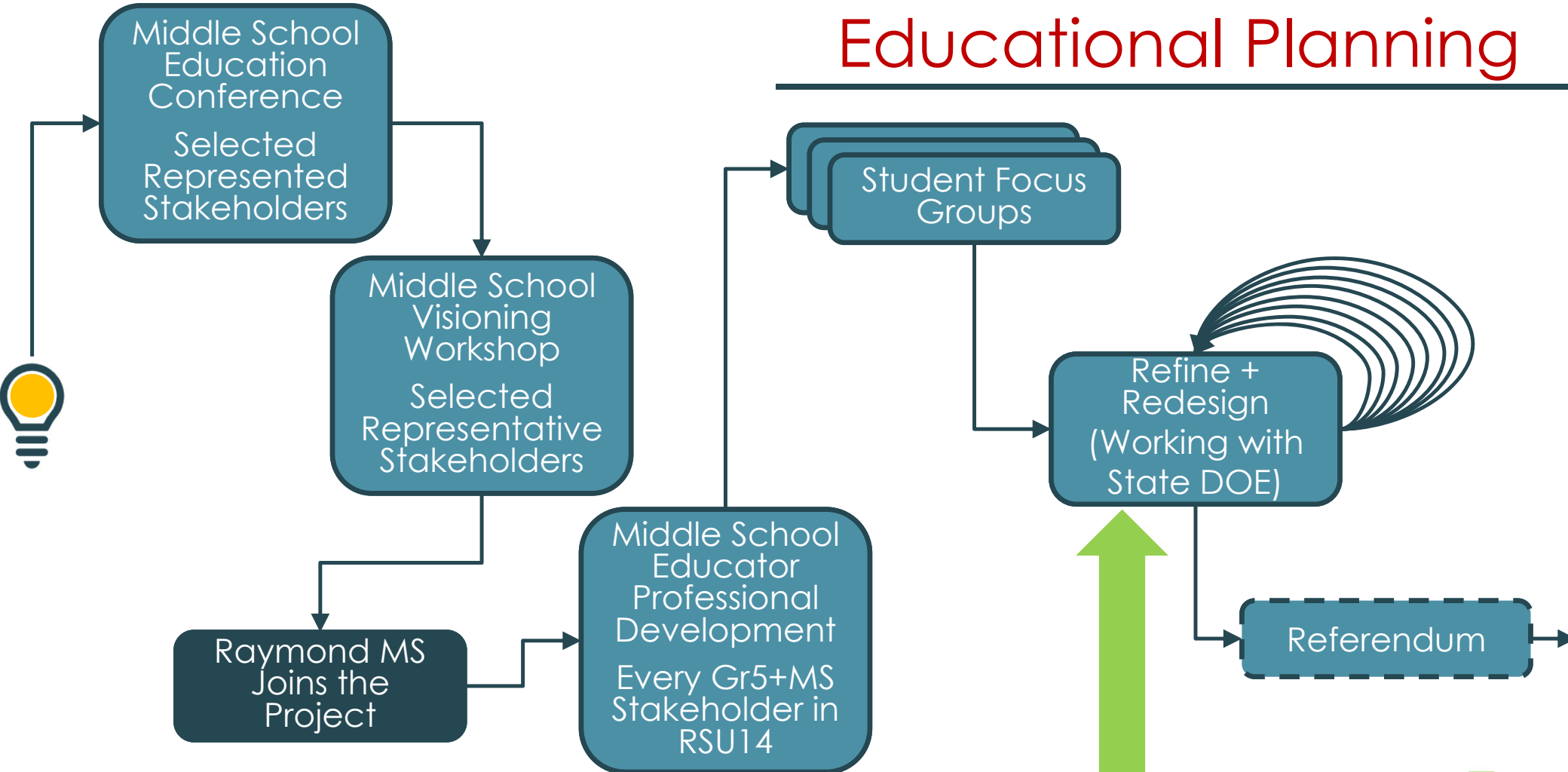
Part  The Process

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# Educational Planning





# THE PROCESS

Address both MS's together

District Master Plan added 5th grade

Meanwhile politics unfolded



# EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

- Teacher/Student Relationships
- Small Learning Communities
- Collaboration on Social + Communications Skills
- Growth Opportunities





