

Kodiak High School

LOCATION
OWNER

Kodiak, Alaska
Kodiak Island Borough School District

KODIAK
HIGH SCHOOL

LOADING
ZONE

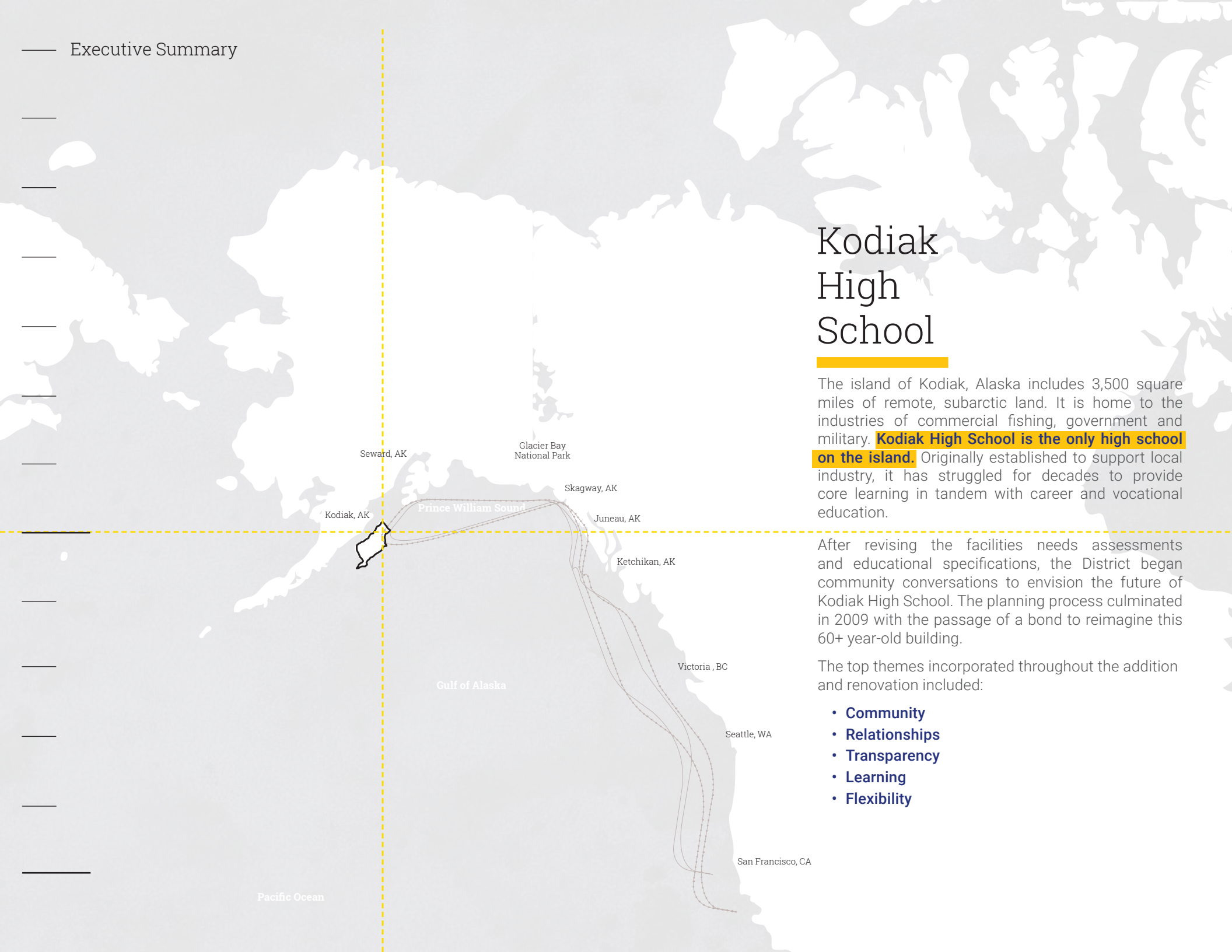
Kodiak High School

The island of Kodiak, Alaska includes 3,500 square miles of remote, subarctic land. It is home to the industries of commercial fishing, government and military. **Kodiak High School is the only high school on the island.** Originally established to support local industry, it has struggled for decades to provide core learning in tandem with career and vocational education.

After revising the facilities needs assessments and educational specifications, the District began community conversations to envision the future of Kodiak High School. The planning process culminated in 2009 with the passage of a bond to reimagine this 60+ year-old building.

