2020 James D. MacConnell Award Submission

INNOVATION CENTER

ST VRAIN VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT LONGMONT, COLORADO

AN INVITATION TO EXPLORE

STEM runs deep at the St. Vrain Valley School District, North of Boulder, Colorado where the tech economy put down roots, an energy economy fuels development, and families rally around a district commitment to build a technologically-trained workforce by focusing on STEM education. The St. Vrain Innovation Center is a single building, a resource for **all kids** in **all schools**. Designed to foster collaboration, choice, inspiration and collision of ideas, the Innovation Center looks like no school you've ever seen.

IT IS A MODEL FOR HOW EDUCATIONAL SPACES CAN EVOLVE TO IGNITE THAT MOST BASIC HUMAN INSTINCT ...TO EXPLORE.

DESIGNING FOR STEM

In 2006, the St. Vrain School district, the 7th largest district in the state educating 32,000 students in 58 schools, made a robust commitment to STEM education. In 2012, St. Vrain Valley Schools was awarded the prestigious national Race to the Top grant to address the disparity between growing need for a technologically trained workforce and the slowing influx of students into STEM (Science Technology, Engineering, and Math) programs. District leaders invested Mill Levy and Grant funding to begin construction on an educational system that would transcend the traditional classroom and provide experiential opportunities that develop today's students into tomorrow's leaders, innovators and changemakers.

Each high school in the district developed a focus program, and students were given the choice to attend the school of their interest:

HIGH SCHOOL	FOCUS PROGRAM
ERIE	AEROSPACE
FREDERICK	BIO-SCIENCE
LONGMONT	BIO-MEDICAL + THE SCIENCES
MEAD	ENERGY ACADEMY
NIWOT	IB PROGRAM
SILVERCREEK	LEADERSHIP + COMPUTER SCIENCES
SKYLINE	ENGINEERING + STEM

Within the District, a Department of Innovation was formed to focus on the development of a district-wide cohesive strategy to promote STEM careers and connections with the region's professional industry. As a part of this initiative, a dedicated facility was proposed as a design incubator, to bridge the academic and career-readiness pathways for STEM students in a high-school setting. The dedicated facility was named the Innovation Center.

credit: St. Vrain Valley Schools

"WE BELIEVE PUBLIC EDUCATION — SECOND ONLY TO PARENTING — HAS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE FUTURE OF OUR SOCIETY.

DR. DON HADDAD
ST VRAIN VALLEY SCHOOLS
SUPERINTENDENT

INNOVATION
STARTS HERE.

The Innovation Center of St Vrain Valley Schools offers courses, industry work experience, research opportunities and more, in content areas ranging from aeronautics, robotics, computer sciences and technology, to media, STEM and entrepreneurship. It operates as a district hub, accessible to all of the district's 33,000 students through high-school courses, elementary and middle school field trips, and a range of multi-aged summer programs.

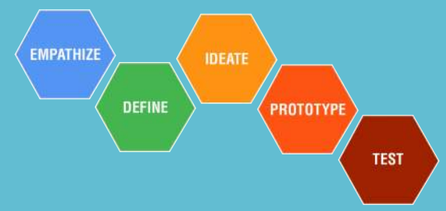
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

VISION:
RE-DESIGN EDUCATION

MISSION:
ENGAGE STUDENTS THROUGH EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCES

A framework built on strategic engagement of stakeholders turned community input into a sustainable component of the building's success.

A fundamentally human condition, a desire for innovation, exploration, and ideation, roots all efforts in the development of this place. Built upon the principles of the Design Thinking process, one that is not linear, but cyclic and continually evolving, the programming and visioning process focused on the certainty that change would drive decisions from beginning to end. Guiding Principles and Metrics were developed early in the process with leadership and community partners to ensure tangible goals could be measured against the initial vision for the facility. Returning to these metrics again and again, the project had a clear roadmap to judge each programmatic and design decision against.



PROJECT DATA

Location	33 Quail Road, Longmont, Colorado 80501
Specific Use	STEM, Industry Program
Owner/District	St. Vrain Valley School District
Occupancy	August 2018
Superintendent	Dr. Don Haddad
Data	Grades Housed: 9-12 (focus); K-12 (limited) Pupil Capacity: 350 students
Size	Site Size: 5-acres Gross Area: 50,000 GSF Area Per Pupil: 143 sq. ft
Site Development Cost	$1.2M
Building Cost	$18.9M
Furnishing Cost	$1M
Technology Cost	$2.5M
Total Project Cost	$23.6M
Energy Use	47.67 kBTU/SF/YR
Predicted Net WUI	5.7 GAL/SF/YR (10 GAL/SF/YR Benchmark)
Predicted Reduction from Benchmark	74% Reduction
Does the Project Meet the 2030 Challenge?	Yes
Does the Project Generate Renewable Energy?	Yes
Post Occupancy Evaluation	Yes
If Yes, What Type of Evaluation?	Program suitability interview; utilization study

SCHOOL + COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

> A HUMAN-CENTERED APPROACH TO INNOVATION THAT DRAWS FROM THE DESIGNER'S TOOLKIT TO INTEGRATE THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE, THE POSSIBILITIES OF TECHNOLOGY, AND THE REQUIREMENTS FOR BUSINESS SUCCESS.
>
> TIM BROWN,
> PRESIDENT + CEO, IDEO

ST. VRAIN MEETS WITH OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS FROM COLORADO AND ACROSS THE COUNTRY THAT ARE INTERESTED IN REPLICATING ITS PROGRAMS.

