



STEVENSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
BELLEVUE SCHOOL DISTRICT ESCUELA PRIMARIA



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STEVENSON
ESCUELA PRIMARIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

14220

SCHOOL COMMUNITY & ENGAGEMENT

Stevenson is designed to address a unique challenge this country is confronted with in many schools today. The social demographics and transient immigrant student population of Stevenson created unique learning challenges. These real needs were clear from the start of the project and deserved the utmost attention.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Stevenson Elementary has been a unique school within Bellevue School District for a long time. Its location in the central-east part of city serves a richly diverse community that, unknown to many, struggles with poverty and languages barriers.

While the Bellevue School District's overall performance has been consistently excellent for many years, Stevenson's performance is improving. Similarly, while the Bellevue School District's overall economic demographics are strong, Stevenson's are improving.

At the first meeting for the educational specifications with members of the community and the steering design committee, we found a typical community striving to improve their lives and wanting to build the best school for their kids. Their focus was on creating a sense of belonging and opportunity for all the kids.

What we saw and heard in our first meetings, was the soul and fabric of immigrant families

coming to this country to achieve a better life for themselves and their children. The American Dream! Why not!

These immigrant families were largely composed of families from India (included six dialects) and Hispanic heritages. Many families were struggling with English as a second language, but were not deterred to DREAM.

CHALLENGES

Imagine... family members unable to speak the language of the teacher, students with bright eyes and a desire to learn everyday confronted with a passionate teacher who does not speak his or her language, and a Specialist trying to navigate the translations in the classroom or small breakout sessions to make sure each student is connected to their teacher.

Imagine... a small team of specialists needing to provide access to more than 30 languages to make sure the students understand the basic concepts of K-5 curriculum.

Imagine... A school district trying to provide funding for language support as the demographics shift each year.

Imagine... grade sizes shifting by entire classrooms year to year and over a quarter of the students not attending a full year in the same school.

Imagine... if nearly half the families come from economic demographics in need.

Imagine... Homeless families sending their kids to school every morning after cleaning their kids in a Safeway bathroom. This was a lesson of humanity and a reality check that Equity is a real challenge in Bellevue like any other district.

Understanding these challenges, we started a to work to fully understand their NEEDS and GOALS with an inclusive process and with the design steering committee composed of teachers, parents, principal, and the community.

We kept hearing the new school needed to celebrate community and it needed to include support family connections. These components promoted the primary goal of providing a positive, welcoming environment to offer the students and families the recognition and support necessary to flourish.

The New Stevenson Elementary needed to be better than what they had and provide places to gather and learn indoors and outdoors. It had to celebrate community and inspire kids to achieve their dreams.

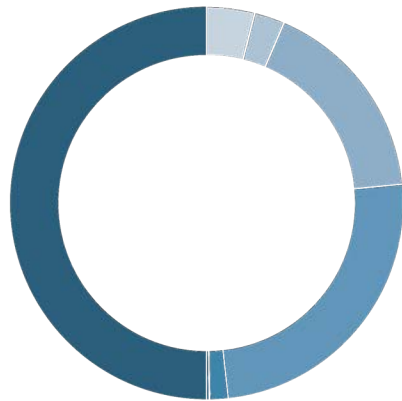
ENROLLMENT

The program requires the replacement of the existing school with a present student population of about 550 students. The new Stevenson Elementary program will have the capacity of 650 students.