# VISIONING WORKSHOP

## Educational Vision

- Teacher Collaboration
- Student Collaboration
- Personalized Learning
- Innovation not Standardization
- Continuous Innovation
- Fluid + Adaptable
- Project-Based Learning



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# VISIONING WORKSHOP

## Facility Concepts

- Small Learning Communities
- Learning Circulation
- Opportunity not Equity
- Flexible Spaces
- Interdisciplinary Planning
- Flexible Student-Controlled Furniture





# ALL STAFF PD WORKSHOP

Share Concepts:

3 Most Important  
Issues:

- Student Engagement
- Social/emotional skills
- 21st Century Skills

Hopes + Concerns?

Feelings About the  
Process?



# STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS 1, 2, 3

Share Concepts:

Vote with “thumbs”

- What do you like?
- What don't you like?
- Why?





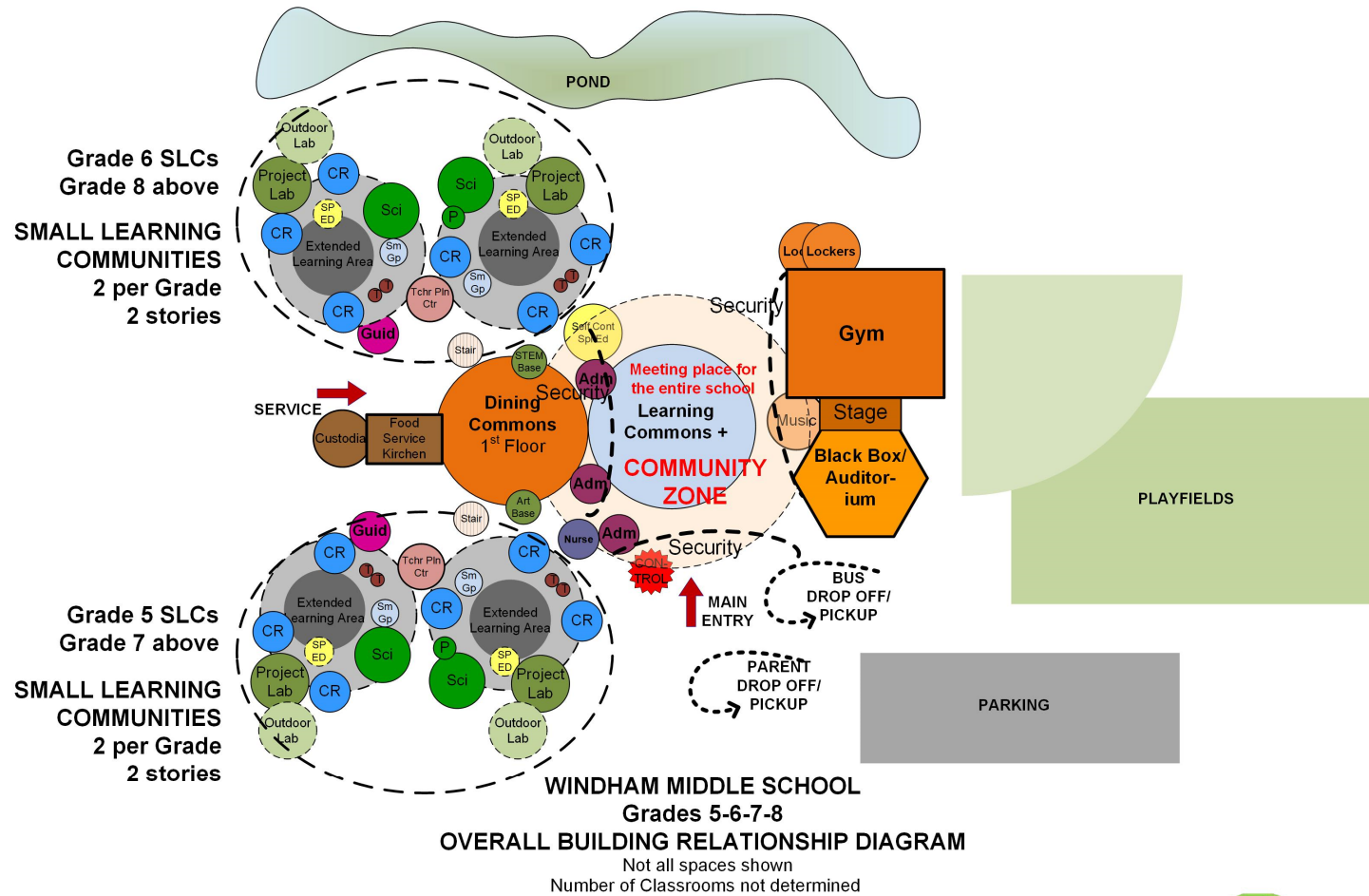