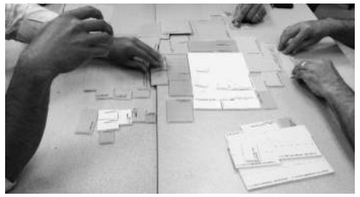
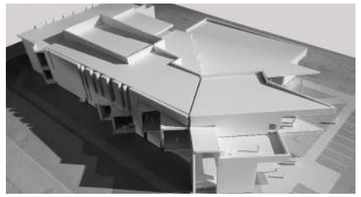
60+ GROUPS VISITED THE INNOVATION CENTER IN ITS FIRST YEAR.

BUILDING ENTHUSIASM

Having worked already for nearly a decade to craft an educational system focused on STEM, District leaders charged with visioning the Innovation Center program and design were very engaged, very vocal, and “laser-focused”. And yet, the priority of the group was to conduct a process that was democratic and engaged stakeholders across the district. An outreach process was carefully crafted to allow for a focused group of deeply invested stakeholders to lay the foundations for the work to follow with a much broader district-wide engagement. The DAG worked with the design team in an initial effort to begin give form to the vision, resulting in developed thoughts and a schematic building proposition that a broader outreach effort could use to build deeper understanding and solicit a more informed response.

Initial vision and idea for the building in hand, the district hired a strategic outreach consultant, nationally recognized for iterative, outside-the-box brainstorming, and authors of the Design Thinking process being employed at the district. It was with their guidance and school district’s pioneering leadership that extensive input was gathered to help define and mold the Innovation Center’s core services and solidify the culture of this new educational space. The outreach exercise reinforced critical district-wide enthusiasm for the project and documented outcomes.

Construction complete, and with two years of occupancy under their belts, the St. Vrain Innovation Center Leaders realized that planning is again in order to meet the needs of the future. Expansion Master Planning for a potential bond in 2020 is underway, exploring utilization and growth, and laying a baseline of data for planning next steps.



2006 STEM Academy Established
2012 Race to the Top Grant
2016 Youngest student achieves Apple technician certification at 14 yrs old
2017 Apple Executive Summit
Discovery Education Summit
VEX Robotics Tournament
Xilinx Embedded Systems Bootcamp
National Women in Technology Workshop
Cyber Security Workshop for K-12 Educators
2018 AEROFEST 2019 - An Academy of Model Aeronautics Sanctioned Event
2019 Inaugural Summer Camps
Super STEM:
+ Sustainable Business
+ AI: Power the Future
+ Mini Shark Tank
+ Sustaining Earth
+ AR/VR
+ Circuits
2019-20 SCHOOL YEAR
2020 Future-Ready Innovation Lab - Cutting Edge Tech in a Mobile Environment
The Succeeds Prize - Excellence in Technology Enabled Learning
TechStars - Startup Weekend
APEX Project of the Year - Colorado Technology Association
Host FTC FIRST Tech Challenge Robotics Competition
Virtual Summer Camp Goes National: Cybersecurity, Space Robotics, and Machine-learning
US Dept. of Education Tour
2021 AEROFEST 2021
2022 Potential Bond
2024 Earliest Opening for Expansion

PROGRAMMING & DESIGN
Bond Passes
Tours with IC Staff
DAG Workshops
Precedent Studies
Schematic Design
District-wide Outreach Workshops

FF&E DESIGN
Design Development & GMP
CDs & Foundation Permit
Building Permit
Groundbreaking

CONSTRUCTION
Drone Field Added
GRAND OPENING

SPRING SEMESTER
Staff Moves In
IC Virtual Construction Project
Program Report: Aeronautics grows by 150%
Diversity Assessment Completed, Partnership with Vanderbilt University PhD Students

Expansion & Master Planning
Utilization Study
Post Occupancy Program Suitability Interviews

HOW MIGHT WE…

The design teams asked how participants would experience the future Innovation Center. Through a "mad Libs" type exercise participants recorded their thoughts and multiple themes emerged:

GLIMPSE OF THE REAL WORLD

+ partnership with industry
+ professional guides
+ project for real client
+ training in technology
+ professional spaces
+ courses for credit
+ collaborative spaces
+ public speaking opportunities
+ professional certifications

BRING THE OUTSIDE IN

+ digital and mobile experiences
+ community-wide events
+ all-access, all-ages spaces
+ learning opportunities for teachers
+ flexibility to evolve
+ spaces you can create yourself
+ transportation services

NOT FEELING LIKE A CLASSROOM

+ inspirational decor
+ everything on wheels
+ small + large collaboration spaces
+ transparency
+ cutting edge tools + materials
+ students can build their own day

7 STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

82+ INDIVIDUALS CONSULTED

STUDENTS

The Innovation Center, where idea become real, feels like a **SECOND HOME TO ME**. What I find most exciting about it is the freedom to learn and invent. It allows me to be myself and create with experts and friends alike. I wonder whether it will also appeal to my friends, and that we can discover how to make it interesting for all student to help make it a place for everyone.

If there was just one word to describe it, it's different.

One last thing: thank you.

LEADERSHIP

The Innovation Center, a collaborative learning hub feels like the future to me. What I find most exciting about it is the potential to engage students. it allows me to think and dream without limit. I wonder whether it will also appeal to the entire community, and hope that we are **INTENTIONAL** to help make it a place for everyone.

If there was just one word to describe it, it's exciting.

One last thing: ever onward!