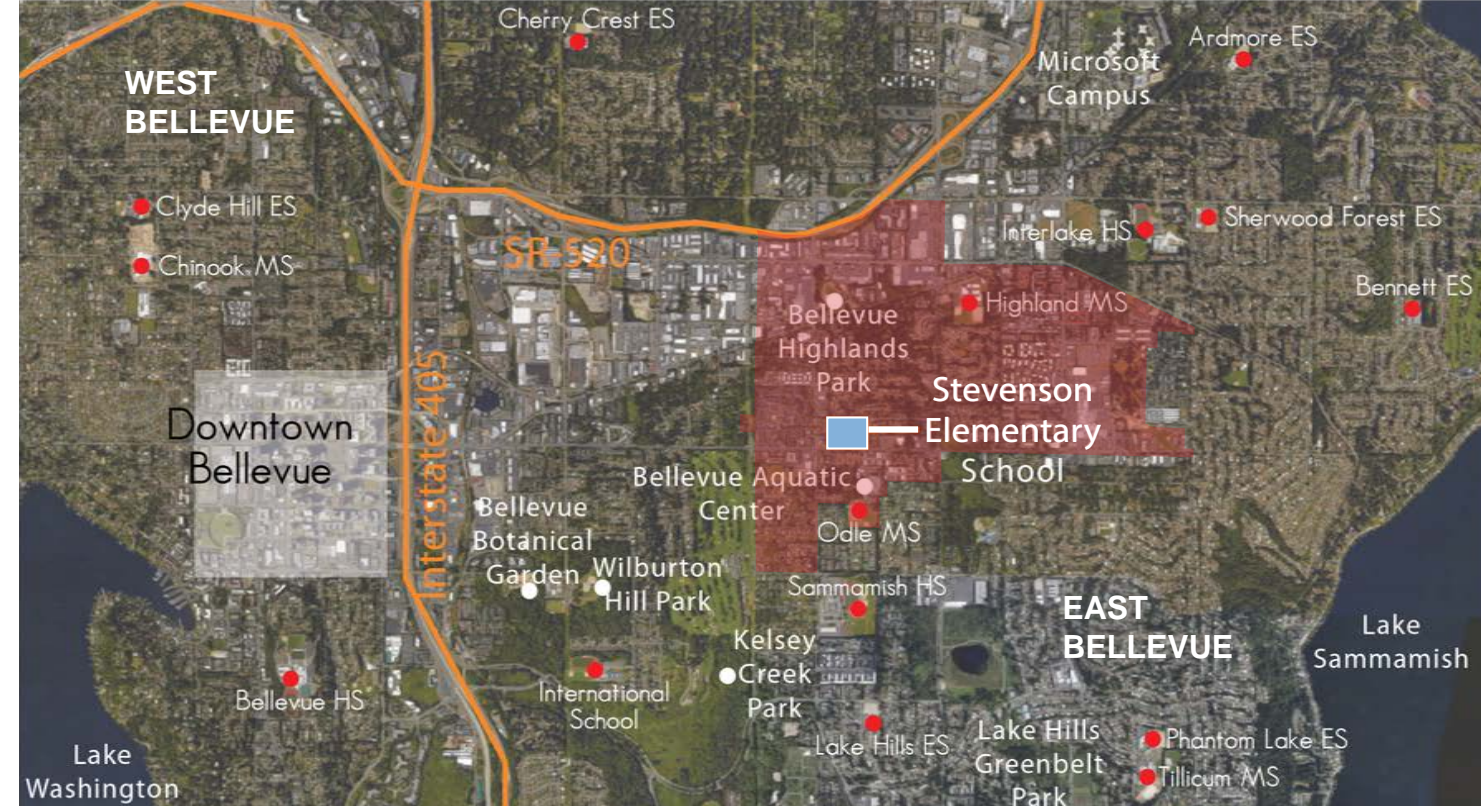
CULTURE

We understand that the existing Stevenson Elementary School was composed of 51% Asia, 32% Hispanic and 4% Multi Ethnic with 77% of all students having a first language other than English. It also included a Spanish Dual Language instructional program.

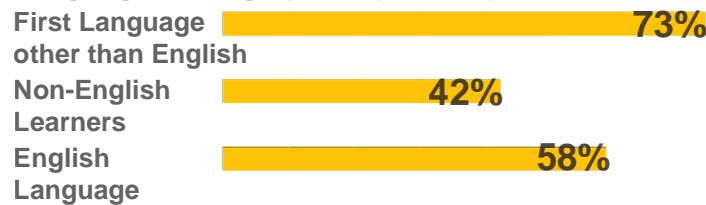
Stevensons Racial Demographics (2019-20 School Year)



- Asian 49.5%
- Hispanic 34%
- White 7.9%
- Black 5%
- Two or More Races 3%
- Pacific Islander 0.4%
- Native American 0.1%

