

Legacy Park Elementary School

Weyburn, SK



A4LE PNW Region Pinnacle Award 2023

Executive Summary

Community Reimagined. In 2017, Weyburn's local school division, Southeast Cornerstone, received approval to consolidate three of their existing elementary schools (Haig, Queen Elizabeth, and Souris Schools) into one new larger facility. It was to be connected, in joint-use, with a recreation and cultural centre for the City of Weyburn.

The School Division and City of Weyburn wanted a world class facility that would reinforce Weyburn's status as one of the best places to live in Canada (MoneySense Magazine 2017 and Maclean's Magazine 2019) and provide the opportunity for a multigenerational facility that would reflect the needs of all members of the community.

The challenge for the design team was to:

1. Design a new facility that will support and celebrate the integration of three existing schools within an innovative 21st century learning environment that also meets the needs of the school division.
2. Facilitate a shared vision of excellence between school and city stakeholders that takes full advantage of the joint-use nature of the facility's site, design, and programming.

The design team undertook an extensive stakeholder engagement process to identify the goals and vision for the project that resulted in the development of key design drivers that informed the desired outcomes for the project.

Design Drivers

Community Partnership

- + A cohesive facility, with distinct "personalities" for each group
- + Create a sense of belonging to a "campus"

Park Connections

- + Open, inviting, accessible, direct views inside and out
- + Reflective of nature, natural materials

History and Art

- + Design inspiration and meaning
- + Display and programming opportunities

21st Century Learning and Teaching

- + Flexible, adaptable, collaborative environments
- + Holistic spaces supporting multiple learning styles and 21st century skills

Wellness and Activity

- + Multi-Functional, Multi-Generational, year-round use and opportunity



Executive Summary

Design Solution

Legacy Park Elementary School is an 80,546 sq.ft. facility designed for 650 students and includes an integrated childcare centre (daycare). It is a unique 21st century learning environment physically connected to a city-owned recreation and cultural facility called the Credit Union Spark Centre.

The pre-K to grade 6 school is divided into six distinct age-specific zones called Learning Communities, each of which contain a mix of flexible classrooms, break-out rooms, wet and messy areas, teacher collaboration spaces and student commons spaces that serve as community hubs for each age grouping.

The site is adjacent to Jubilee Park, a 16-hectare (40 acre) outdoor city recreation area that provides multi-use sports fields, pathways, and landscaped gardens. The planning of the site incorporates a shared drop-off for the main entries of both school and recreation facility. There is also a separate drop-off area for the childcare centre and a parking lot for staff. A large bus loop for city and rural buses at the north end of the site allows easy access to play fields and entries into the individual Learning Communities.

Outdoor play areas and learning environments wrap around the north, west and south sides of the school. There are appropriate play structures for each age level. Play areas on the south side of the school are adjacent to the All-School Commons and main public entry.

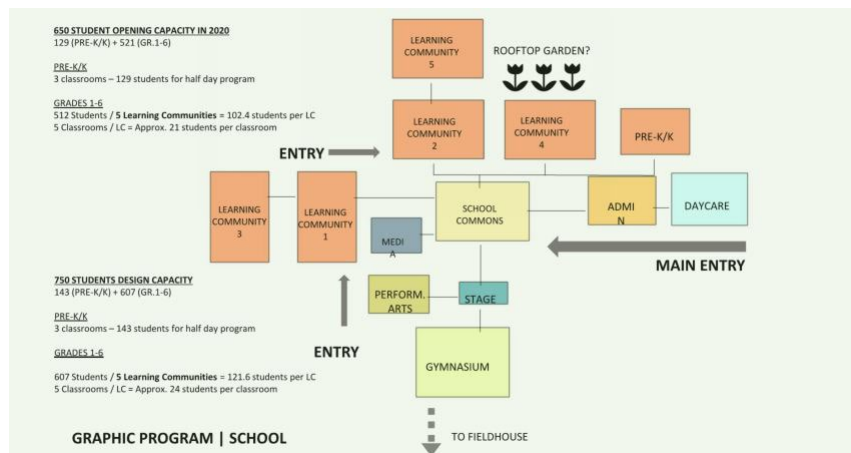


Accessibility, security, and access to natural light were key design drivers that ensure a welcoming and safe environment for building users.

The separate entrances, boot storage, and locker areas for each Learning Community were of great benefit during COVID restrictions, allowing administrators to keep smaller cohort groupings in an efficient and safe manner.

Each of the six learning communities flows into a larger central shared common space: the All-School Commons. It contains a performance stage, media centre and amphitheater seating for student assemblies, performances, and community meetings. The rear of the stage also opens to a large, light-filled gymnasium to provide additional flexibility.

The welcoming glazed front entry connects to the recreation and cultural centre with a series of built-in security measures designed to keep students safe during school hours. The entrance faces south, and fills the school with natural light and offers views to the outdoor play fields and learning spaces.





Scope of Work and Budget

The architectural team provided a full scope of work as the prime consultant for architectural and interior design services. The design process relied heavily on early predesign community and stakeholder engagement. The engagement established a shared vision for both joint use partners, and determined ways to celebrate each unique program and contribution to the facility as a central hub for the Weyburn community.

“Legacy Park Elementary School is a state of the art 21st century design that lends itself to countless possibilities for best practice in education and will continue to serve the community of Weyburn in so many ways. We have so much to be thankful for already and I can’t wait to be a part of many LPES celebrations to come.”