BUSINESS COMMUNITY

The Innovation Center opens minds and feels like the future of education to me. What I find most exciting about it is the endless opportunities. It allows me to articulate its value to others and **SHOW THE WORLD TRANSFORMATION IN EDUCATION** with passion. I wonder whether it will also appeal to everyone, and hope that the entire area including business and government will help make it a place for everyone.

If there was just one word to describe it, it's game-changing.

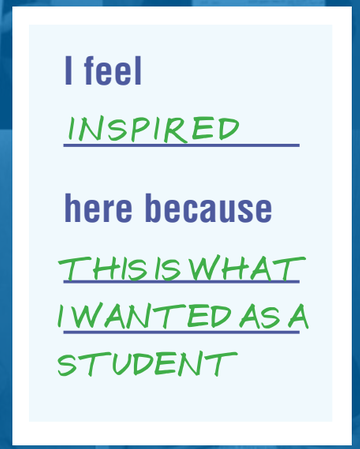
One last thing: be sure your launch is EPIC.

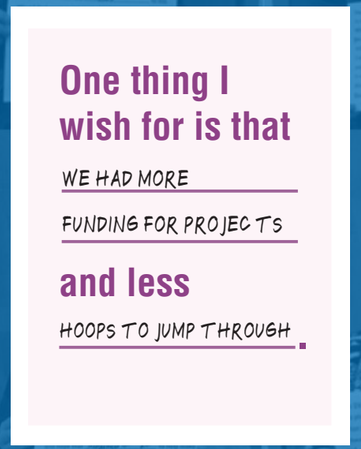
ADVISORY BOARD

The Innovation Center, **A CONSTANTLY EVOLVING EXPERIENCE**, feels like an open world to me. What I find most exciting about it is innovation for all. It allows me to collaborate and expand my thinking with those not in my circle. I wonder whether it will also appeal to non-tech folks, and hope that we are open-minded to help me it a place for everyone.

If there was just one word to describe it, it's dynamic.

One last thing: where was I when this was a student?





THE INNOVATION CENTER IS A PLACE FOR STUDENTS TO EXPERIENCE A PROFESSIONAL-GRADE SETTING

A PLACE THAT FOSTERS EXPERIENCE-BASED LEARNING, WHILE CONNECTING THE KIDS WITH THE WORKPLACE CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT THEY CAN EXPECT IN THE FUTURE.

EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

LEVEL ONE

- INNOVATION SHOP/TECH SERVICE
- ADMINISTRATION
- THE UI LAB (APPLE TECH)
- THE CURIOSITY ROBOTICS LAB
- THE COLLIDER
- AERONAUTICS
- THE MILL (WOOD SHOP)
- THE FORGE (METAL SHOP & MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY LAB)
- THE GARAGE (COMMUNITY MAKERSPACE)
- THE LABORATORY (BIOMEDICAL)
- CAFE
- THE VALLEY (PRESENTATION)

LEVEL TWO

- PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- SHARED CLASSROOMS
- COMPUTER LAB
- THE SOUND SPACE
- THE STUDIO
- INCUBATOR AND ENTERPRISE ZONE
- THE PITCH ROOM
- FLEXIBLE WORK ZONE

DESIGN AROUND THE LEARNING PATH

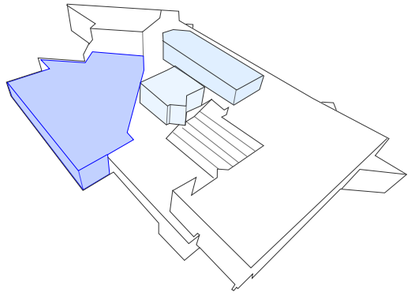
The process of Innovation begins with Design Thinking, and goes on to the next steps toward connecting that process with real-world outcomes.

To continue that journey, students are offered the opportunity to extend their explorations to take ideas into the business world. This process is physically manifest in the building through stages of engagement that follow a path to the apex of the facility -the place where an idea can become reality.

1 The first stages of the journey begin in the labs and Collider, exploring an idea using Design Thinking, to empathize, define, ideate, prototype and test. A successful process results in an idea or product that can then be explored for development as a business idea.

2 The Incubator/Enterprise Zone hosts a range of classes to explore certifications, boot camps, and courses focused on the development of an entrepreneurial mind-set, and ultimately a business plan.

3 With business plan in hand, students experience the thrill of a pitch to actual investors, in a space designed to represent the spirit of the professional world.



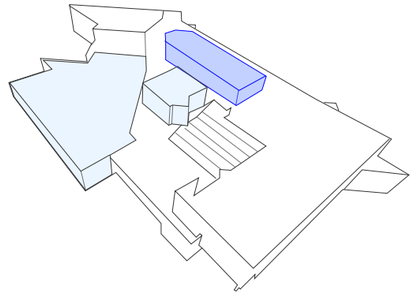
"STUDENTS LIKE TO WORK IN TEAMS ADJACENT TO ONE ANOTHER AND SEEM TO ALSO LIKE BEING ABLE TO HEAR ACTIVITY GOING ON IN THE NEARBY FABRICATION LABS."

1 DESIGN FOR DESIGN-THINKING

THE COLLIDER

Innovation is more than just a mind-set of curiosity, it is also heavily dependent upon process. Much of the work is team-based, so the plan was organized around a central flex zone, called the Collider, which is outfitted for team gathering and brainstorming. It is surrounded by specialized labs, tools and resources, as well as places for independent work.

The Collider has key physical characteristics to support this work; it it central, open, connected visibly and acoustically to adjacent work environments, and surrounded by the tools and resources to optimize flow. Brainstorming requires furniture and technology to seamlessly support group work. Everything is on wheels, storage is abundant, and work spaces surround the Collider with tools for fabrication and advanced printing technology.