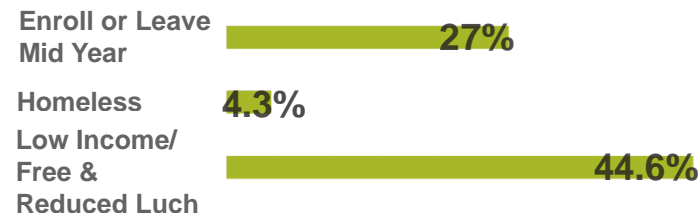


Language Demographics (2018-19)

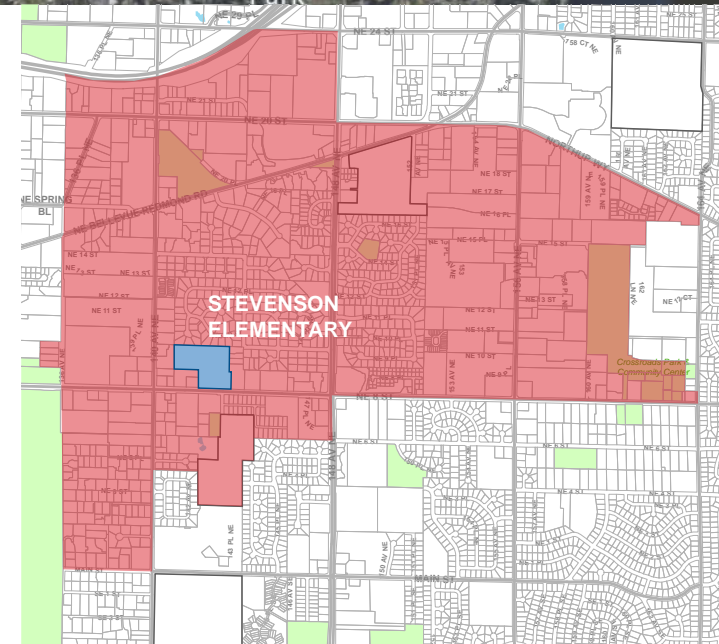


33 Total Languages Spoken

Economic and Mobility Data (2018-19)