The top themes incorporated throughout the addition and renovation included:

- **Community**
- **Relationships**
- **Transparency**
- **Learning**
- **Flexibility**



Scope of Work



Scope of Work

- 5 years of planning
- \$60 million construction budget
- 85,000 square feet new construction
- 104,00 square feet renovation
- 900 student capacity (increase from original capacity of 550)
- External reach to rural school locations
- Shared site with middle school and District administration facilities

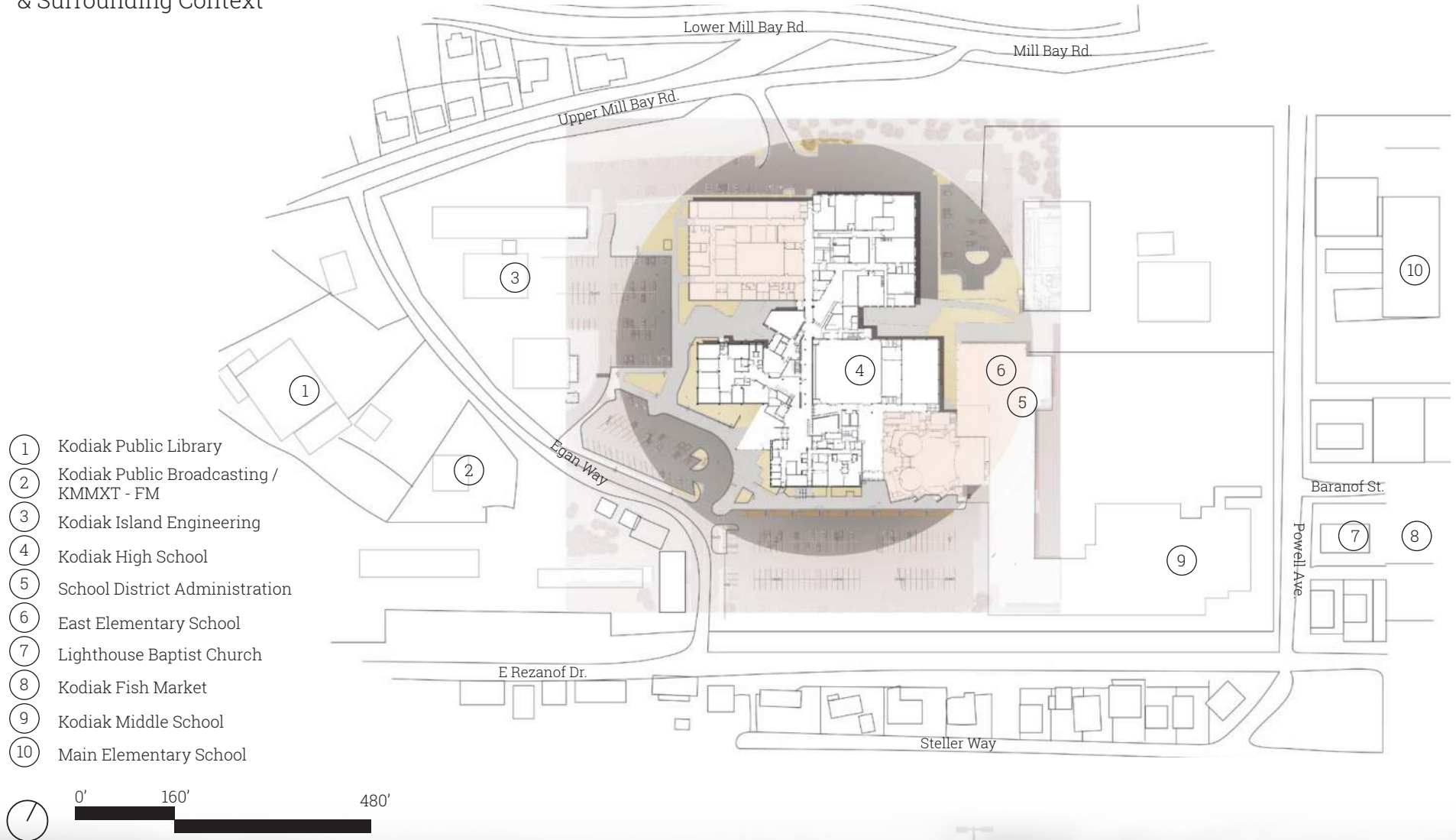
Historical Context & Challenges

Kodiak High School opened in 1966 as an integrated vocational education school designed to support local culture and industry. With original class offerings such as fur processing, carpentry, welding, and fishing, the school directly supported the surrounding community, native Alutiiq population, and blue collar way of life.

During the 1970s, Kodiak introduced a “college-first” initiative (including a building addition), but the shift departmentalized the facility, losing the unifying theme of vocational education.

In addition to navigating dated facilities, site-specific constraints were a factor since the campus is shared with District administration and the middle school, and would need to remain occupied during construction.