# SPACE PLANNING

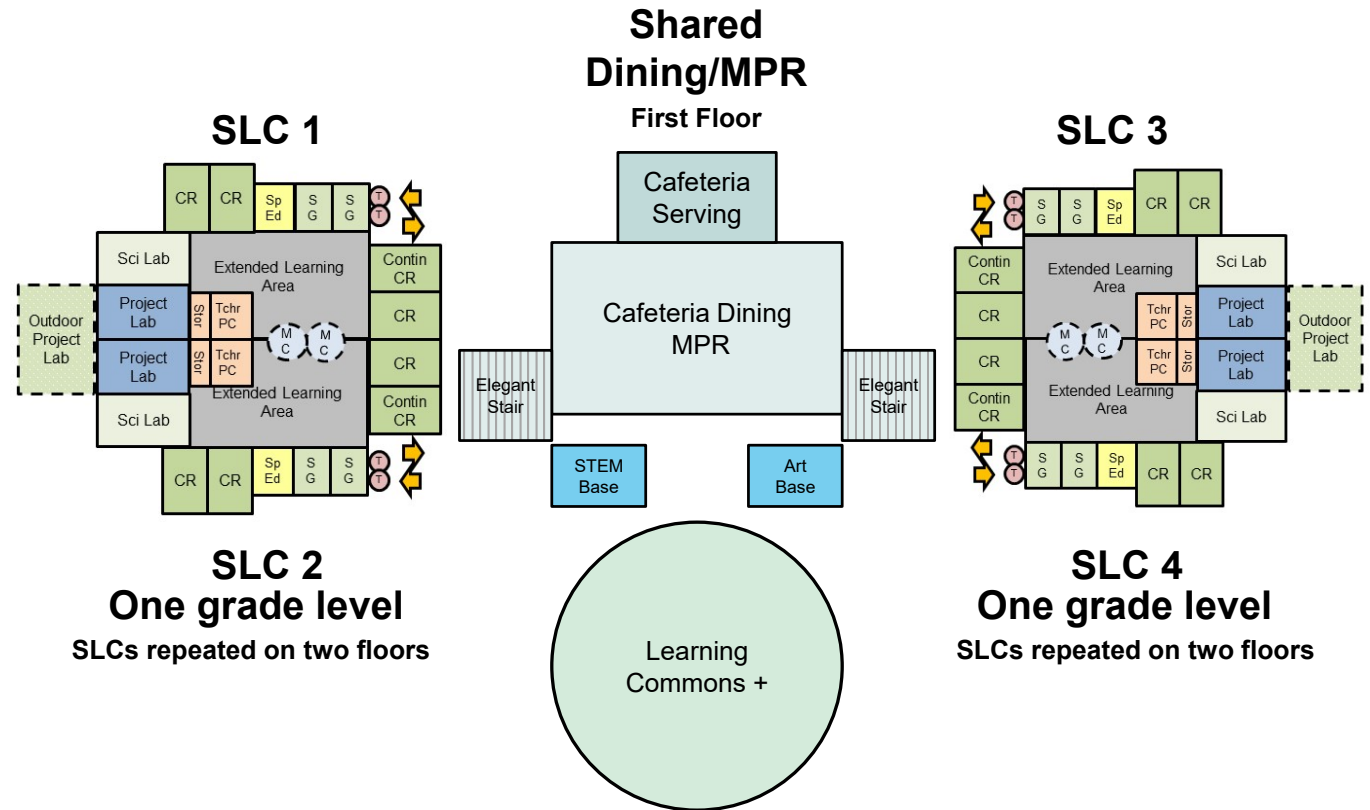
## Overall Planning Diagram



# SPACE PLANNING

## Small Learning Community Planning Diagram

Two Grade Levels + Services

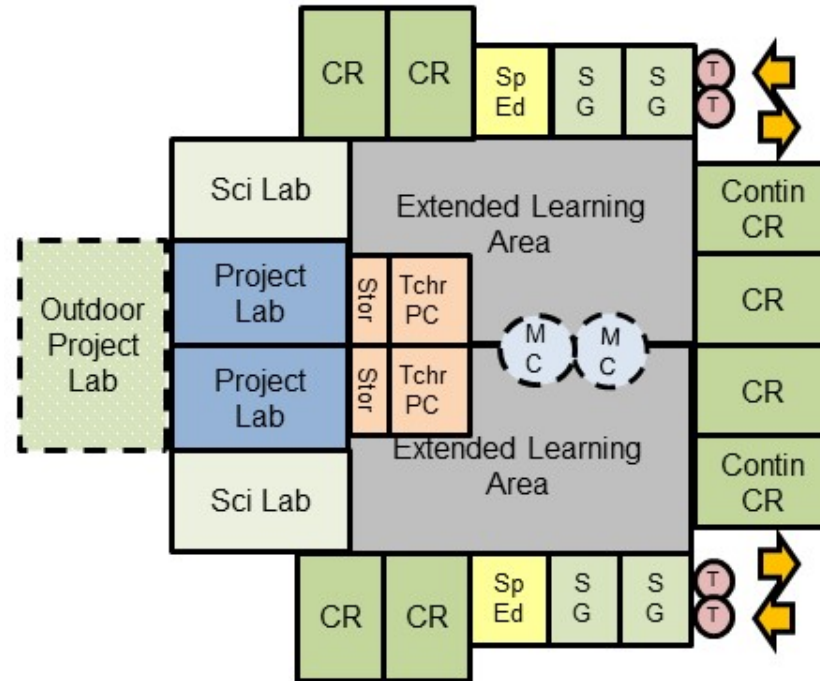




# SPACE PLANNING

Small Learning  
Community Planning  
Diagram

One Grade Level





# 3D PLANNING

Understanding Space Relationships in the Third-Dimension



What challenges do you see in this  
Space Planning concept?