2 REAL WORLD APPLICATION

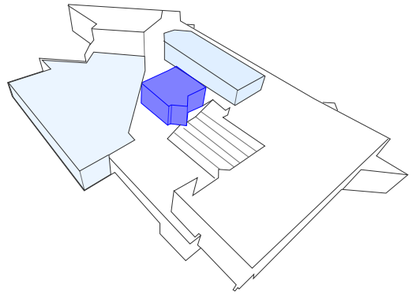
WE ARE THE START-UP WITHIN THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT.

The Entrepreneurial Zone is designed to build a collaborative culture for students, staff and the community. It's a zone for individuals to engage their Entrepreneurial MindSet, understand the entrepreneurial process, build business sense, develop ideas, and find support through a community of internal and external industry related experts.

"[Learning in this class] was so different than typical learning. It's something [that] really began to change my way of looking at things. Out of all my classes I took this year I apply the things I learned in the entrepreneurship class more than anything else.

...one thing that I really liked as a student of yours was the fun learning space that inspired creative thinking. "

- Junior at Longmont High School



3 THE APEX OF EXPERIENCE

Perched above the Valley, the Pitch room is the place where students who have worked through each stage of the program; studying, inventing, prototyping, and ultimately crafting a business plan, can pitch that plan –in a space that looks and feels like the professional world the kids are striving towards.

Students are inspired to take true ownership of their work. Local businesses, entrepreneurs, and Partner institutions of higher education are engaged as partners, connecting kids with opportunity, and the communities of their professional future.

“[This student] pitched a REAL Business to a REAL Bank and his business was viable enough for him to receive their underwriting! Amazing to be honest - Proud. “

-Jeff Lund,
Entrepreneurship Instructor

PARTNERSHIPS

"[IC students] are actually testing the latest version of our code. It's not like we're giving them something that we know what the issues are. We're giving it to them and saying, 'okay, see what you can find.' We don't know, so there isn't a solution manual or anything for them.

IT'S ACTUALLY SOLVING REAL WORK PROBLEMS."

- Innovation Center
Business Partner

Through partnerships with industry leaders such as IBM, St. Vrain students are leveraging new technology to design and implement solutions to difficult world problems. They are building artificial intelligence chatbots using IBM's Watson, forming partnerships with the Denver Zoo and the Ocean First Institute to create underwater robots to monitor endangered frogs, and designing and developing apps with the Swift coding language. Through these types of activities, students develop in-demand soft skills such as communication, creative problem-solving and project management.

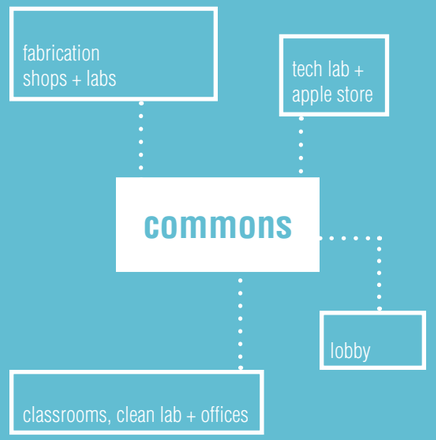
Most students want to spend more time working on projects that can be used and shared in the complex 21st-century global environment.

- Dr. Don Haddad, Superintendent,
St. Vrain Valley Schools

CONNECTED COMMUNITY

A TESTAMENT TO A FUNDAMENTAL TRUTH OF THE INNOVATION CULTURE, THAT “NONE OF US IS AS SMART AS ALL OF US”.

Designed for large groups, competitions, conferences, hack-a-thons, and everything else, The Commons, aka ‘the Valley’ is the heart of the Innovation Center. It is flexible, re-arrangable, and connected to every program in the building. Beyond physical proximity sharing, this space is wired with the technology that connects the forum with conversations, experiments and discoveries happening in real-time. In fact, the building has a wiring infrastructure that allows for activity happening in any room of the building to be live-streamed directly to any screen in the building, or to the world, through the internet.



CHOICE + OPTIMIZATION

IN MANY CLASSES, STUDENTS WILL LEAVE THE CLASSROOM OR LAB TO GO DO THEIR WORK.

"It is almost a competitive sport when students are released to go find work space, they sprint to their favorite spot."

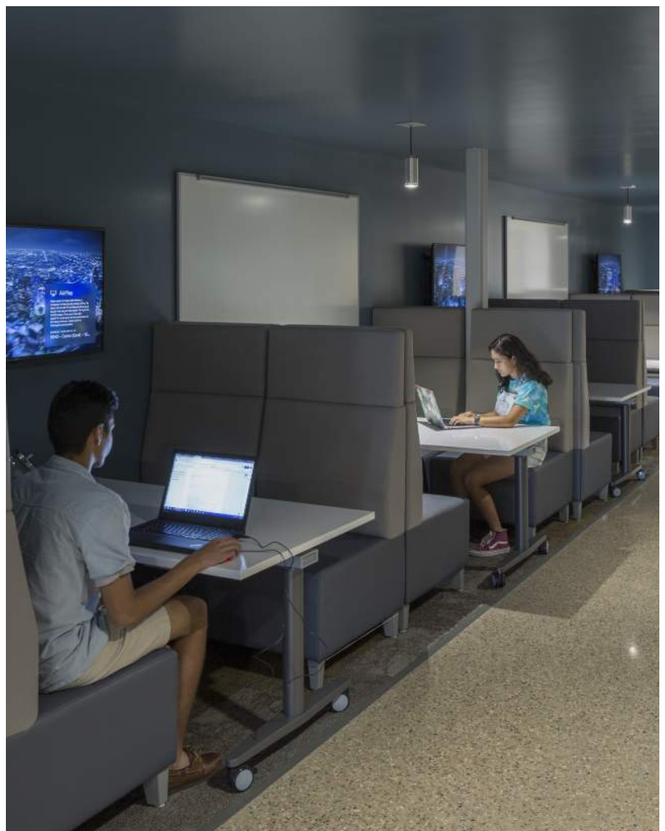
- Innovation Center Instructor

We know that our brain is better able to focus on detail-oriented study (like writing code) when the roof over our head is low and close.* Students can choose areas like "The Caves" where ceiling height is lower and light sources are minimal, focused on the work surface.