Site Plan & Surrounding Context



Previous Campus Entry and Existing Building

School & Community Engagement



Diverse Community

From the beginning, opponents and supporters alike were engaged to incorporate diverse community voices. From parents to government officials, interested business owners, tribal representatives, School District staff members, and industry professionals, the hopeful success of Kodiak High School meant early community involvement invested in the outcome.

After the first bond attempt failed in 2008, a joint task force between Kodiak Island Borough and Kodiak Island Borough School District was formed by the Mayor to address next steps. By reducing the project scope (dropping an administrative office space which had been an earlier component) and communicating the changes to the community, the project was able to receive the funding it needed through the 2009 bond.

As the project moved through design, community involvement remained a crucial factor.

Relevant Stakeholders

Kodiak Island Borough School District provides education to nearly 2,500 students. The district operates four large elementary schools, a middle school, a high school, and eight rural schools (K-12), in addition to participating in State-wide distance learning through the program AKTEACH.

Representative of the District, various members of administration, operations, and the high school itself were involved throughout the planning and design process.

The Kodiak Island Borough (a separate government agency) was also a major stakeholder in the process due to their tie to funding and oversight.



43 Meetings // 200+ Voices

- Core Academics
- Custodial & Building Services
- Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA)
- Technical & Career Education
- Students
- PE, Athletics & Extra curricular
- Welcome Center & Administration
- Special Needs
- Music & Performing Arts
- Visual Arts
- Media Center & Student Production
- Cafeteria & Food Service
- Rural Schools
- Central Services & Business Office
- Community Members

Planning Process

In Kodiak, the unique blend of industry includes commercial fishing, healthcare, aerospace, the US Navy and the US Coast Guard. **In order to ensure buy-in from school staff, students, and the surrounding community, the design team conducted 43 meetings over four months during schematic design.** Participants included the Kodiak Island School District Borough, Kodiak Island Borough, Oversight Team, Kodiak High School PTSA, students and staff, the community at large, and the Citizens Advisory Committee.

In one meeting, a student named Samantha said,

“If we see new things, we are more apt to create new things.”

The design committee took this charge to heart. The existing school facility was a confusing maze of additions and renovations, forcing the isolation of many student groups. As a result, there was a loss of cohesiveness and empathy.

The District, user groups, and students made it clear they wanted the new building to reinvigorate a sense of community (notably absent from the original school). Even though the future space was unknown to these students and educators, champions for change arose throughout the planning and design process, including many who would never have the opportunity to use the new facility themselves. The support and participation marked the coming of educational and community transformation.

As the design progressed, focus groups were revisited with updated plans, and questions and concerns discussed openly. Time was spent with each staff group reviewing how space was utilized and talking about plans. Things that were working well, as well as challenges, were communicated to the design team. Sketches and revisions to preliminary plans were done in-person with each group to ensure feedback was understood.

Educational Environment



Vision & Goals

The motto of Kodiak Island Borough School District is “Engaged in Learning. Prepared for Life.” In a sense, the goal of this project was to return to the historic roots of the school and its place in the community through integration of CTE/Vocational components and their visible tie to the surrounding industry.

As the design team met with staff, students, and community members during the early stages of the design, the intent was to foster dialogue, conversation, and idea generation, ensuring each voice was heard.

Building upon the District’s Guiding Principles and Mission, the design focused on five key points:

- **Community**
- **Relationships**
- **Transparency**
- **Learning**
- **Flexibility**

Support of Curriculum

The school faced unaddressed deficiencies dating back to the early 1980s. Music, physical therapy, speech language, counseling, reading, and ELL

programs did not have space designed to meet program needs. Science, arts, and vocational classes were being taught in regular core classrooms, too small to meet instructional needs. As stated directly by the district,

“Facility limitations are defining instructional programs rather than programs defining facilities.”

Following the renovation/addition of Kodiak High School, the school is experiencing the benefits of forward-thinking curriculum and providing interconnected education within the school and through virtual connections to distant locations.

A major driver of how the building’s program is tied to the dispersed delivery of CTE programs. By pulling the programs from the recesses of the building and giving them a visible, prominent position in the school, participation in the CTE curriculum has gone up to 70%, and is expanding in influence to other facets of the school. Core curriculum is provided in the 4-story addition, and large group spaces for teaching, learning, and congregating spill into the surrounding areas, encouraging blended learning, group activities, and cross-collaboration.