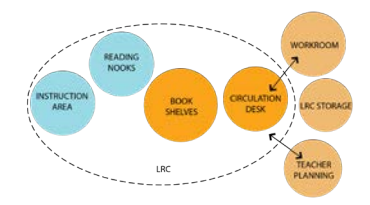
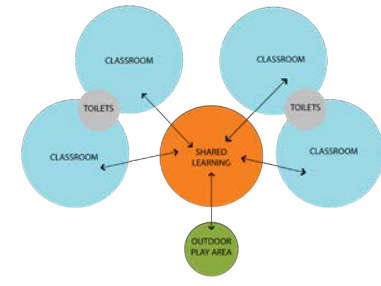
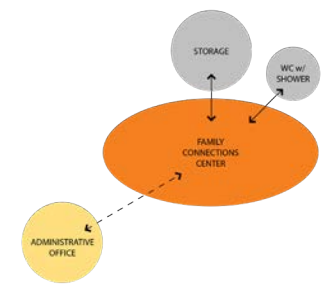
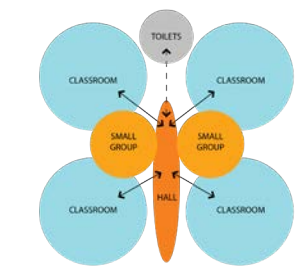
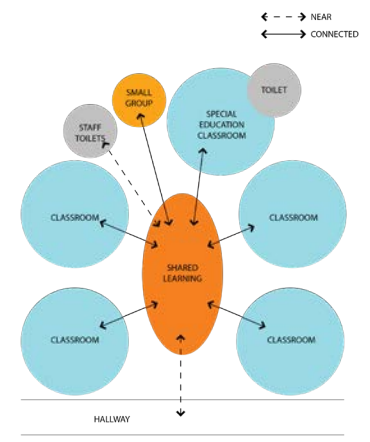
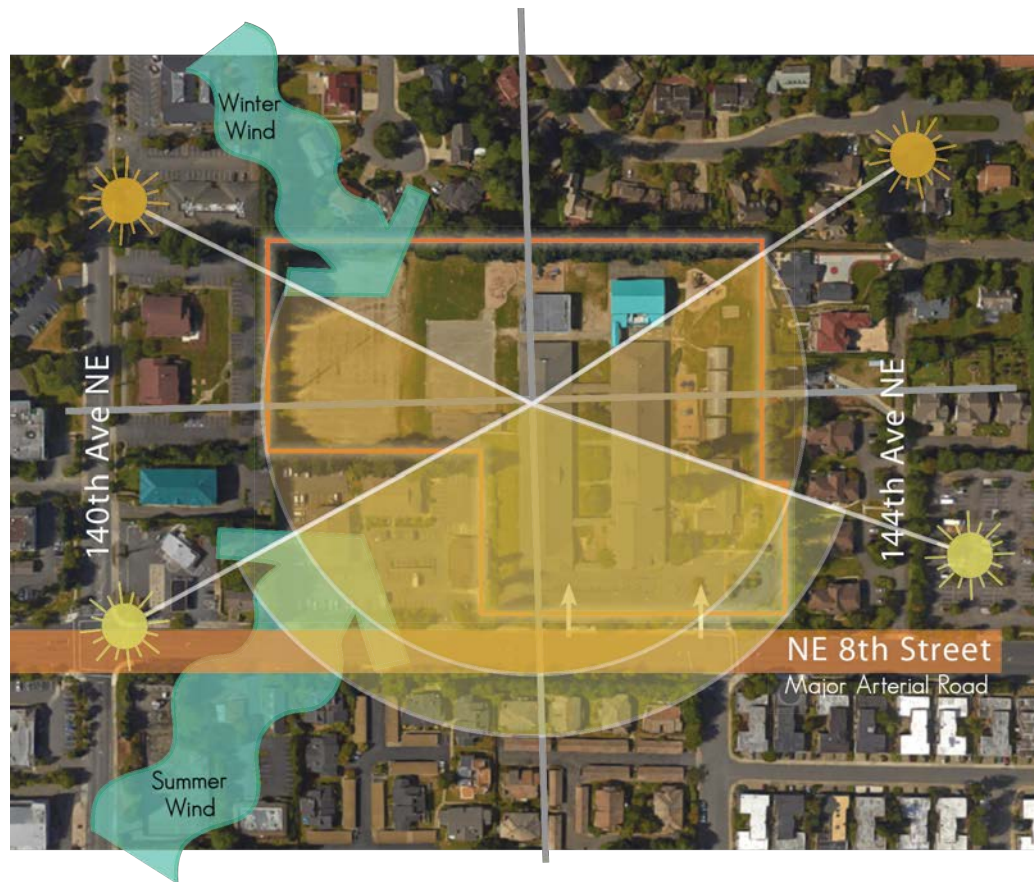
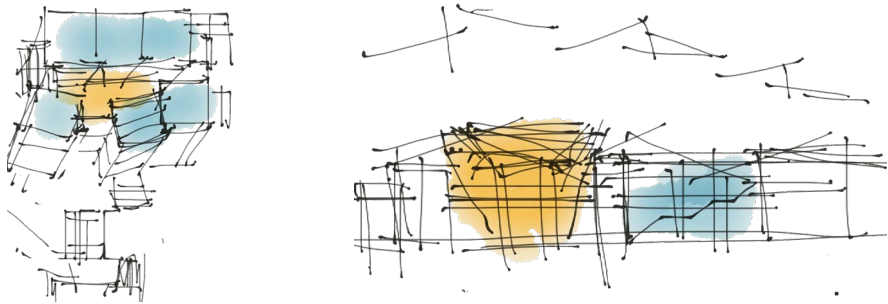
Attendance (2018-19)



- Stevenson Elementary
- Stevenson Elementary Attendance Boundary

PLANNING PROCESS

The program requires the complete redevelopment of the site to support the new school. The organization of the key spaces was defined by several key needs. A mix of traditional and small group/shared instruction with year to year flexibility, specialty support staff pushing in to the classrooms to better support students and keep them connected to their peers, and creating a shared, equal experience to promote community and eliminate feelings of isolation.



TEAM WORK

The team discussed the possible site locations of the major programmatic components including the academic, public, and specialty portions of the building, the parking and drive loop, and the playgrounds and fields. After reviewing a number of different options the committee stated they saw more positives and less negatives with the option of locating the parking/bus loop/parent loop at the south end of the site facing the street, the play fields at the west end of the site and the building in the center north portion of the site.