Andy K. Dobson, Manager of Facilities & Transportation, Southeast Cornerstone School Division

KEY STATS

Size
80,546 sq. ft.

Type
Pre-K to grade 6 school and daycare centre divided into distinct age-specific zones called learning communities

Student Capacity:
650 students

Completion:
2021

Budget:
\$24 million

Location:
Weyburn, SK

School and Community Engagement

Community Description

Access to education in rural Saskatchewan has changed dramatically. In 1947, the Province had a population of 836,000 and 5,192 school districts; serviced by thousands of small and one room schoolhouses.

By 1960, 8 out of 10 country schools had closed their doors. Small farms were slowly being swallowed by larger industrialized farming operations, birth rates had dropped, families were getting smaller, and the population was shifting into cities. Larger consolidated school divisions targeted the inefficiencies of small rural schools. In 2007 alone, due to decreasing student populations, 23 small rural schools were closed in Saskatchewan. Students from smaller communities were required to bus to schools in larger communities such as Weyburn, a small city in southern Saskatchewan.

Weyburn has a population of 11,000 and is located 75 km (46 miles) north of the American border and 116 km (71 miles) south of Regina, Saskatchewan's capital city. It is the largest inland grain port in Canada. Farming and oil and gas exploration are the largest sectors of the region's economy.

Stakeholders

- + Southeast Cornerstone School Public Division
- + City of Weyburn
- + Province of Saskatchewan Ministry of Education
- + Principals and Teachers at Haig, Queen Elizabeth, and Souris Schools
- + Students



Haig School



Queen Elizabeth School



Souris School

Legacy Park Elementary School

Challenges

The most significant challenges that the design team faced were to:

- 1. Design** a new facility that will support the integration of three existing schools within an innovative 21st century learning environment that also meets the needs of the school division. Serving as a replacement for three aging schools in Weyburn and the surrounding rural area, the design team was tasked with capturing the individual identities and culture of each student body and integrating elements of each into the new school.

Each of the three existing schools had their own rich history and culture. Parents from smaller rural communities and farms were concerned about sending their children by bus to an even larger, impersonal, consolidated city school. Weyburn community members were concerned about losing their small neighborhood schools with their tight-knit school spirit. The school division was concerned about safely sharing the site with a large city-owned recreation centre with joint-use amenities and programming.

- 2. Facilitate** a shared vision of excellence between school and city stakeholders that takes full advantage of the joint-use nature of the facility's site, design, and programming. Working with multiple stakeholders groups, each with their own diverse needs and priorities requires a collaborative and personalized approach. Each group needed to feel a sense of belonging in the final design and be provided with opportunities to both interact with other user groups and to showcase their own identity in the facility. Careful consideration of program schedules to maximize the use of shared amenities, security and access, as well as ensuring a sense of identity and ownership for both joint use partners were all challenges that the design team faced throughout the project.

School and Community Engagement

Available Assets to the Project

Park Partnership and Principals

Jubilee Park is situated on sixteen acres in the city's northeast and provides a variety of outdoor athletic and recreational amenities including multi-use soccer and football fields, six ball diamonds, and tennis courts located adjacent to the Weyburn Aquatic Centre and outdoor pool and splash park. The park is truly the heart of the community and a fitting site for a multigenerational joint-use facility designed to bring the residents of Weyburn together. Taking inspiration from the park setting, the design of both facilities combines rich City heritage with the vibrancy of the nearby park. Tyndall stone is used as a nod to the historic structures that once stood in the community with warm woods and the colours of the seasons.

From the onset of the project, the partnership between SECS and the City of Weyburn provided valuable opportunities to create a true shared facility that would benefit the greater community for generations. The benefit to each stakeholder group was evident and the voices at the table welcomed the synergies that presented themselves through this process. This partnership laid the foundation for a design solution that reflected the collaborative and respectful nature of the close-knit community.

The principals of the three schools facing closure were an integral part of the whole design process, from the first sketches through to the final solution. Having the right people at the table provided the design team with the insight and feedback required to ensure that the individual personalities and teaching styles of each school were reflected in the design of the new school. Through our early engagement with the principals, including detailed interviews, tours of each school, and a Character Mapping Pop quiz, we saw and heard that each school was already practicing 21st Century Learning principles within their own schools. The design for the new school provided an opportunity to build on a strong, existing foundation.



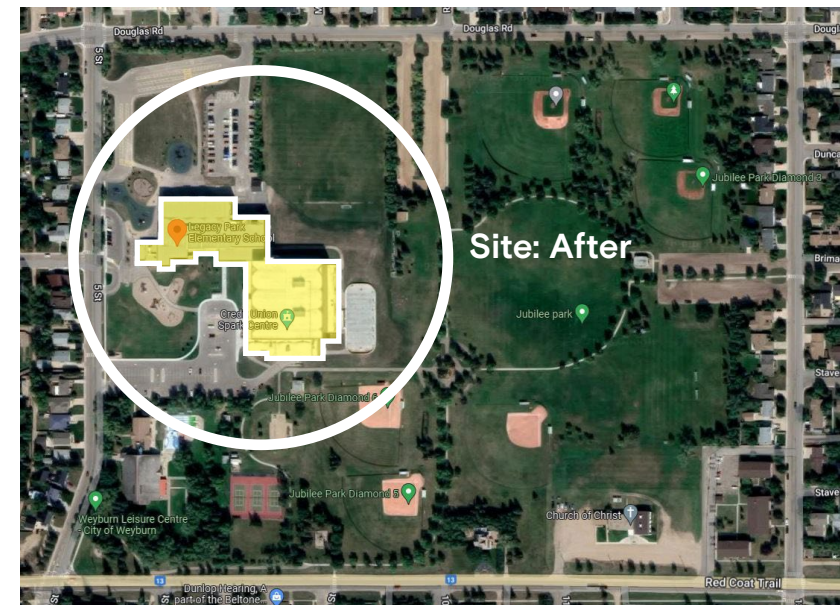
Principals of all three existing schools