We seek out high volume or open-sky places as ones that support our need to think big and engage higher-level creative connections. The same study* that highlights intensified focus in places with lower ceilings points out the enhanced ability for free and abstract thinking that comes with high ceilings and open sky.

Collaborative soft seating areas in high volume see heavy use because the arrangement changes the hierarchy of the interaction, as well as the level and type of participation. Especially when the group includes students and adults, the setting equalizes through the casual ways people engage - it democratizes the learning process.

**Based on a study by Joan Meyer-Levy of the University of Minnesota*



RARELY RESERVED, ALWAYS USED

EVERYONE HAS TO BE A PARTICIPANT IN THIS AREA BECAUSE OF THE SCALE OF THE SPACE. WE SEE THE SAME REACTION, THE SAME HEAVY USE FROM BOTH STUDENTS AND TEACHERS DOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORK.

The mezzanine space is not typically booked for regular events, but it sees frequent use because it is so flexible and is contiguous to the Commons. It allows free movement in and out of groups and presentations:

+ The projector serves students in soft seating, and is visible from a range of spaces in the building.
+ The cave on the mezzanine and is outfitted with a digital screen loaded with software allowing anyone to transfer content from personal devices to the screen. This setting supports focused collaboration.
+ The whiteboard area extends along the entire length of the wall to provide ample space for collaboration exercises

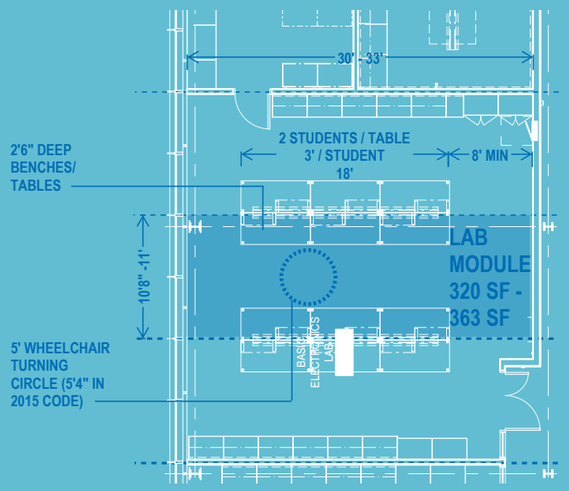
"The flex work spaces are spread throughout the facility. It feels like [each space] has connection to all aspects of learning. When people come here, it kind of 'sticks on them' and the energy returns to their home schools across the district."

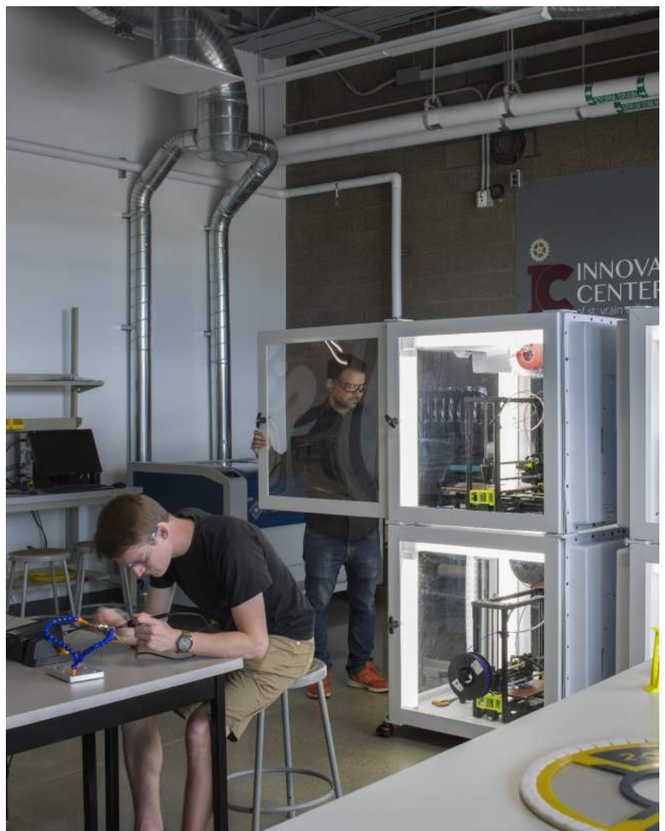
-Axel Reitzig,
Coordinator of Innovation

SPECIALIZATION

Specialized workspaces are designed to look and feel like those used by professionals, offering the best tools and resources in the district.

The robotics lab is outfitted with soldering stations, furniture that folds and rolls out of the way to make room for robotics courses, and a tank designed to support the amphibious robotics program. With an innovation-focused curriculum, a key design strategy is to plan for change. Labs and shops were designed around a lab module that is standard in higher-ed lab planning, allowing for conversions of spaces as program needs evolve.