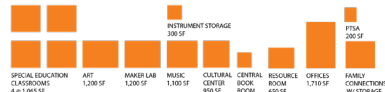


Program Blocks

General Instruction



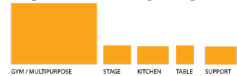
Specialty Instruction



Learning Resources



Gym/ Multipurpose



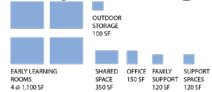
Main Office/ Administrator



Building Services



Early Learning Program



TEAM DISCUSSION

The team discussed the breakdown of the overall building components from the previous exercise into the individual spaces that compose the school. We reviewed the layout of each individual area - gym, administration, library, specialty staff resources, and primary classrooms - and discussed the pros and cons of numerous layout options. They reviewed the summary of the teacher interviews and how these interviews impacted the program and room relationships.

The group discussed the pros and cons, particular to Stevenson, with classroom layouts such as pod and linear arrangements. The committee concluded that, due to the unpredictable nature of Stevenson's classroom allocation per grade, pods could hinder collaboration and might lead to isolation. A linear hallway arrangement was dismissed as too static and lacking space for collaboration. The committee asked the team to test layouts that provided both the flexibility of classroom programming (accomplished by the linear concept) while maintaining the collaborative feel of the pod layouts. The result was a zonal approach with shared learning areas organized along a shared spine.



EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Celebrating Community and Cultural Diversity

Stevenson is a study of how to celebrate cultural diversity with the fusion of Language and Culture connecting to its Community.

THE VISION

Stevenson Elementary emerges from the idea of creating a heart, the *Cultural Center* embraced by the *Music, Art, Science and Family Connections* with *Bridges to Knowledge* connecting the public Main Entry area to the Academic World.

The Cultural Center and the interior Patio bring the Stevenson Community together to celebrate its Diversity. It also vertically connects the upper spaces: Learning Resource Center to the west and to the east the Resource classroom supported by a team of counselors, therapists, and specialists to help each student feel part of the school community.

The Learning Resource Center connects to the city skyline and Olympic Mountains while introducing geography to the students through murals on the walls and windows.

The Bridges to Knowledge introduce the students to an understanding of how the building was built and functions and to the continual development of human knowledge in the form of selected Nobel Prize winners related to the four fundamental areas of Knowledge: Science, Literature, Peace, and Medicine.

Just as the Bridges to Knowledge use graphics and language to inspire each student to achieve their dreams, the Family Connections presence within the Cultural Center supports the everyday needs of students and families in need to achieve the same goal.

FLEXIBLE & ADAPTABLE SPACES

From the start of the planning process, we heard the need for special space that could function for dancing, lecturing, community gathering, music concerts, art exhibits, robotics, science demonstrations, and afterhours childcare activities. The physical relationship between the Flexible and Adaptable nature of the Cultural Center supported by the spaces around it reinforces the fundamental nature of these functions as part of culture and education.

LEARNING & NATURAL LIGHT

Stevenson invites Light to enter in ways that surprise, even for us. We believe this essential element, if manipulated and articulated with spirit, enhances the experience of learning translating into knowledge. At Stevenson natural lighting focuses on quality and intensity in relation to each space. Selective shading devices provide diffused light for the primary classroom functions while the classroom bay windows create distinctly lit pockets.

The play of light from diffuse to vibrant activates the spaces and brings ample light, even for the classrooms on the north looking out on the 60-foot wall of trees.