Sustainability

Weyburn Elementary School incorporates a range of sustainability features to reduce its environmental footprint and lifecycle costs. These include:

Efficient site planning, energy efficient building footprint, high-performance building envelope; natural daylighting strategies including: high-performance glass and automatic shading devices, energy efficient and operable windows, LED lighting and occupancy sensors; in-floor hydronic heating system, central energy recovery system, high-efficiency boilers, digital energy management control system.

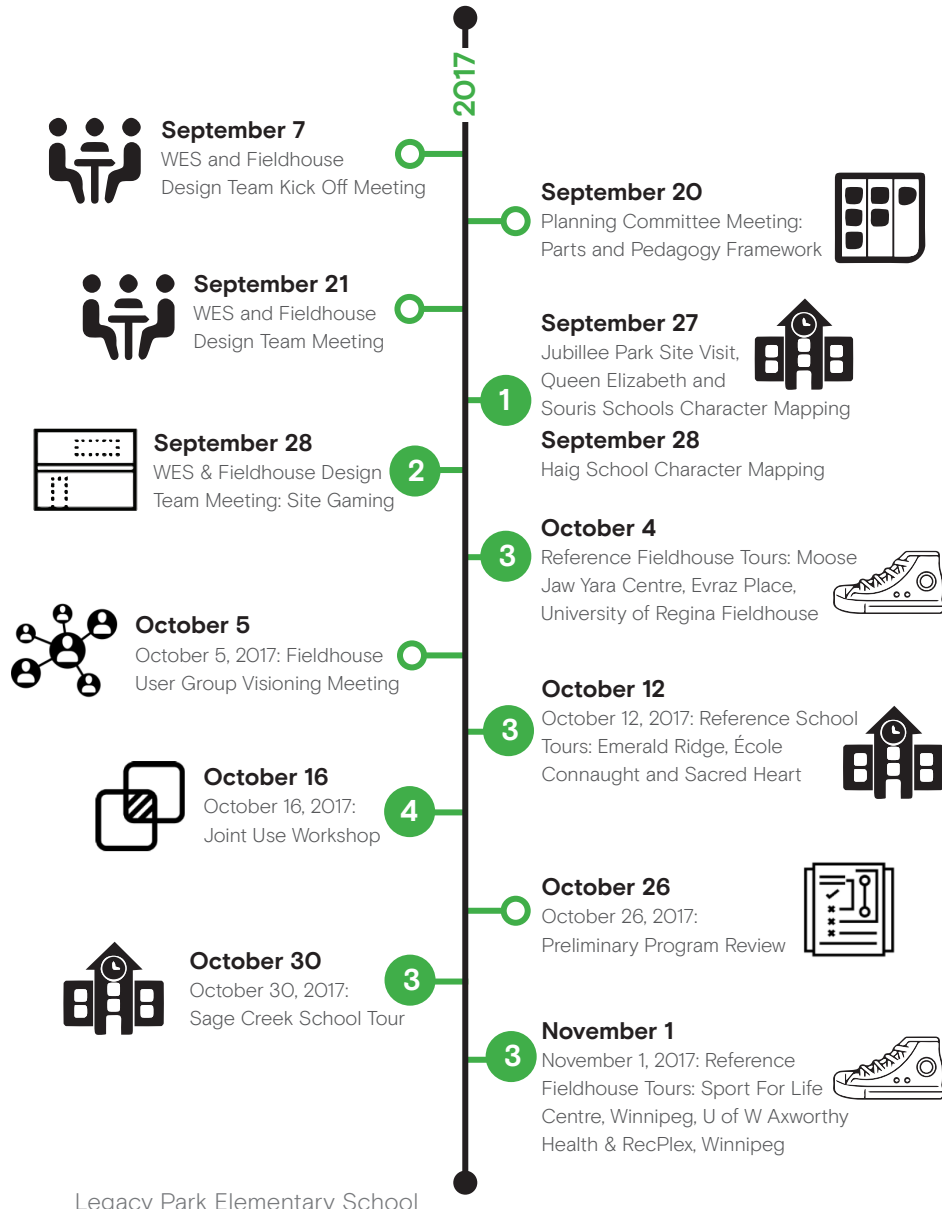
Legacy Park Elementary School



School and Community Engagement

The Value of the Process and Project to the Community

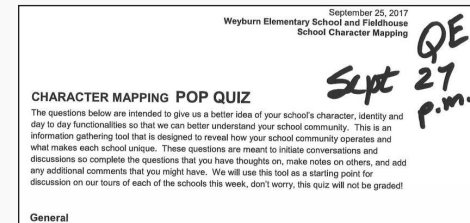
The consultation process aimed to listen and respond to the needs and concerns of the community it will serve. The passion and commitment of the stakeholders ultimately led to a truly unique 21st century learning environment that immerses students and visitors in the community's history. Its value to the community that shaped it will only grow in the years to come.