AERONAUTICS

FIRST TO GROW

The Aeronautics program provides an engineering and industry certification platform for students looking to prepare for a career in Aviation Engineering and Flight.

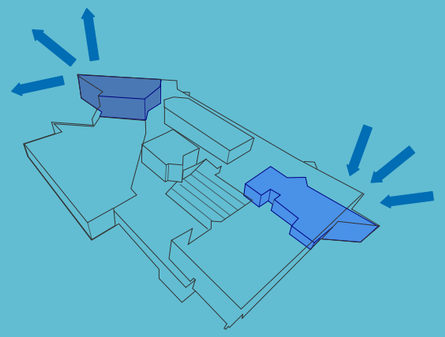
The aeronautics lab was a program component that came online after the building was designed. By planning for change in the original design, the program not only found a home in the facility, but room to grow by nearly 300%.

AEROFEST

An annual AMA sanctioned event connecting community through remote controlled flight. Activities include:

+ Community development and networking
+ UAS industry groups, and collegiate aviation programs share latest products and projects
+ Organized micro quad outdoor drone racing venue hosts open flight and competitive racing.
+ Food vendors along with community viewing areas for non-flying guests of all ages
+ Building community through flight at the Innovation Center of St Vrain Valley Schools

AEROFEST 2019



STRATEGIC ANCHORS

When planning the building, it was critical to ensure that the spirit of innovation could be infused throughout the district, not just in this one facility. Two programs were added to the facility to connect St. Vrain more broadly by bringing in and taking out ideas and experiences

LEARN IT, LIVE IT, SHARE IT

By allowing teachers to experience the innovative learning environments for their own coursework, the innovation culture of the district is enhanced. The teachers who experience the space and the technology interact differently, and they take an exploratory mindset back to their home schools. In effect, the Innovation Center becomes the “sandbox” to scale STEM teaching ideas to the whole district.

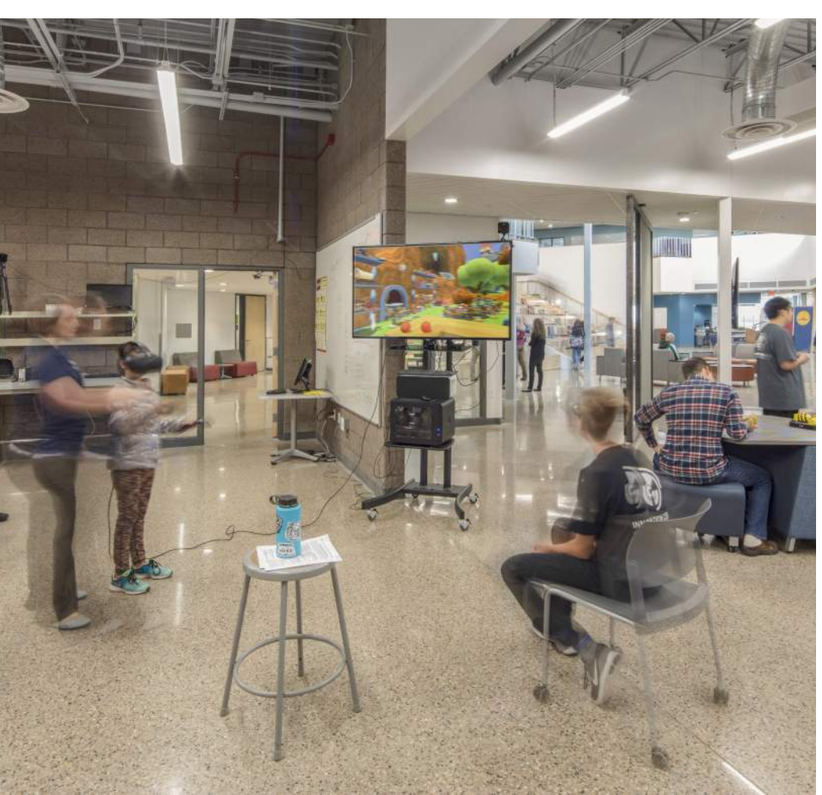
EXPLORE AND DISCOVER

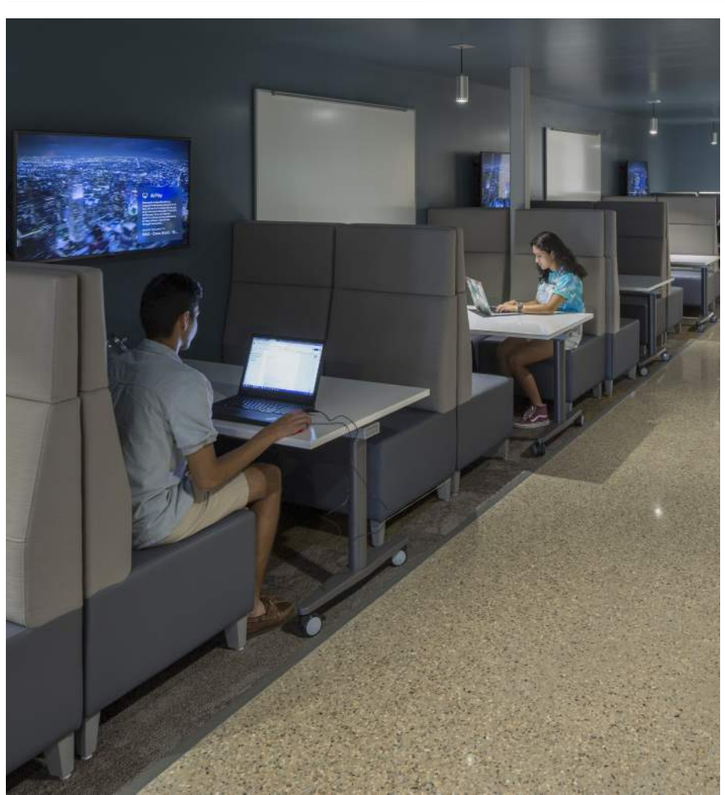
Not just a place for high school students, the Innovation Center includes a community maker space, outfitted for all-hours use to bring community members to the building to experience STEM education and making first-hand. The Makerspace is a regular field trip destination for STEM coordinators in elementary and middle schools. Tour groups of 100+ students take over the Makerspace and spread throughout the building to experience the thrill of making, and to plant seeds for future interests.