Part  The Design Solution

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# New RSU14 Middle School



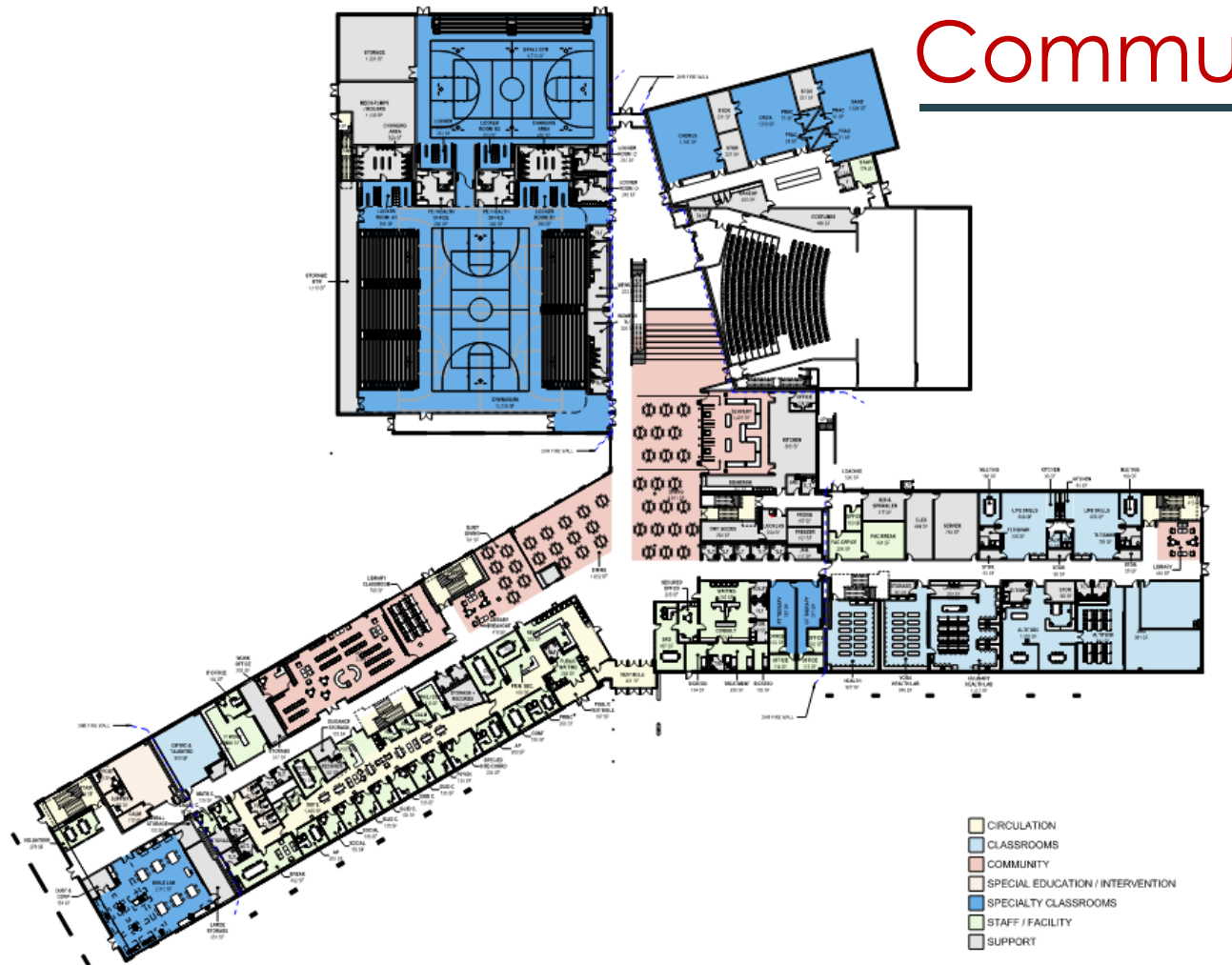
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# Community Level



