



# CAPPS MIDDLE SCHOOL

PUTNAM CITY SCHOOLS | WARR ACRES, OKLAHOMA



## Executive Summary

# Capps Middle School

Inspired by Henry David Thoreau's words, "I took a walk in the woods and came out taller than the trees," Capps Middle School re-envisioned a neighborhood park into a new, 170,000 SF future-ready middle school serving 900 students in grades 6, 7 and 8.

An existing campus on another site in the district, Capps Middle School formerly occupied a 1950s-era building, originally constructed as a high school and later converted to the middle school.

What once was a facility of traditional teaching and learning became a new campus, driven by an inquiry-based teaching and learning model. **At the forefront of this change - a shift in the teaching and learning.**

The construction of this new facility was more than just a new building, it was an opportunity to position a "catalyst for change in Putnam City Schools." Everything from the facility itself, to the building systems, arrangement of learning suites, and furniture was poised to change.

From both a facility and a teaching perspective, the site was a major asset. An existing park with a creek that bisects the campus, offers outdoor learning opportunities that most middle schools cannot. In the words of a 7th grade science teacher at Capps, "we can't build a better science classroom than the creek."

Each neighborhood embodies a departure from traditional teaching methods, encouraging a new

inquiry-based model that cultivates curiosity, inspires hands-on learning, and supports the environment as a tool for teaching. Whether the learners are experiencing the launch of a project, actively researching and investigating new material, innovating and creating prototypes, or presenting findings and solutions, the space adapts to meet the needs of these learning activities. Educators facilitate while learners engage in the material in their own way providing a student-centric environment for exploration and learning.

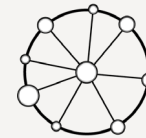
The design of the building itself clearly communicates the new values of the learning neighborhood, shifting the focus from testing and lectures to creativity and hands-on learning for both students and educators.

The same spaces, furniture, and shifts in teaching and learning have begun to trickle into the other existing middle school campuses across the district, bringing true meaning to Capps being a "catalyst for change."

What began as the rebuild of an existing middle school, turned into an opportunity to impact the community at large in Putnam City Schools.

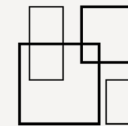
Capps Middle School has done more than rebuild a campus. By leveraging the opportunity to have a building become a catalyst for cultural change, Putnam City Schools set their aim high - and the post-occupancy study confirms their design is supporting their learning community as they reinvent education.

## Guiding Principles



### INQUIRY BASED

*A shift from traditional teaching and learning to a learner-driven inquiry-based model*



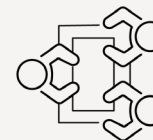
### SCALABLE

*Flexible, adaptable learning environments to foster cross pollination and casual collisions*



### DESTINATION

*School is more than just a place to go every day, but a place learners want to go*



### COLLABORATIVE

*Environment aligned to collaborative teaching and learning*

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## Scope of Work

### OWNER

*Putnam City Schools*

### LOCATION

*Warr Acres, OK*

### PROJECT TYPE

*Middle School*

### GRADE LEVELS

*6-8*

### PROJECT SIZE

*170,000 SF*

### STUDENT CAPACITY

*1,200*

### CONSTRUCTION COST

*\$48,024,944*

### CONSTRUCTION DELIVERY METHOD

*Construction Manager At Risk*





## School & Community Engagement

# Understanding the Community



### THE COMMUNITY

In an area just outside of Oklahoma City and Bethany's corporate limits, Warr Acres was originally developed as a residential suburb to both urban areas. In 1909 Isreal M. Putnam, a real estate developer and member of the legislature, had unsuccessfully attempted to engineer the relocation of the state Capital from Guthrie to Warr Acres, prompting the slogan "Almost Capital of Oklahoma."

Truly a "bedroom" community, the city has largely maintained the small town feel as a suburb in the larger Oklahoma City metro.

Capps Middle School, set within an established 1960s residential community, serves a large percentage of low-income families (83% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch).

Furthermore, the community of learners is quite diverse, 39% of learners are of Hispanic decent, 28% White, 20% Black and 14% identifying as other.

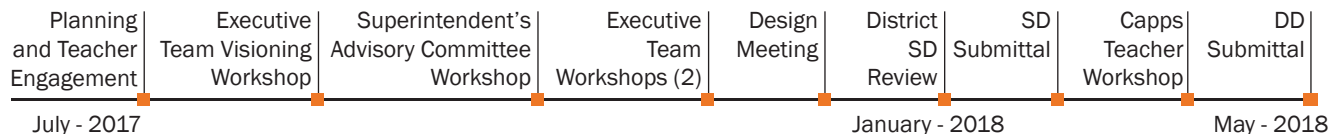
With such diverse backgrounds came critical conversations of equity and inclusivity, something that extended well beyond the walls of Capps Middle School.