P-TECH AND P-TEACH

Pathways in Technology Early College
Pathways in Education

P-TECH and P-TEACH programs bring together elements of high school, college, and the professional world. Through a cooperative with the University of Colorado, Denver, Front Range Community College and IBM, students who are engaged in the program have an opportunity to graduate with both a high school diploma and an Associate degree in 4-6 years. This program is provided to students at no cost and is a model that is gaining stature across the nation as districts find ways to partner with industry to build workforce capacity and offset some of the burden of higher education cost.





THE INHERENT BONES OF THIS BUILDING ARE INTERESTING; MEANING THAT COMPLEX MATERIALS ARE NOT NEEDED TO ENLIVEN THE BUILDING.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

RECOGNIZABLE ICON

THIS BUILDING WILL SYMBOLIZE INNOVATION FOR THE DISTRICT, IT MUST NOT LOOK LIKE A TRADITION SCHOOL.

The anticipation for this facility inspired interest throughout the district and the community. Location and partnerships were critical to the success of the venture. Longmont already has a strong population of tech entrepreneurs itching to share their passions, and the Innovation Center was strategically placed to support multiple aspects of the Longmont's professional and cultural communities. Placed adjacent to other Longmont Cultural Facilities, the District hoped to create a critical mass of cultural opportunities along Quail Road.

THE INNOVATION CENTER

MATERIALITY

THE INHERENT BONES OF THIS BUILDING ARE INTERESTING; MEANING THAT COMPLEX MATERIALS ARE NOT NEEDED TO ENLIVEN THE BUILDING.

Given the directive that this building should not feel “school-like,” traditional and economically impactful materials like concrete block were used in unique ways: varying block size and texture applications to provide a more natural feel. The metal paneling patterns mimic natural structures, reinforcing a link to local agricultural buildings and STEM curriculum overall. The overlap of the natural world and the man-made technology in ever-greater depth of complexity expose frontiers of exploration and discovery, and have suggested a framework for which the metaphorical concepts of this building can be built. On the exterior, the massing, form, and materiality of the building serve as a metaphor of the Colorado mountain landscape; stepping upward to the north, and gesturing northwest towards downtown Longmont. As a nod to the mountain’s north face -- the coldest, most unforgiving side of a mountain with steeper faces and austere complexion -- vertical windows and profiled metal wall panels along the north elevation portray the fissues and crevices to evoke this unique geology. The masonry clad shops and masses along the south juxtaposed with the metal-clad multiple story north building masses pay homage to the Foothills and Front Range.

DELIBERATELY CLEAN
AND MODEST, THE
INTERIOR PALETTE
HIGHLIGHTS
THE PEOPLE,
THE ACTIVITIES AND
THE SPACE ITSELF.

EXPLORATION

By the time kids get to high school, they're bumping, sometimes railing against the boundaries of life. They feel ready to spread wings and explore. The Innovation Center is designed to blur those boundaries, connect spaces, create a terrain to explore and to test what opportunities might exist when kids are given license to set their own limits. This place is a bold step forward to provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate that they are ready. High School students leave with the skills and the experience to work together, to explore ideas, and to take an idea from concept to prototype(s) to business pitch. The Innovation Center, as a philosophy and space, is built around the concept of exploration, revealing around each corner student workspaces and products.

Exploration thrives in an environment that orchestrates conversations and gathering spots amongst hardware and software. Each space within the building transitions easily from collaborating to making zones. The building is designed to reflect the curriculum and respect student choice and autonomy, to discover spaces that best suit their own learning styles. Each day a student can choose to work from a range of environments: a cave-like huddle space, a perched overlook, or the voluminous grand hall.

EXPANSION

Almost two years into operation, the team reconvened to evaluate program successes, review growth projections, and to begin thinking about expansion planning. The team reviewed what makes the building special, and what is needed as the potential for the building grows. Key findings guide the journey as the exploration continues:

SYSTEMS THINKING

All programs are growing, and the district anticipates tripling the number of students using the space in the coming years. Scaling and sustaining innovative practices requires a systemic approach.

BLENDED STAFF LEARNING WITH STUDENT LEARNING IS A WIN

Professional Development programs sometimes must look elsewhere for space, but sentiments align around the value of integrating teacher training into this facility. Especially in evening programs where kids are working alongside teachers in the facility, staff and students enjoy the camaraderie and value the cultural impact.

DYNAMIC STABILITY

New programs like Artificial Intelligence and cyber-security are beginning with introductory coursework engaged by smaller groups of students before gaining momentum. Planning must allow for new programs to be implemented (and abandoned) iteratively in order to discover what works as quickly as possible.

SYNERGY THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are the bedrock of opportunities and crucial to remaining informed on the pulse of industry. Continue to seek partners in expanded sectors; municipal as well as industry.