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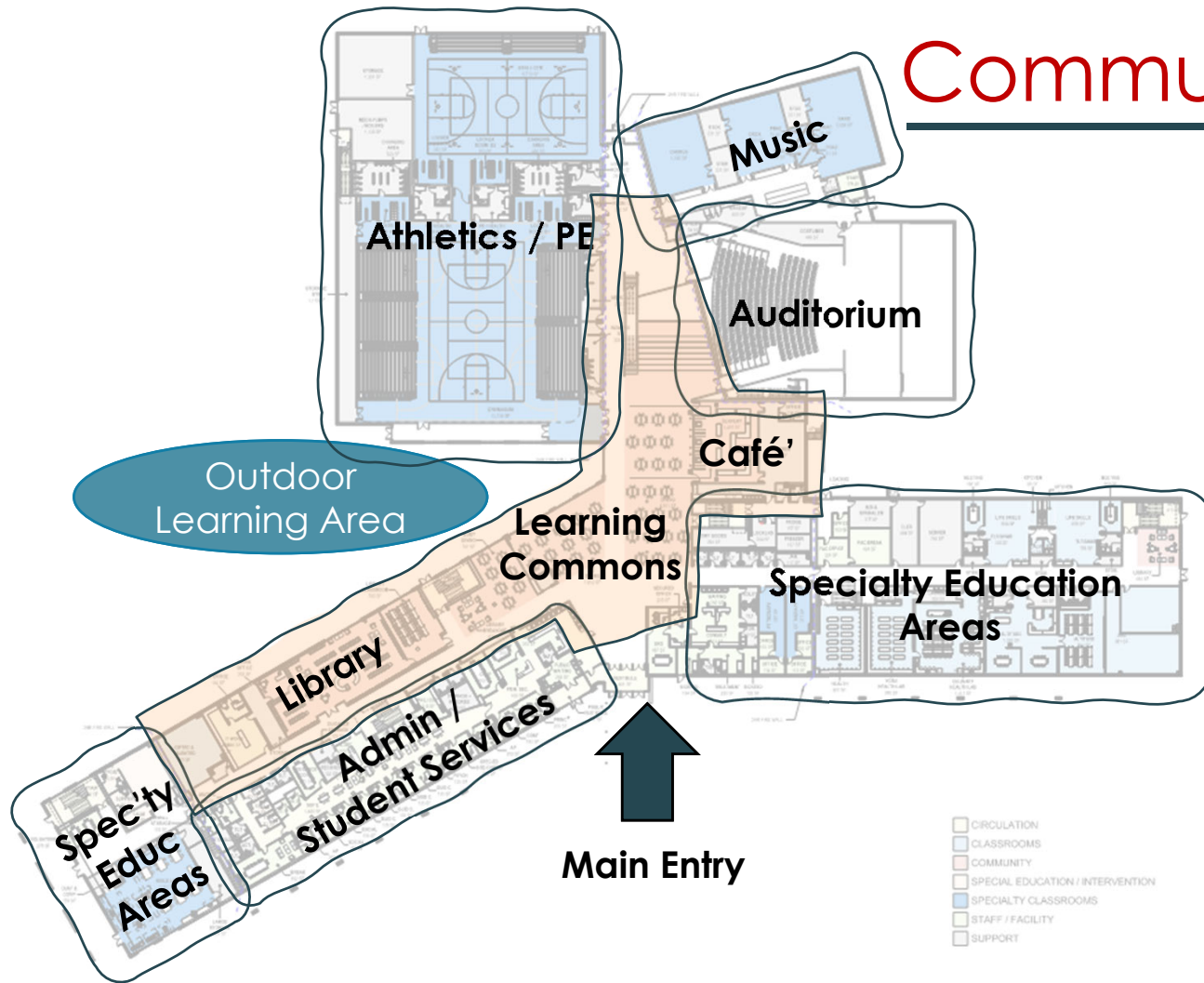