Video Production Studio



Fabrication Shop



Culinary Arts



Science Lab



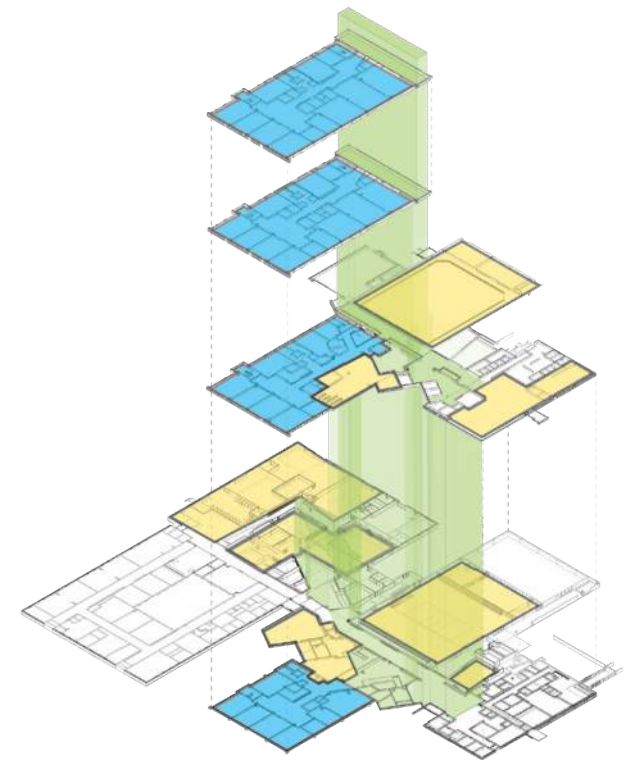
From top to bottom and corner to corner, intentional interconnectivity at Kodiak High School allows core curriculum, career/vocational learning, and community use spaces to merge with fluidity.

As a result, **vertical and horizontal integration break down the physical and cultural barriers** which were present in the former school.

The Entry Lobby

Support of Curriculum

Throughout the school, an intentional “link” weaves together previously disconnected programs through a network of overlapping horizontal and vertical paths and volumes. Furthermore, abundant transparency offers glimpses into the activities happening with the classroom, Cascading Commons, or career and vocational spaces. It serves to celebrate the work being done in the school, and is also a way for students to spark an interest in programs and areas of study.

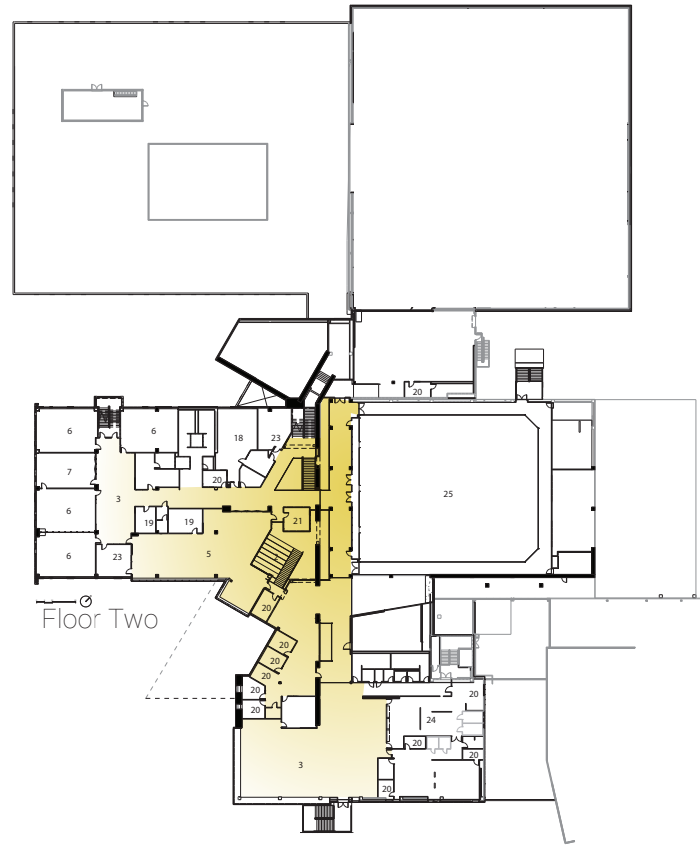


LEARN ——— LINK ——— EXPLORE



0' 40' 120' 280'

Floor Plans (1-4)



Floor Two



Floor Three and Four

- 1 WELCOME CENTER
- 2 CASCADING COMMONS
- 3 COMMONS
- 4 BEAR'S DEN
- 5 LIBRARY
- 6 CLASSROOM
- 7 CLASS / STUDIO
- 8 MULTI PURPOSE WORKSHOP
- 9 MUSIC INSTRUMENTAL / VOCAL
- 10 DANCE STUDIO
- 11 NATURAL RESOURCES
- 12 CONSTRUCTION LAB
- 13 DESIGN AND ENGINEERING
- 14 AUTO SHOP / MECHANICAL
- 15 METAL FABRICATION / WELDING
- 16 MEDIA ARTS / VISUAL ARTS
- 17 SCIENCE LAB / CHEMISTRY
- 18 ELAP
- 19 WORKROOM
- 20 OFFICE
- 21 GROUP
- 22 STAFF LOUNGE
- 23 RESOURCE
- 24 KITCHEN
- 25 GYMNASIUM
- 26 FITNESS
- 27 HEALTH

Support of Learning and Teaching

What once was a facility unable to provide the desired academic offerings – lacking space for group activities or collaborative learning, and plagued by supervision concerns – is now a global participant in high-quality learning. Gender and socioeconomic norms have no place in education. Opportunity is available to all, promoted by transparency throughout the facility.