MORE TECHNOLOGY, PLEASE

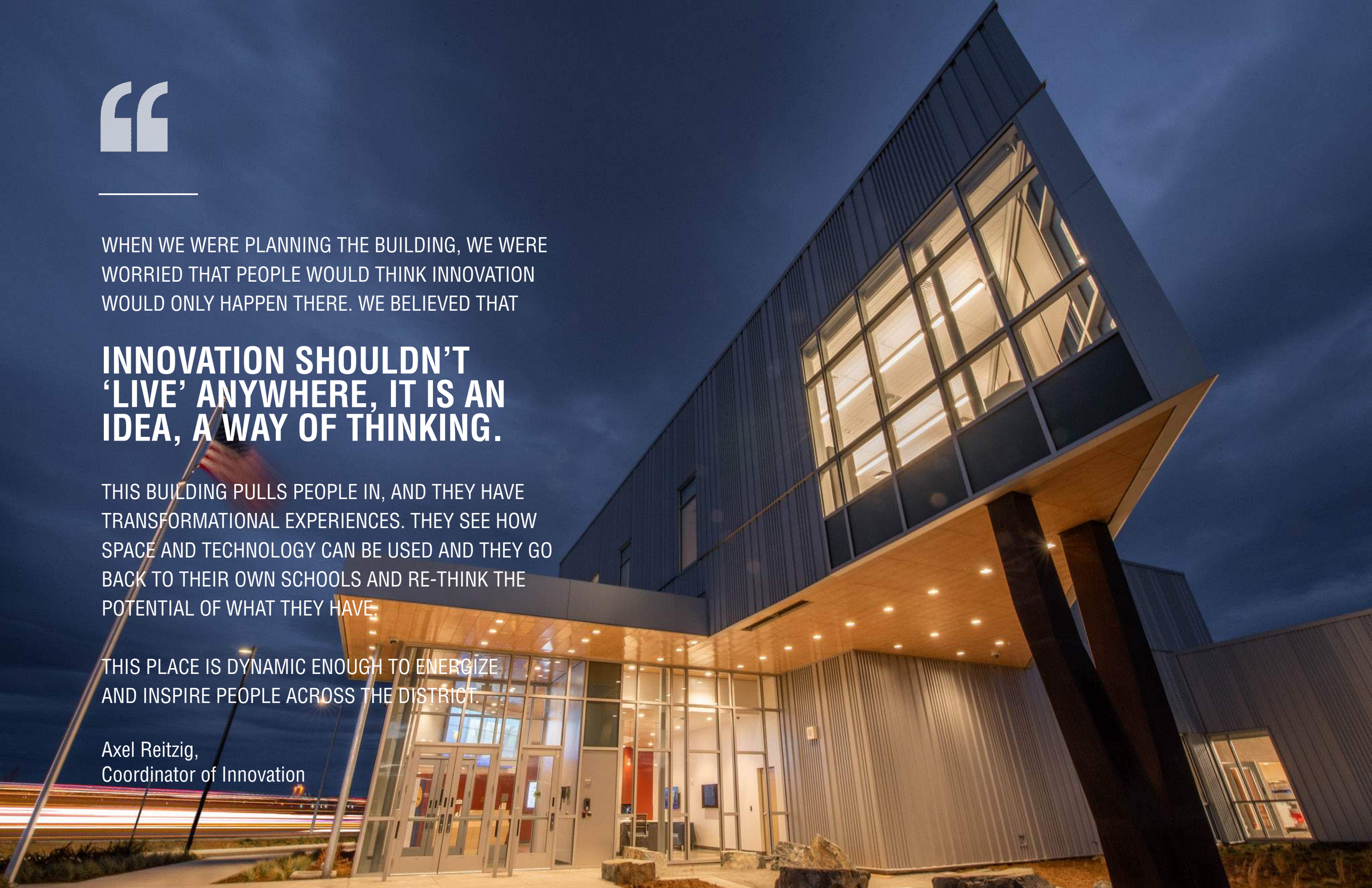
Conference rooms are always booked. The technology-enabled workspaces throughout the facility are very appealing to staff and students, and are constantly in use. Flexible, free-access to use of these collaboration zones contribute to the energy and culture of this place.

GO BIG(GER)

Large volume spaces have unique potential for exploration activities, for example an indoor fly zone, robo-dome, or large-scale fabrication area. Outdoor test environments similar to the drone field could be developed for programs like robotic test fields, on land and in water.

EVERYBODY WANTS IN

Groups from all over the district are asking to do visioning in this building because it's causing people to think differently. Maintain the dynamic energy of the space while finding ways to accommodate more, larger groups.



WHEN WE WERE PLANNING THE BUILDING, WE WERE WORRIED THAT PEOPLE WOULD THINK INNOVATION WOULD ONLY HAPPEN THERE. WE BELIEVED THAT

INNOVATION SHOULDN'T 'LIVE' ANYWHERE, IT IS AN IDEA, A WAY OF THINKING.

THIS BUILDING PULLS PEOPLE IN, AND THEY HAVE TRANSFORMATIONAL EXPERIENCES. THEY SEE HOW SPACE AND TECHNOLOGY CAN BE USED AND THEY GO BACK TO THEIR OWN SCHOOLS AND RE-THINK THE POTENTIAL OF WHAT THEY HAVE.

THIS PLACE IS DYNAMIC ENOUGH TO ENERGIZE AND INSPIRE PEOPLE ACROSS THE DISTRICT.

Axel Reitzig,
Coordinator of Innovation