Legacy Park Elementary School

1. Character Mapping Pop Quiz

To understand the cultural and pedagogical nuances of the three existing schools, the design team undertook an audit to understand how each physical environment was being used. The principal and key staff members from each school were interviewed and asked to fill in a Character Mapping Pop Quiz. This gave the design team a better understanding of each school's day-to-day functioning, character, identity, unique elements, and how the physical parts of their existing school contributed to, or limited, their ability to deliver their curriculum.



2. Facility Design Working Group: School & Recreation Centre Site Gaming Exercise

Understanding the site from the eyes of the community is critical in determining how a building fits into the neighborhood. To learn this, we conducted a site "gaming" exercise. Stakeholders got to "play" with program blocks on the site to understand key site relationships. This exercise was fundamental in establishing the nature of the shared use arrangement between the school division and the city. The result was a campus style approach with a commitment to shared site access and parking that provides opportunities for all members of the community.



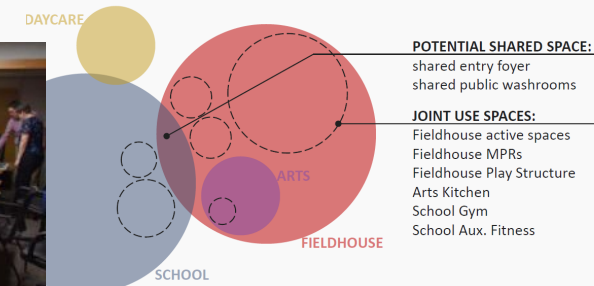
3. Precedent School & Fieldhouse Tours in Saskatchewan and Manitoba

Jubilee Park and Weyburn Aquatic Centre, Queen Elizabeth School, Weyburn, SK
Souris School, Weyburn, SK
Haig School, Weyburn, SK
Emerald Ridge School, Regina, SK
École Connaught Community School
Sacred Heart School, Regina, SK
Moose Jaw Yara Centre, Moose Jaw, SK
Evraz Place, Regina, SK
University of Regina Fieldhouse, Regina, SK
Sport for Life Centre, U of W Axworthy Health & RecPlex, Winnipeg, MB

4. School & Recreation Centre Joint-Use Workshop

The purpose of this workshop was to establish the vision, goals and spatial needs that would drive the design for the new joint use facility. The outcome was an increased awareness of each stakeholder group's spatial and functional needs. Additionally, the workshop identified areas of overlapping use, complimentary schedules, and potential areas of conflict.

Throughout the engagement process we focused on consistent communication and a collaborative approach. The team used a Response Matrix methodology to track and respond to all input and needs that were presented throughout the design process. This critical step closed the feedback loop and ensured that the final design was consistent with the vision and goals established at the onset of the project.





“The project team focused on stakeholder collaboration and engagement through the Division Planning Committee at the inaugural meeting, which resulted in touring previous projects, participation in several planning workshops and characterizing what 21st Century Learning meant to our system educators. This incited immediate enthusiasm and trust in the process and ultimately produced an environment of team cohesiveness to ensure our goals were achieved”

Andy Dobson, SECS

Educational Environment

Educational Vision and Goals

The design team facilitated a workshop where the School Planning Committee was asked to place stickers on a series of rubric charts conveying their priorities for levels of innovation in seven Pedagogical categories as well as twenty-one 'Parts' categories. The 'Parts' are the physical attributes of the educational environment. The results of the Workshop listed the following priorities for the design:

Top Pedagogical Priorities

1. Student Capacity

- The school integrates intellectual, spiritual, social and the physical health of students into learning
- The school integrates social, academic, emotional and institutional engagement

2. Teacher Collaboration

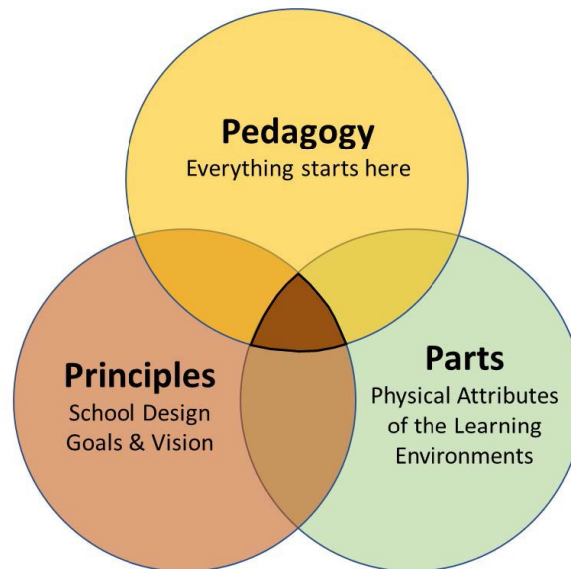
- Collaboration is an expectation of professional practice
- Teacher collaboration is driven by school data and evidence-based research
- Resources and supports are in place to support teacher collaboration and capacity building

3. 21st Century Competencies

- 21st Century competencies (critical thinking, communication, problem-solving, collaboration, managing information, cultural and global citizenship, creativity and innovation, personal growth and well-being) align with curricular outcomes

4. Assessment

- Educators use authentic assessment to communicate around student work and to enhance educational practice.



Top Priorities of the Educational Environment

1. Learning Spaces

- Learning spans several related and flexible spaces. These spaces support a variety of learning modalities, learning activities and can be flexibly configured.

2. Teacher Spaces

- Teachers model professional practice in dedicated workspaces. These spaces accommodate lesson planning, project development and collaborative teams.