“Because of the facility design, innovative instruction is possible, and it all started with the community conversations.”

- Former Superintendent



Educational Environment



Adaptable and Flexible

For large group needs, Kodiak offers multiple options, all within close proximity and able to be easily supervised. The first, the Cascading Commons (pictured on previous page), is a large seating area that spans from the second floor to the first floor. From simple amenities like electrical plugs in the seats, to offering a large drop-down projection screen, built-in flexibility for conducting presentations, club meetings, studying, community use, or meeting with friends makes this central location a crucial circulation and gathering component. With close proximity to the tower, gym, dining hall, and CTE spaces, it has been a large contributor to breaking down walls between ethnic and culturally diverse student groups due to its very nature to encourage students to easily mingle.

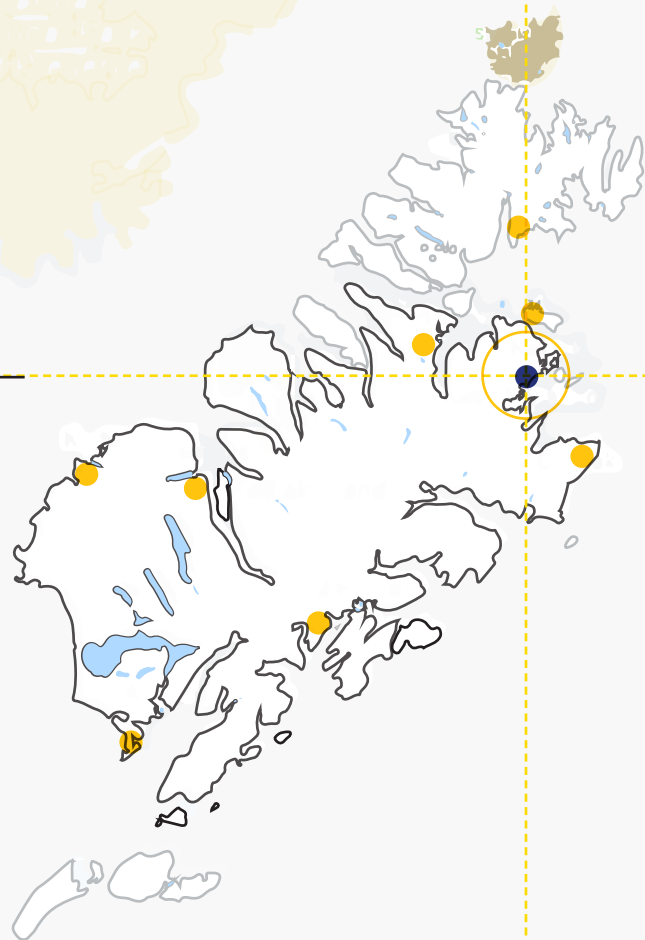
Adjacent on the second floor, the dining hall offers a

sweeping view of the harbor and is used beyond the lunch hour for mock restaurant operations (operated by the culinary program), student clubs, and student dances.

In the CTE classrooms, instructional flexibility allows the specialized programs to operate in multiple capacities. The fisheries program, for example, can operate as one part lab, one part industrial complex. It features a large garage door, and the program includes an actual fishing vessel owned and operated by the District (kept at the local marina). The classroom is wired with the audio and video to operate as a virtual studio, capable of reaching its distance learning students.

From classroom flexibility, to bringing real-life relevance to the surrounding industries, Kodiak High School's agility, prominence in the community, and reach to surrounding areas has transformed the way education is being delivered.