*The result is a Middle School that, according to a research study conducted with Putnam City Schools, is fulfilling its role as a catalyst for change by shifting learning emphasis and activities to a collaborative, inquiry-based model.*

### STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT "Learner-Driven Process"

The design team met with numerous stakeholder groups throughout the development of the design, but the unique quality of this project is the stakeholder group that came first: the learners.

Before pen was ever put to paper, and before any administrative presence was engaged in the design, Putnam City Schools empowered new freshmen at the high schools to envision what a day in the life of a middle school learner would look like in 20 years. The outcome was a collaborative, learn-by-teaching, scalable, cross-pollinated, fun educational experience, entirely originated by the learners.





## School & Community Engagement

# Overcoming Obstacles



### CHALLENGES

Aside from the obvious constraints of the piece of property on which the school was sited, this was the biggest shift of teaching and learning in the district to date. Not only was the environment drastically changing from the former campus, but an existing cohort of educators had to shift their campus culture to adapt to an inquiry-based teaching and learning model.

Capps Middle School quickly became the benchmark that Putnam City Schools would use to measure the quality of future-ready learning environments across the district, and pushed to align space and curriculum in a way the district had never done. Examples include: collaborative and new environment types being implemented in smaller renovations; furniture modeled after Capps; and a shift to inquiry-based learning at all secondary campuses.



### ASSETS

The Capps community has a vibrant and dedicated culture that was open and ready for change. The introduction of a new learning environment was seen as a crucial opportunity transform teaching and learning.

From both a facility and a teaching perspective, the site is a major asset. An existing park with a creek that bisects the site, offers outdoor learning opportunities that most middle schools cannot. In the words of a 7th grade science teacher at Capps, “we can’t build a better science classroom than the creek.”



## School & Community Engagement

# Creating Value

### VALUE OF PROJECT TO THE COMMUNITY

Education plays a major role in the growth and progress of a society. An inspiring and effective school provides value to the community by producing good citizens equipped to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives. This is Capps Middle School. The focus to develop future ready skills takes into account how educators and learners are an integral part of the transformation of the community in which they are located.

*Capps students and teachers/staff share the belief that collaborative group work, hands-on learning and real-world projects are valued by the school leadership and reflected in its design. Students felt that creativity was the #1 value reflected in the design of the school.*

Capps Middle School supports progress. With the inquiry-based learning model, the learners engage in skills in research, problem solving, and critical thinking. Learners actively make connections and discover new opportunities, often linking this work to supporting community topics. With the learning spaces designed to promote collaboration, visible learning, and demonstration of understanding, learners not only develop the skills necessary to academic achievement but also to embrace culture, value the beliefs of others, and understand personal interests and learning styles. This learning environment and the evidence-based practices are coordinated to enhance all learners' social, emotional, and academic success, school involvement, civic engagement, and career preparation.

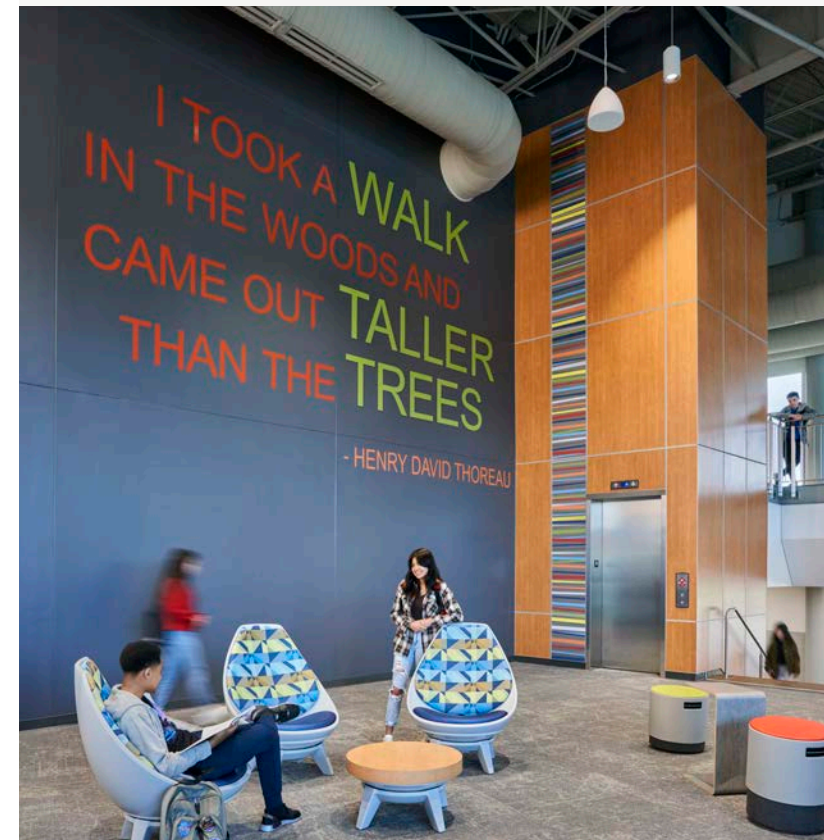
*In a survey of Capps students and teachers all “agree” to “strongly agree” that students learn new things from their peers, share information with peers, and have student-teacher trust.*