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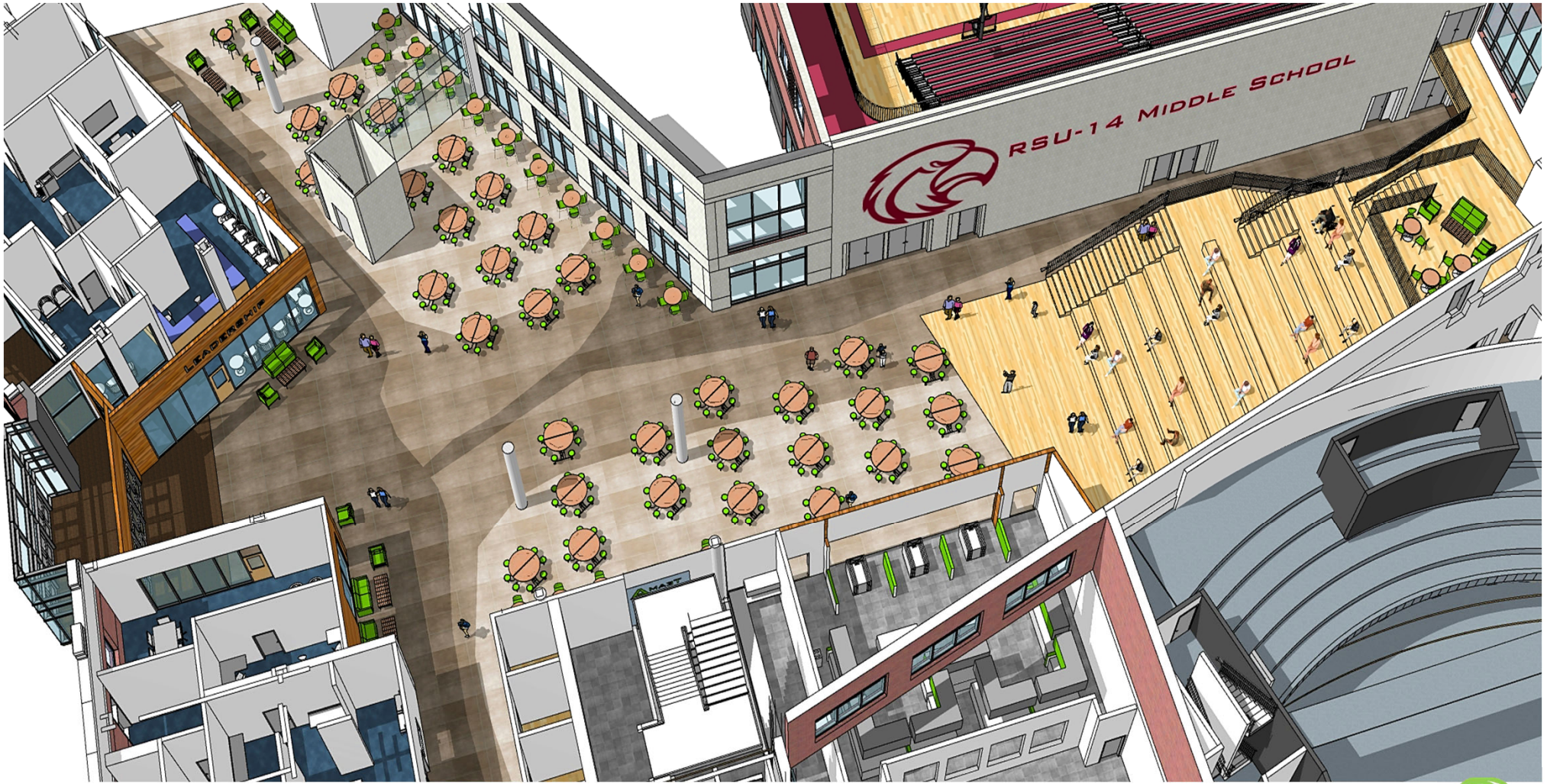