Physical Environment



● rural schools

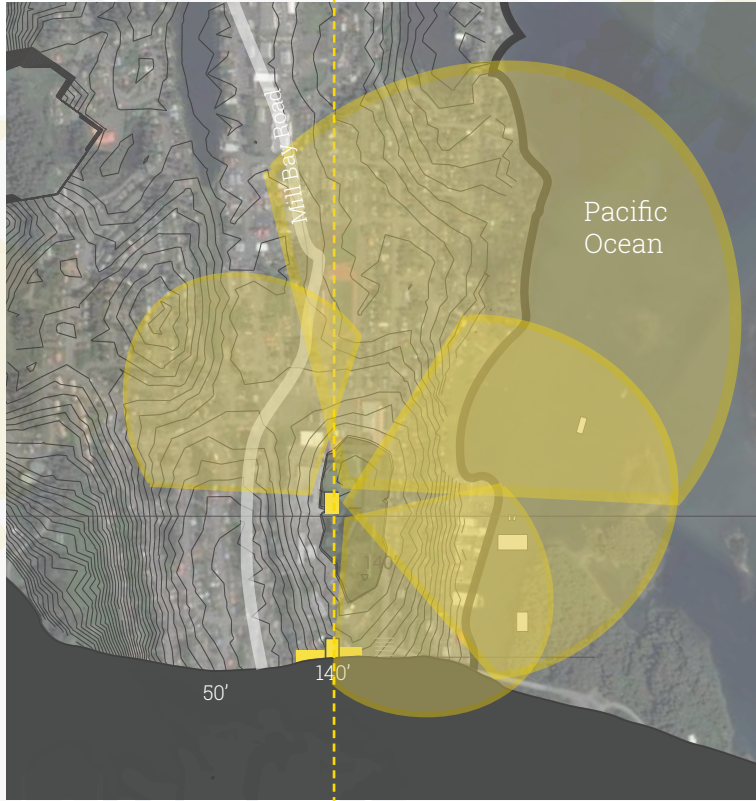
Physical Attributes

Located in the Gulf of Alaska, the island of Kodiak covers just over 3,500 miles. Known for harsh weather, its buildings and infrastructure must withstand 70+ inches of rain in the summer, and 70+ inches of snow in the winter. The School District operates out of the city of Kodiak, serving the educational needs of the entire Borough through facilities in the city and rural facilities in outlying towns (see diagram at left).

Natural Materials

The construction of Kodiak High School was broken into 10 phases, and special exterior cladding was chosen based on exposure to corrosive salt spray and annual precipitation. The building features materials designed to withstand the harsh weather, while reflecting the natural surroundings in its palette of colors and textures.

Physical Environment



Site Section Diagram

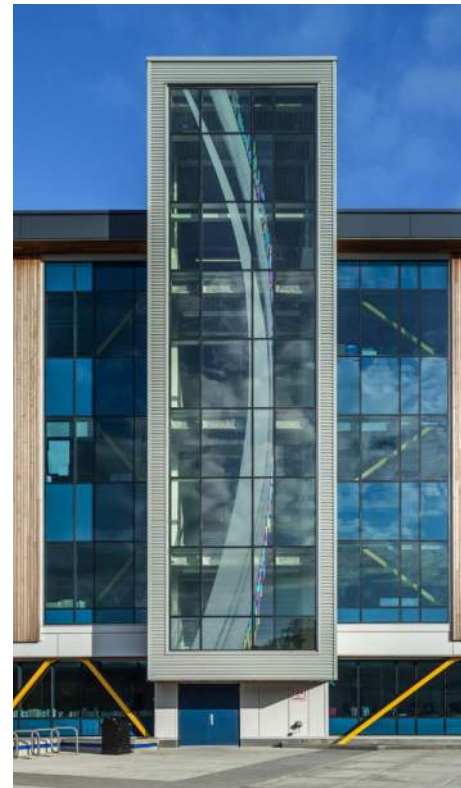
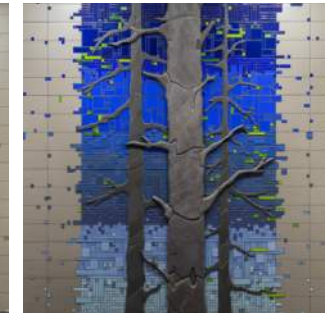
Community Context

Situated prominently on a hillside above the waterfront, Kodiak High School overlooks the community from its front door. The concept of the high school as a community asset is especially critical in rural Alaska—with limited community venues. Kodiak High School is designed to support all aspects of community use: education, sports, arts, continuing education and community school activities, as well as independent groups and rentals.

It is even designed to serve as the primary community emergency shelter in the event of a tragic repeat of the tsunamis and earthquakes that hit Alaska in the 1960s.

Kodiak Island Grade Change





Local Art

In effort to convey the rich heritage of the community and the State of Alaska, the high school had the opportunity to allocate 1% of the budget to public art projects focused on the themes of fishing, industry, and nature, largely designed by Native Alaskans.

The series of four stone and tile tree murals shown on this page depict regional Sitka Spruce trees and were inspired by ancient Alutiiq carvings.

Physical Environment



Inspire and Motivate

When Kodiak High School opened after completing its addition and renovation, the surrounding community took note. No longer skeptical, they realized that their lists of “wants” during the planning stages had been made a reality in the built form.