Good schools are an economic driver, in an article titled “The Economic Impact of Good Schools” written by Eric Hanushek, referenced research showing “Clearly that the economic growth of a state is directly tied to the skills of its workforce.”

Educators and school staff want to work at a well-organized, inspiring school that can impact educational opportunities for learners. Being part of the school community provides stability, financial resources, and support from members of the group. Providing community identity, Capps Middle School exudes a positive culture and values that have influence beyond the school walls. As the school and community continue to partner, the preparation has begun for the next generation of college participants and the workforce.

*Out of the 579 students surveyed, 79% say being part of a neighborhood makes them want to get better grades, 70.5% to work hard*

From April to May of 2022, the design team worked with the Putnam City School District to issue a survey at Capps Middle School for students and teachers/staff. The self-administered, online survey collected anonymous responses to a validated measure called the Student/Teacher Engagement Index (SEI/TEI), which consists of a variety of questions on perceptions and use of the learning environment, collaboration with others, and levels of comfort. The survey generated responses from 579 Capps students and 78 teachers/staff.





## Educational Environment

*Students and teachers report that small group spaces at Capps play a key role in supporting collaboration - but they also host other key activities during inquiry-based learning. Having breakout spaces like these allows students to choose the workspace they need to stay engaged with their peers in the neighborhood.*





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## Educational Environment

# Setting the Vision

### EDUCATIONAL VISION & GOALS

The Putnam City Public School District superintendent, Fred Rhodes, stated that the new Capps Middle School would be a catalyst for change. Not only was Superintendent Rhodes willing to invest time and energy into transforming one school, but he also created the pathway for all campuses to benefit from lessons learned with the new school.

To begin the process of change, the BOLD (an acronym for Bridging the Organization, Learning, and Design) services were obtained to support the road to transformation. BOLD is a holistic change process that supports campus staff in successfully developing and implementing a clear vision for the future that empowers educators to fully leverage their new facilities. The BOLD process involves a series of activities to building capacity and structure for the campus' new vision. Since the selection and sequence of exercises is customized, the campus leadership team provided input for the new educational vision and goals at Capps Middle School.

As the vision was to transform from a traditional method of teaching to the facilitator-led format that promotes engagement, curiosity, and experimentation, the Inquiry-Based learning model was selected. As part of the BOLD training, the educators participated in professional development to learn the

inquiry cycle and develop new curriculum. As this learning model was launched, the students engaged in a cycle of learning that:

- Begins with a sense of wonder
- Collaborates with others on research and investigation
- Creates, experiments and prototypes
- Demonstrates understanding and performance evaluations
- Allows for group and individual reflections

With inquiry-based training a resounding success, learners became “owners” of their knowledge acquisition, motivated, engaged, and self-directed. Every space is a learning space encouraging formal and informal learning and adapting to the activity as needed.

*Out of the 579 students surveyed, a majority feel that being part of a neighborhood motivates them to be good academic citizens.*

As desired, Capps Middle School became an incubator for ideas for the other middle schools in the district. Plans for inquiry-based learning and flexible furniture have taken off across the district as a result of the success of Capps.