3. Furniture

- Furniture is adjustable, movable, ergonomic and multi-use. Students have the option of different types of seating (soft and hard) and standing and sitting. Seating for students is located across learning spaces.

4. Entry / Community Spaces

- The main entry balances welcome and security. Welcome may include signature elements, community spaces, spaces for gathering, student work displays and transparency.
- The space incorporates areas where parents and community can engage with staff, students and one another in authentic ways.

5. Bathrooms / Health & Fitness

- Family-style bathrooms accommodate student diversity, safety and privacy. These bathrooms are located in small clusters adjacent to supervised spaces.
- The school encourages life-long healthy habits.

In order to maintain the “tight-knit” community feeling of the three smaller schools being replaced, the main planning goal was to create smaller “Learning Communities” (LCs) within the larger school context.

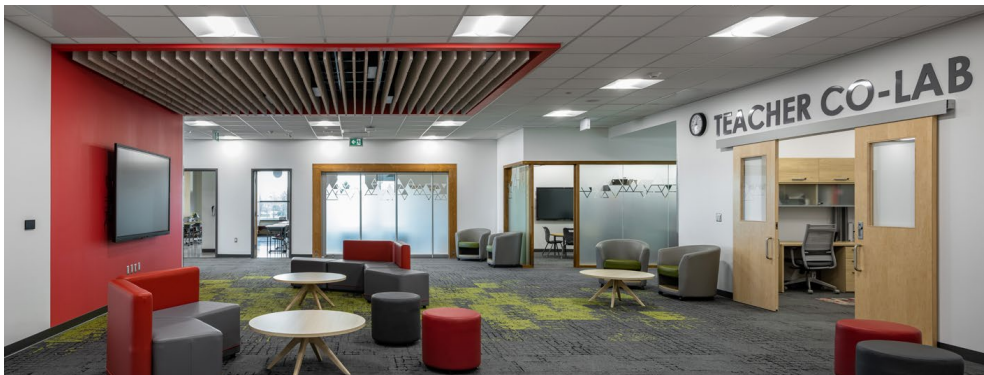
Educational Environment

An Environment that Supports the Curriculum

Each Learning Community (LC) has all the “parts” required to support a small learning group of 100 to 150 students and 4 to 6 teachers. It contains the core learning, teaching, and support spaces staff and students will use everyday.

The Learning Communities are located so that earlier grade students are on the Main Floor, with the older students on the Second Floor. This allows for the design of age specific features for each age group such as washrooms, handwashing areas, cubby storage and Student Services spaces.

Teacher Collaboration Spaces and decentralized Student Services are located within the Learning Communities to provide a strong connection between the staff and student spaces.



Legacy Park Elementary School



“We have six different learning communities within the school. They are all based off different grade levels, so that grade-alike classrooms can share an open learning common space. Each of these six different learning communities have their own colour, so it is landmarked for the students so they know exactly where to go. It is all for the ease of the students.”

Arlene Dobson, Principal at Legacy Park Elementary School



Educational Environment

The Learning Commons are the heart of the Learning Communities.

The classrooms within each Learning Community are designed to have varying degrees of connection to a central common space called the Learning Commons. One of the classrooms has the ability to open to the Learning Commons to expand the space for large group activities.

The Learning Commons is a flexible teaching and learning space that can be reconfigured to suit a range of activities from large group to individual learning. At the elementary level, the commons also include a “wet and messy” area complete with art sinks for all kinds of projects. Class art project or science project? Try setting up in the learning commons to make the most of the art sinks and extra area. Special Guest? Have them present at the teaching wall so that all the classes can join in! Reading time? Let students find their favourite nook in the learning commons. Kids getting restless? Allow students to spread out in the learning commons while maintaining connection to the larger classroom and continued supervision by a village of teachers.

Each Learning Community also contains two “Breakout Spaces” for resource assistance, small group meeting, and break-out group work as well as to accommodate programs and resources to support the student services staff.

Each Learning Community also contains individual washrooms, teacher collaboration spaces to accommodate 6 staff members, teacher storage, and space for AV storage.

The washrooms in each Learning Community are designed as individual home-like water closets with full height partitions. The lavatory area on the Main Floor between LC-1 and LC-2 is a shared space between the two Learning Communities and provides a large central location creating a visual and physical connection for the staff and students of both Learning Communities. On the Second Floor, the individual washrooms contain a toilet and a sink within each room which allows for better privacy for the older students.



“We wanted to make sure that students had full privacy when they were using the washroom and individual privacy, and then we wanted to have an open area where, for our little kids, that they were able to wash their hands, et cetera, come out and that’s clear sightlines for us and just keep the safety piece at the top of the list with our students. Then for upper grades, obviously we wanted to have more privacy with the gender-neutral washrooms. So sinks are built right in with the toilets, so fully functional washroom, all independent on its own.”

Arlene Dobson, Principal at Legacy Park Elementary School

Educational Environment

Each Learning Community has its own access to the great outdoors.

Separate and distinct entries into each Learning Community helps each student identify with their own learning community and keeps cohorts together. Each entry has its own dedicated vestibule with boot racks and convenient access to lockers or cubbies. They provide teachers with a direct and convenient way to bring students outside with minimal disruption to the rest of the school. It encourages a connection to the outdoors and opportunities for learning and fun.

The Learning Communities are organized so there is a direct connection to a central, shared “All School Commons” that is the heart of the school.