The CTE and Vocational Education component of the school have been called the “R&D Department of Kodiak” by many community members, realizing that forward-thinking innovation is helping raise up a workforce of knowledgeable and skilled young people. By partnering with local businesses, real-life learning opportunities are being provided to students, allowing them to see first-hand where their education can take them.





Achievement of Educational Goals and Objectives

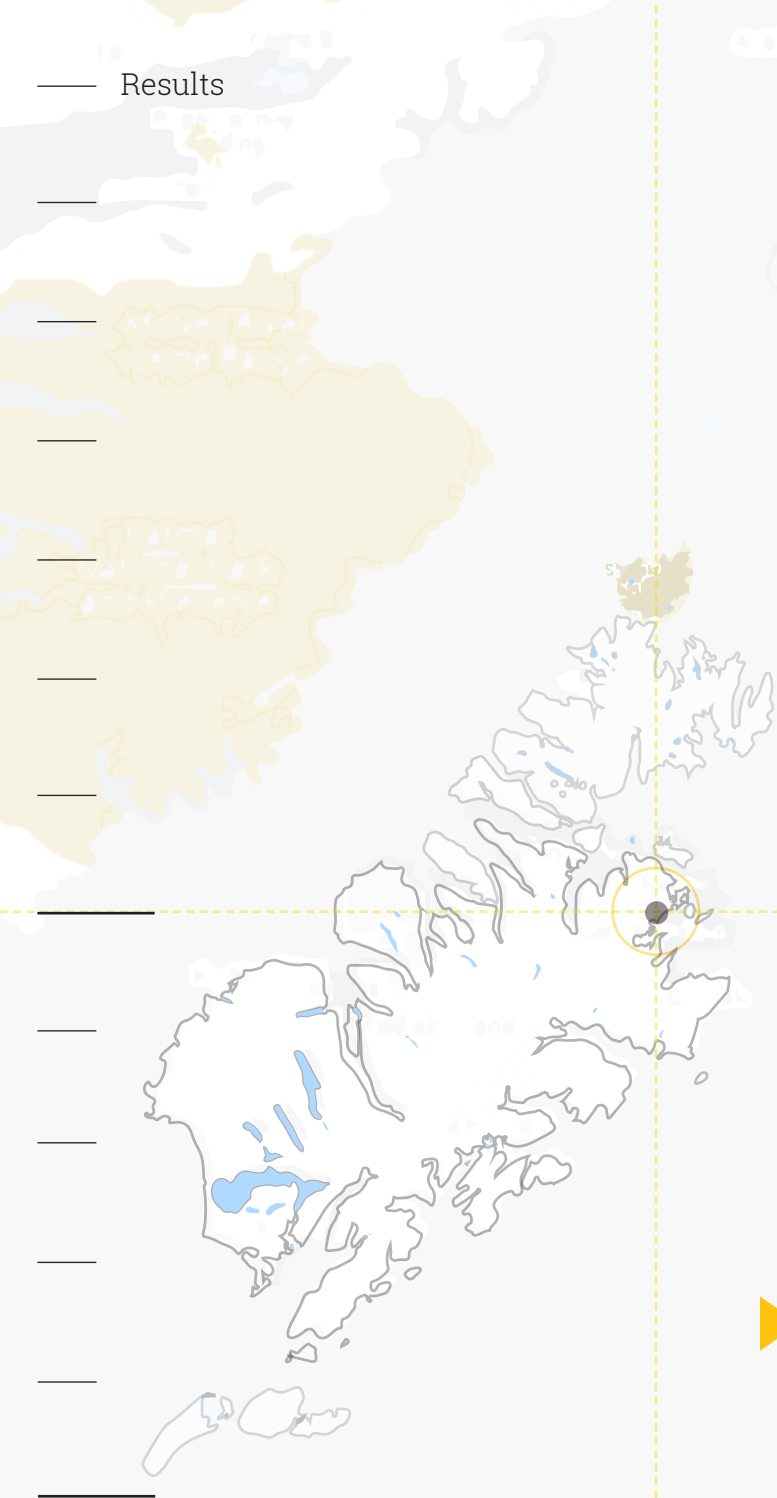
Kodiak High School is pushing the future of education, and how Career and Technical Education plays a part to inspire new paths of study, obtain a living wage job, or support a college education. CTE classes are no longer viewed as second-class or limited by the physical constraints - they are truly open to all, and the varied opportunities in robotics, digital media, fabrication, welding, auto shop, woodworking, health science, art, and commercial fishing are enticing students to get involved in new and innovative ways.