# Community Level







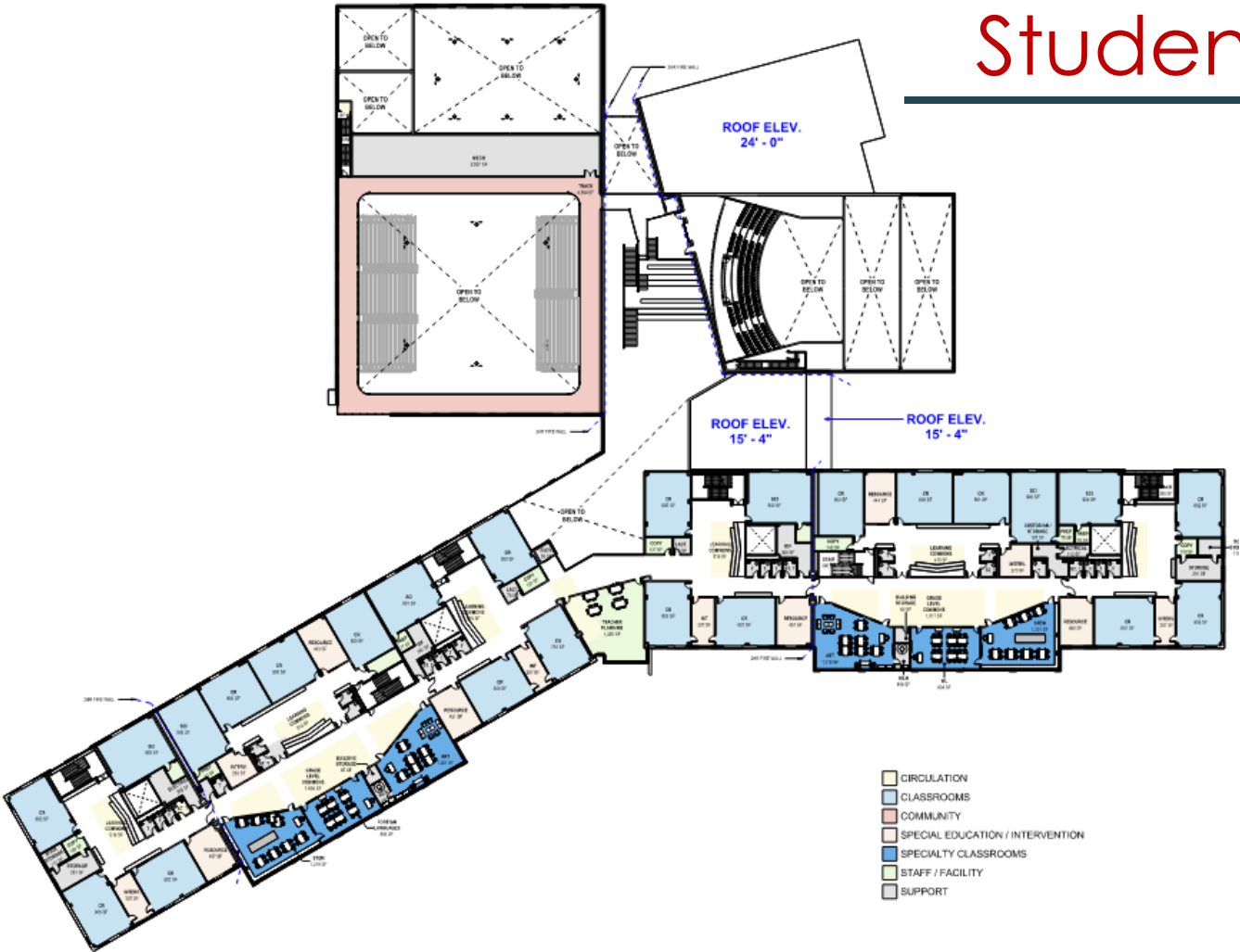
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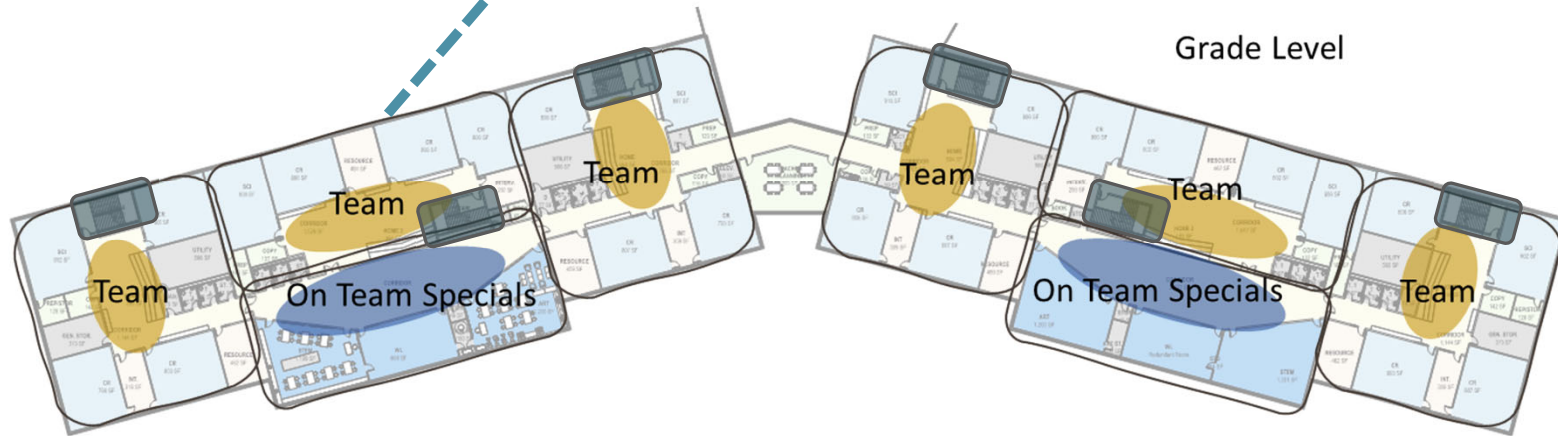


# Student Level





# Student Level





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Can you guess what % of overall floor area is devoted to "circulation only" (hint, a typical MS is 15-20%)?

The **Design** Solution

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Do you have any questions for us?

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# Goodbye! Thanks!

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