The central All School Commons is a two-storey space that is located at the heart of the school and provides a large, naturally lit space that is directly connected to the school Media Centre, Main Entry and Gymnasium. The design of the Commons is focused around a large amphitheater-style stair that serves as the central spine of the school, connecting the main and second level commons spaces and flooded with natural light from the expanse of glazing on the South elevation as well as a linear skylight that spans the length of the main school circulation corridor.

The amphitheater stair is designed as the central feature of the school and provides a shared gathering place for students of all age groups. The MPR/Stage, raised above the Main Floor elevation serves as a platform that is designed with two operable partitions that open either to the Gymnasium or the main floor All School Commons. This flexibility allows for a variety of different performance, presentations or gathering styles and events.

Unlike a traditional library, the Media Centre is an open area at the heart of the school. Centrally located on the main floor just off of the all school commons, with plentiful natural light, the Media Centre is a welcoming place for students, visitors, and staff to visit throughout the day. Mobile bookshelves can be wheeled wherever they are needed most, and furniture can be reconfigured to create a multitude of learning environments.



Educational Environment

The environment supports a variety of learning and teaching styles

Sometimes the best spot to learn and think is a cozy nook

Everyone has different preferences and needs when it comes to learning environments. Some individuals thrive in open spaces surrounded by people. Others prefer quiet, personal spaces. The “nest” and “landing” spaces provide another option for learners overlooking the commons. Cozy nooks adjacent to the Media Centre are visually connected with the rest of the school, but provide a more intimate space for learning. Whether it is a comfortable place to read or play, these spaces can be used by students and staff alike.

The design allows for ample break-out and collaboration spaces for both students and teachers. Each Learning Community has breakout and small group rooms that can be used by students for self-directed work or by specialized support workers and teachers for individual or small group activities and evaluation. Each space provides a balance of stimulating and quiet focus environments for students. Teachers in each learning community have individual professional workstations in a centralized space.

The All School Commons and amphitheater provide a special presentation and performance space for the school and community, and are also well-used as a quiet group break-out space. The open Media Centre is the heart of the school. It shares the natural light along the south facing glass of the All School Commons, and offers a variety of furniture and seating types including a series of quiet “cave” spaces below the amphitheater stair, a long bench along the glass and a small stepped stage for group reading time. The second floor of the Commons contains a variety of spaces to gather and pause along the sun filled central corridor with light streaming from the skylight above. The project room at the end of the main corridor opens to allow the creative activity of the space to flow out into the common space where student activities can be shared and celebrated.

In keeping with the strong music and band programs at the former schools, the Performing Arts Room has a prominent position in the plan. Centrally located on the second floor, it overlooks the All School Commons and expresses itself as a bright green box with playful windows adjacent to the south main entry of the school.

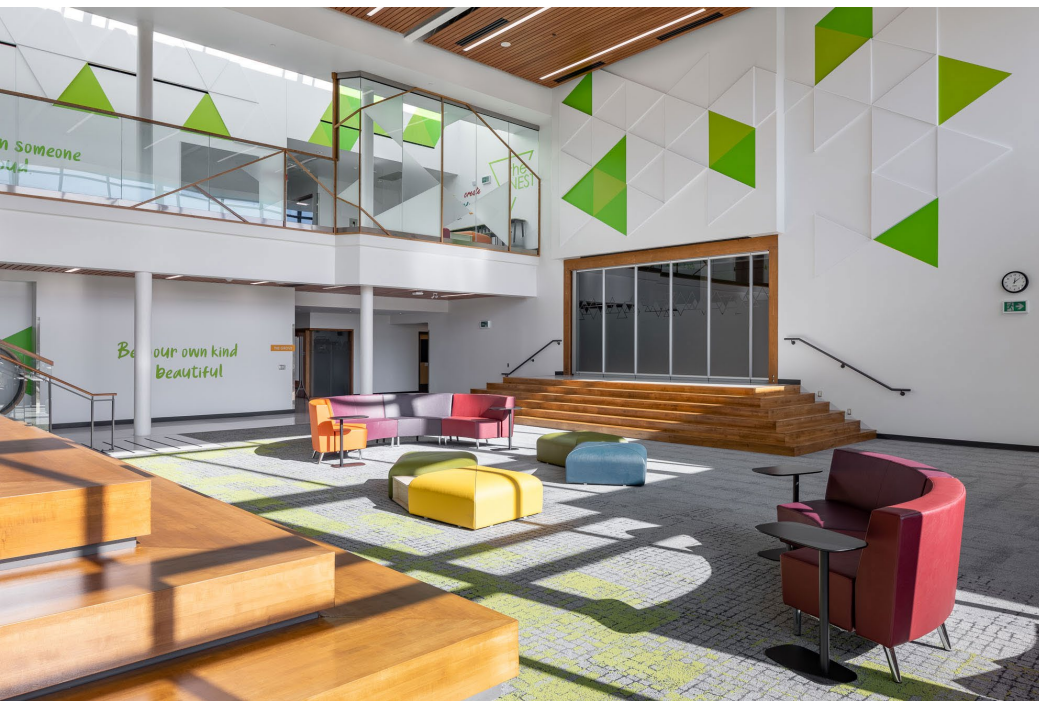


Educational Environment

Adaptability and Flexibility

Learning modalities and teaching methodologies vary greatly and bringing together three unique school communities added another layer of complexity to this design challenge. We learned that each school community had their own ways of creating 21st Century learning environments within their schools despite the limitations of their existing schools. It was important that the new school was designed with a wide range of flexible learning environments to suite the needs of the students and teachers. Large glazed operable walls connect one classroom in each Learning Community to the commons space, which allows teachers to expand their spaces when needed. Glazing between learning environments allows for students and staff to feel connected to each other and fosters a sense of community. Frosting is applied strategically throughout the interior glazing in the school to balance security and transparency.