► **Kodiak High School now has 70% of its student population enrolled in some form of CTE/ Vocational class.**

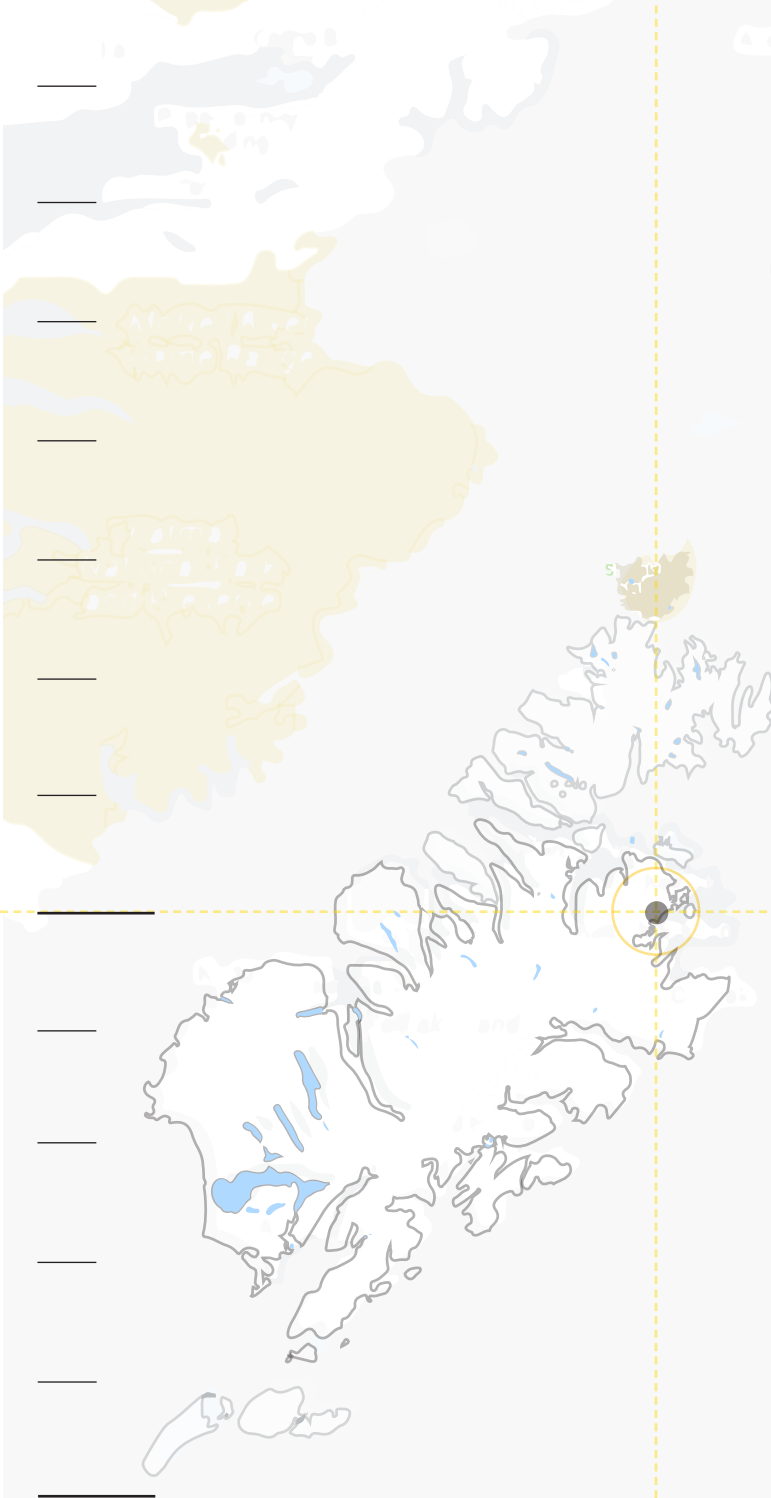
Achievement of District Goals

For rural students served by the Kodiak campus, they once had very limited access to CTE/ Vocational education. Once a year, a District-owned trailer would travel from village to village and provide about two weeks of opportunity to experience expanded learning opportunities based on what could be transported.

Today, embedded technology within Kodiak High School is turning classrooms all over the school into virtual learning opportunities allowing real time, distance learning integration.







Unexpected Results

The mingling of diverse student groups and transformation of school culture has become the best unforeseen result of the addition and renovation. In the old facility, social groups each had their own distinct place, and classrooms had no reason (or space) to collaborate. **As the students took ownership of the new Kodiak High School, the interconnected nature of the facility forced the old barriers to break down.** With glass all over the facility, flexible spaces, walls, and furniture, the student population began to pivot in their treatment of one another.

Kodiak High School is impacting the community and the world, and its students have been further enriched by the integrated opportunities brought to them as result of the tireless work it took to make this project a reality.