KNOWLEDGE & THE EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING

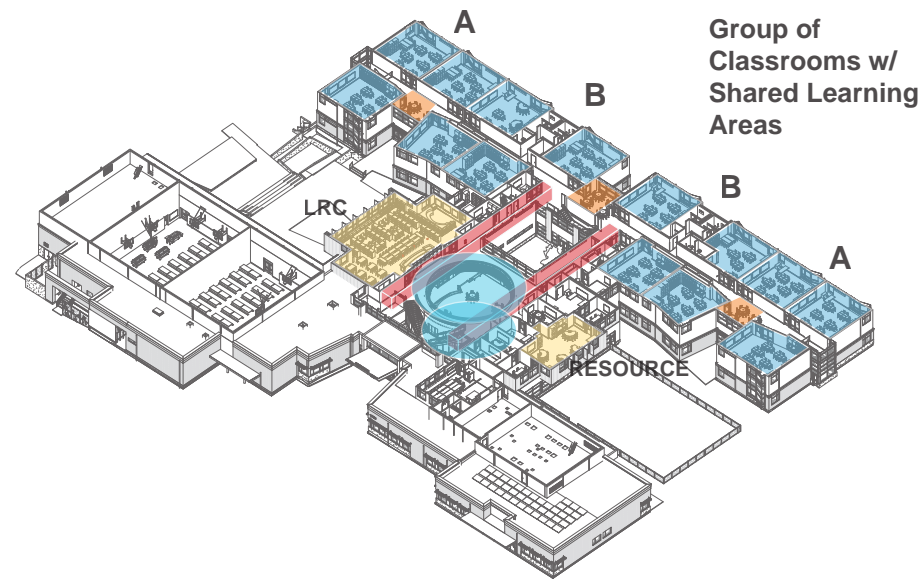
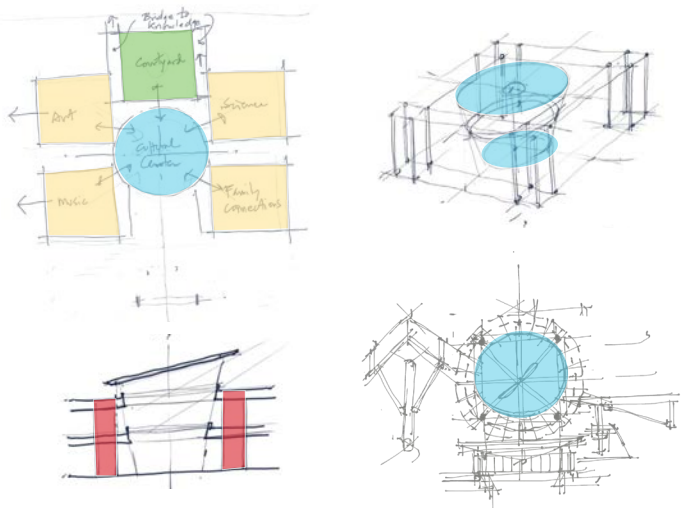
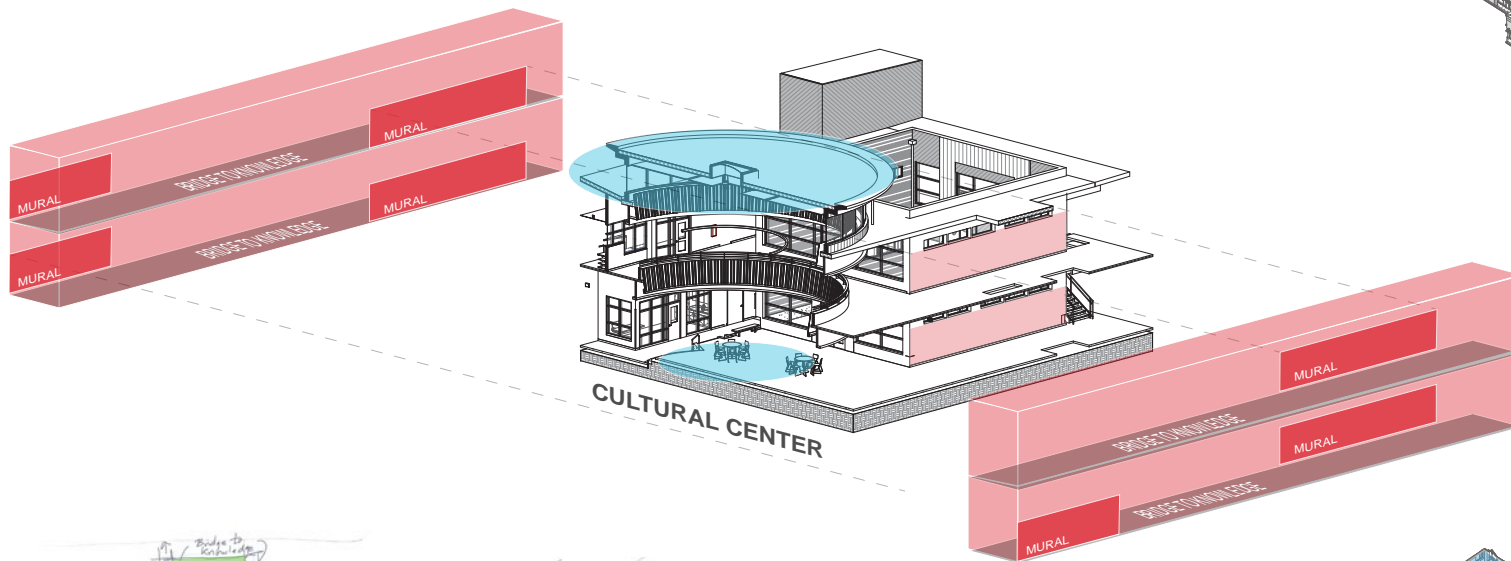
Stevenson originated from the need of small and flexible learning communities and the idea of *Indoor-Outdoor Learning*. At Stevenson this is achieved by a flow of spaces starting from the Bridges to Knowledge. Each day students experience the range of human achievements before they arrive to their learning communities in the academic world.