The Multipurpose space has also been designed adjacent to both the Gym and the All School Commons with the ability to open completely to either side. This provides the flexibility to have a performance or assembly in either space. During a large community event, all three spaces can be opened to each other and used. The Gym and MPR space can be accessed by the community independently as a meeting or fitness space in itself, with direct access to the shared community kitchen and Credit Union Spark Centre. Early stakeholder engagement with both the school division and City of Weyburn revealed the opportunity for the students to make use of the large indoor field during the cold winter days at a time when the community attendance was low. Today you can often see the large indoor field filled with young kids enjoying a game of soccer on a cold Saskatchewan January day.



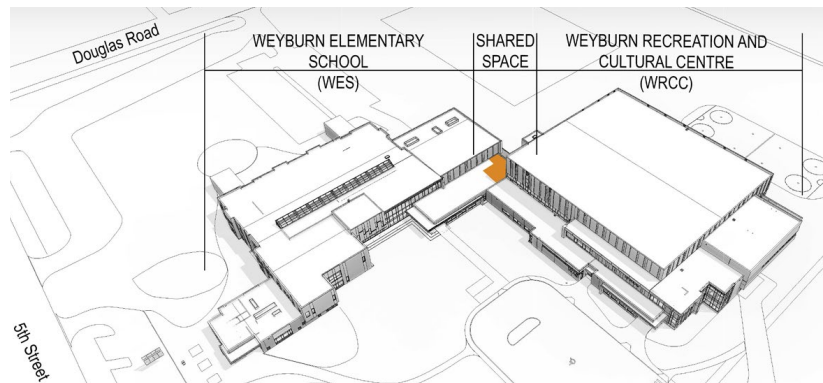
Physical Environment

Legacy Park Elementary School and the Credit Union Spark Centre create a welcoming community campus in the heart of Weyburn's Jubilee Park. Community access and parking for both facilities is located along 5th Street. Each has their own separate entries and identities within a consistent and unified architectural expression. The school's entry is along the South facing façade and is anchored by integrated tiered amphitheater seating that faces out to the community under the large green box of the music room that sits above like a tree canopy.

The driving theme for architectural and interior design development was to create a connection between Legacy Park Elementary and the natural elements of the adjacent Jubilee Park. The central design concept is to present the school as part of the park landscape.

The theme is woven throughout all aspects of the design and is reinforced by: large expansive glazing on the South façade of the building that connects the All School Commons and Media Centre to the outdoor common space, natural materials selections on both the exterior and interior of the school, colour selections throughout the school as well as design themes that permeate through the school as a whole. Exterior playfields and student Learning Community entries are located on the North and East sides of the school, adjacent the large play area and outdoor classroom which is designed to suit the skills and development of each age group uniquely. The playful green window boxes punctuate the façade of the classroom wings like leaves on a tree. From the interior looking out, each classroom has a cozy reading nook with build in benches and bookcases that overlooks the site like a treehouse.

Ultimately, the school itself became as integral to the landscape as a tree in a park.



Legacy Park Elementary School



Physical Environment



Main Floor

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Flexible Classroom | 12. All School Commons |
| 2. Learning Community Commons | 13. Amphitheater Stair |
| 3. Small Group/Breakout Space | 14. Commons Stage |
| 4. Gender Inclusive/Individual Washrooms | 15. MPR/Stage |
| 5. Teacher Storage | 16. Early Childhood Learning Centre |
| 6. Learning Community Entries, Bootrooms and Lockers | 17. Gymnasium |
| 7. Teacher Collaboration Spaces | 18. Reception/Administration |
| 8. Bootrooms | 19. Shared Community Space/Kitchen/Washrooms |
| 9. Pre-K/Kindergarten Rooms | 20. Credit Union Spark Centre - Recreation/Cultural Centre |
| 10. Early Years Learning Community Commons | 21. Sensory Room |
| 11. Media Centre/Library | 22. Student Services |
| | 23. Outdoor Amphitheatre Seating |

Physical Environment



Physical Environment

Community Fit

The design for Legacy Park Elementary School is a direct result of the extensive community consultation process where the building's overall fit in the neighbourhood was identified early as a key design driver that stakeholders were very passionate about. Site relationships, massing and the overall design aim to celebrate the unique personalities of the three school communities along with the prominent location of the school within a mature city park has served for years as gathering place for the residents of Weyburn. The collaborative process that underpinned the design of this facility has given the opportunity for members of the community of all ages, to feel a sense of belonging, connection and ownership.

A School that Inspires and Motivates

Students and teachers love the variety of small nooks, flexible spaces, project studios and wet and messy areas that encourage engagement and excitement in the learning process. The building symbolizes a union of multiple generations of Weyburn residents while paying homage to unique spirit and indemnity of its users. The school serves as a versatile community hub, with public access to the commons space after school hours, and school access to the public recreation spaces. It is also a popular location for PD days and other school administration events. The school also has an early learning centre integrated into the school which creates an easy transition for young students as they enter kindergarten.