The Experience of Learning at Stevenson starts in small Learning Communities composed of four to five classrooms sharing and extended learning area

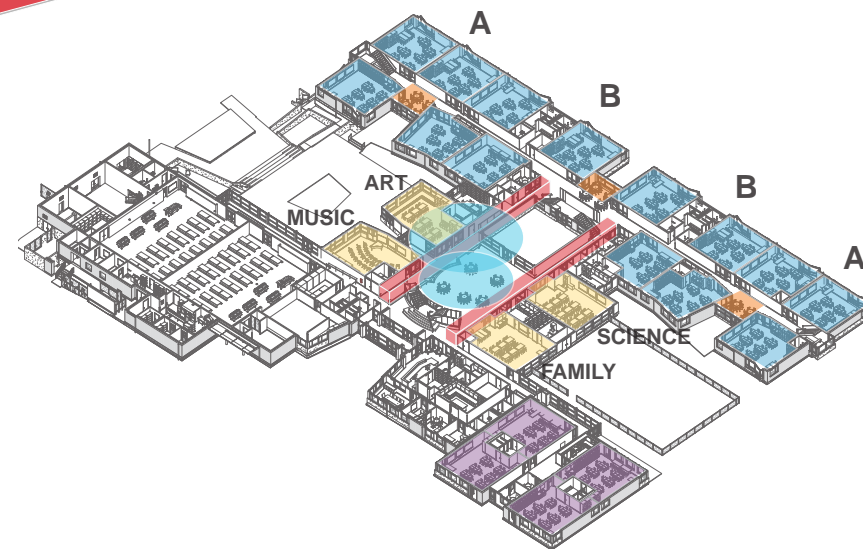
The *Shared Learning* areas connect classrooms to achieve project based learning and other teaching modalities. They also each connect to an exterior shared space to offer the opportunity of outdoor & indoor leaning in the school.

Knowledge grows through the experience of learning. The architecture of Stevenson creates a backdrop to support this experience for a diverse group of people, languages, and cultures.

Bridge to Knowledge
and a
Heart to connect to
a wider
COMMUNITY



- Academic Classrooms
- ShareLearning Area
- ELC
- LRC, Resource, Art, Music, Science & Family Connections
- Cultural Center
- Bridges to Knowledge
- Murals





“The school was designed with learning spaces that not only meet our teaching and learning needs, but also reflect the culture of the diverse community at Stevenson. Our Cultural Center is bright and vibrant and creates an opportunity for students and families to create community.” - Anissa Bashey, Principal, Stevenson Elementary School





**“I love the library – it makes me smile just opening the door to it every morning! I don’t see how I’ll ever leave being the librarian at Stevenson!”
- Jennifer Ching, Teacher Librarian, Maestra de biblioteca**