One of the project's key design drivers was to establish a welcoming, inclusive and accessible space in where students, teachers, and parents feel invited and valued. To achieve this, the design of Legacy Park Elementary School provides an abundance of welcoming and stimulating learning and gathering spaces that create a sense of both autonomy and community. As you enter the school, the All School Commons and Media Centre, with full height curtain wall glazing, are filled with daylight and views to the outdoors. Seating along the glass on both the interior and exterior blurs the line between interior and exterior spaces. The daylight pouring in from the skylight above draws your eye to the second floor where there are opportunities for students to comfortably gather in small groups or as individuals to enjoy the bright, airy space and watch the activity below and outside. Even during the harshest, coldest, shortest winter days, a connection to the natural world is maintained and celebrated.



“The design of this school, with all the architectural features that has been built in, is based off a ‘school within a park’ and bringing the outside inside; Even in the design features of the school itself, there is lots of wood, natural pieces, and even the carpet looks like cobblestone.”

Arlene Dobson, Principal at Legacy Park Elementary School

Results of the Process & Project

Achieving Educational Goals and Objectives

The project achieves the educational goals and objectives of the Southeast Cornerstone School Division through 21st Century Learning Principles in the following ways:

1. Flexible Teaching Arrangements and Instructional Grouping

The school is organized into five Learning Communities (LCs), that act as a home base for approximately 100-150 students. Each Learning Community is organized by age group. A large glazed operable wall connects one classroom in each Learning Community with the commons space which allow teachers to expand their space if desired. Other important design elements include home-like washrooms, teacher collaboration spaces, wet and messy areas, and media and resource areas dedicated to each Learning Community.

2. Teacher Collaboration

Teachers in each Learning Community have individual professional workstations in a centralized teacher collaboration space. To make these desirable places to work together, they are positioned at the heart of each learning community and are connected to a shared teacher storage area and private staff washroom. The room includes both individual workstations and a central group work and meeting table.

3. Interdisciplinary and Inquiry-Based Teaching and Learning

Each Learning Community has breakout and small group rooms that can be used by students for self-directed work or by specialized support workers and teachers for individual or small group activities and evaluation. Each space provides a stimulating environment for students.

4. Inclusive Practices

The new school creates interesting and varied learning spaces to accommodate all teaching styles and student learning modalities.



Legacy Park Elementary School

Achieving Community Goals – Project Outcomes

1. Better education for students

- a. Modernization of facilities and increased flexibility for new teaching and learning innovations creating a better learning environment for all students
- b. Ability to adapt to modern technology
- c. Healthy environment for students
- d. Access to adjacent green space and amenities

2. Operational Efficiency and Investment

- a. More energy efficient facility operation for both SECPD and the City of Weyburn
- b. Centralization and amalgamation of administration and teaching
- c. Bus loop offer safe and efficient transportation to all schools in Weyburn
- d. Investment in new infrastructure meeting current codes, standards and responsible maintenance in lieu of managing non-functional aged buildings

3. Shared and Joint Use Facilities

- a. Creating relationships with SECPD, Ministry of Education, Early Learning, and City of Weyburn to provide added value
- b. Multi-Generational – The facility is designed to invite and intermix users of all ages and interests.

Results of the Process & Project

Unintended Results and Achievements

The unintended results of the design for Legacy Park Elementary School came months after it opened to welcome students in September 2021. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic introduced new challenges for public facilities, particularly schools. However, as students and teachers made their way back into the classrooms, the 21st Century Learning design principles implemented in the design provided the right “toolbox” needed to help create a safe and healthy environment such as:

Flexible instructional spaces: Reconfigure flex spaces to accommodate smaller teaching groups, reducing the number of students in classrooms. Using every other desk may cut your capacity in half or more. Making use of breakout spaces, learning commons and project rooms as dedicated seating areas can increase the capacity for students while maintaining physical distancing.

Learning Communities: Learning communities scale down large student populations and provide a more home-like environment for students. Classrooms are set up with flexible, movable furniture arrangements:

- + Separate entrances and boot rooms which reduce the congestion at high traffic times.
- + Teacher collaboration rooms that provide smaller workspaces for 5-6 teachers as opposed to a larger centralized teacher workroom
- + Library book carts, laptop carts and movable science lab stations which allow the resources traditionally dedicated to larger spaces like computer rooms, libraries, and science rooms to be used within a learning community with a smaller group of students.
- + Home-like washrooms dedicated to each Learning Community with open sinks and hand washing stations provide a high level of transparency, making cleanliness and personal hygiene visible. They also allow for better distancing for students when lining up to wash hands and prevent larger groups of students from gathering in enclosed washrooms. Incorporating hand sanitizing stations and hand wash stations at entries to each Learning Community (as well as throughout the school) provides a visual reminder to ensure that hands are kept clean, creating good hygiene habits.

Fresh air, natural ventilation, and daylight: A fundamental principle in 21st Century learning environments. Access to daylight and views to the outdoors are proven to improve the overall health and well-being of students and teachers. Opportunities for visual relief allows the brain to take breaks from focused tasks and screen time, connecting us to our natural surroundings. Outdoor Learning Environments such as outdoor classrooms and active learning landscapes can all provide opportunities for flexible instruction that allows for greater physical distancing in an open-air environment.

HVAC and humidity control: Radiant floor heating and cooling systems, as well as displacement ventilation, can provide a cleaner approach to heating, ventilation, and cooling systems. Both systems take advantage of the natural buoyancy of air, creating convection air currents within a space. This provides a more comfortable thermal environment for users.