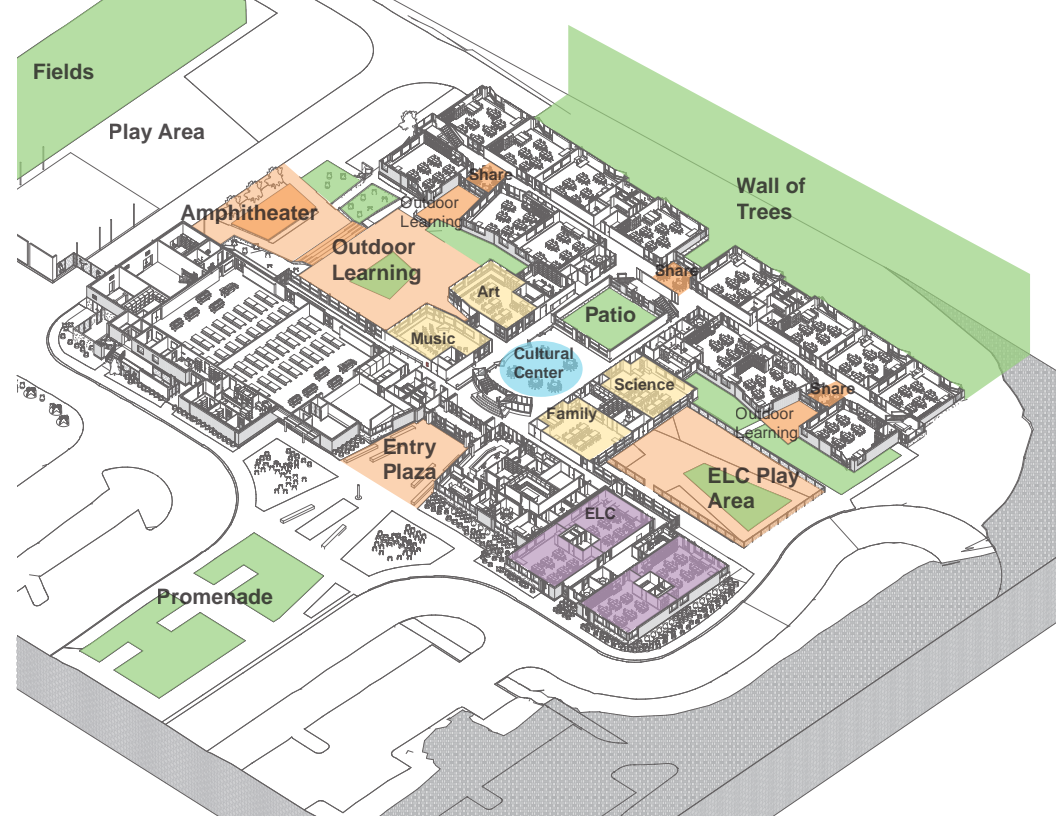






***“What I like of this school is the graphics / murals you have placed throughout the school, it inspires the students to learn science and be connected to the natural world.”
- Teacher***





RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

“The Heart

When I drive down the street, and glance over I can see it! There is the heart of the community peaking out above the roof of Stevenson Elementary. How can this be? A trip inside will tell you immediately that this heart is vibrant and healthy. There, in the center, are children from all over the world, chatting, planning, collaborating and making our world a much better place. The heart helps make this all happen. If you stand in the center of the heart you can actually hear your own heart beat...really! While you are standing at the center you can look around and see where your school is in relationship to the world. It's right there on the Pacific Rim. How amazing if you have come from the other side of the world! You can also study how your school with the heart is constructed, how it is supported, how it will survive an earthquake, being on the Pacific Rim and all. How thoughtful to know for families and community as they bring their precious cargo to this school.

This is about the heart, but also about the ability for the heart to create a meeting place for everyone; little children big children, their parents, their communities. It is a true community gathering spot. Maybe they are there for the beautiful little garden at the center, or the lofty library with a forest floor and a view of the Olympic mountain range or maybe the portraits of fascinating people that line the halls or the mirror at the end of the portraits that allows them to believe they, too could be remembered on the wall.

The heart makes learning great things possible. Stevenson is a thoughtful, and inclusive place with that beautiful heart!

We all need a heart!”

- Jill McLeod, Administrator, Retired, Bellevue School District