## Inquiry-Based Learning

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*Learning is a personalized and individualized experience.*

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*It is human nature to question and be able to understand.*

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*Wonder inspires learning.*

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*Knowledge is not an entity to be transmitted from the educator to the learner.*

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*Knowledge is the constructed result of the interaction between the learner's mental model (experiences, beliefs, emotions, and prejudices) and the new learning experiences.*





## Educational Environment

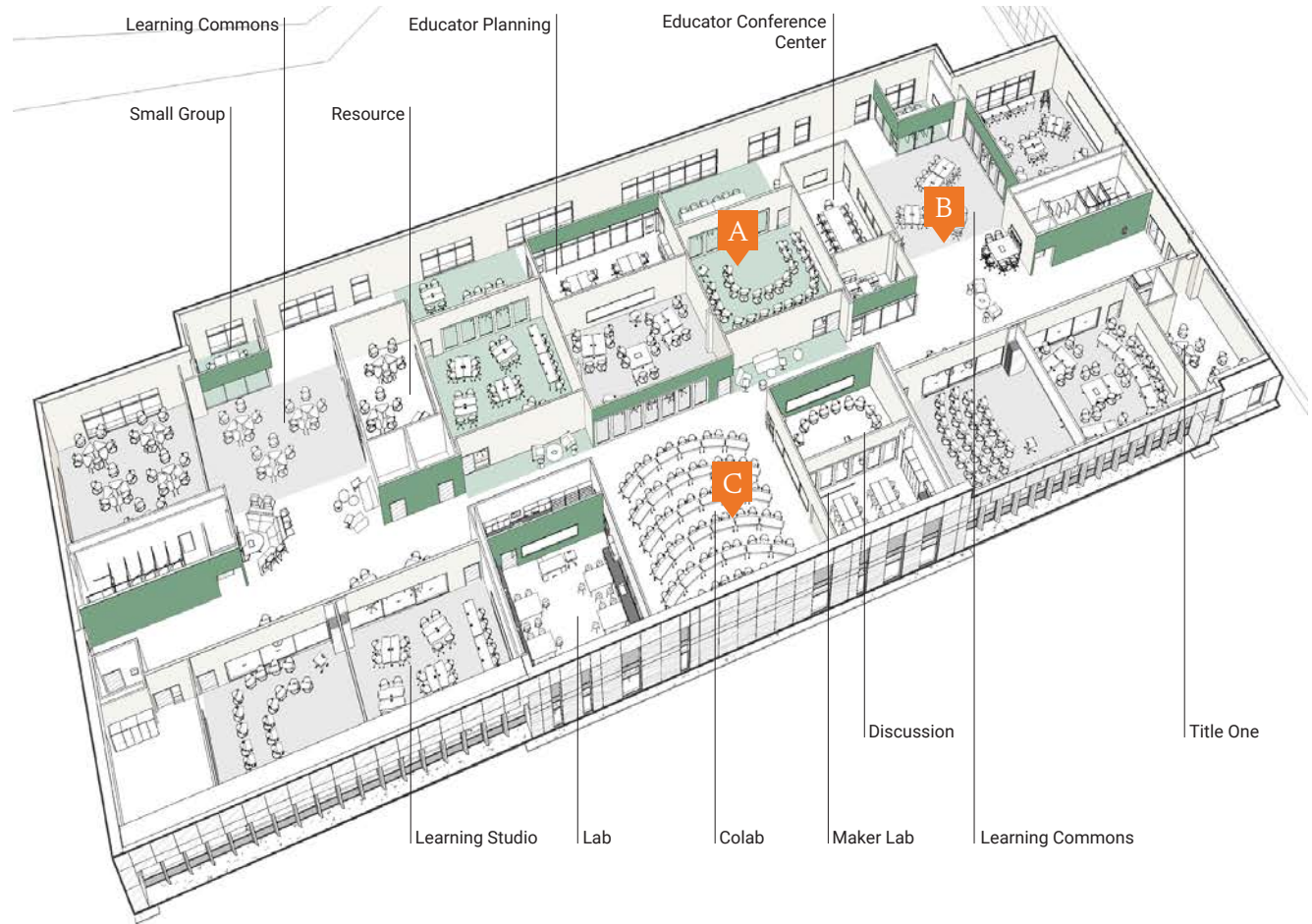
# The Grade-Based Neighborhood

### SUPPORTING CURRICULUM THROUGH DESIGN

As a result of the shift to inquiry-based teaching and learning, spatial diversity was at the forefront of decision making to offer maximum adaptability and flexibility for the various activities the learning communities needed to facilitate.

*72% of teachers surveyed say that the neighborhood design helps students utilize different spaces for various learning activities.*

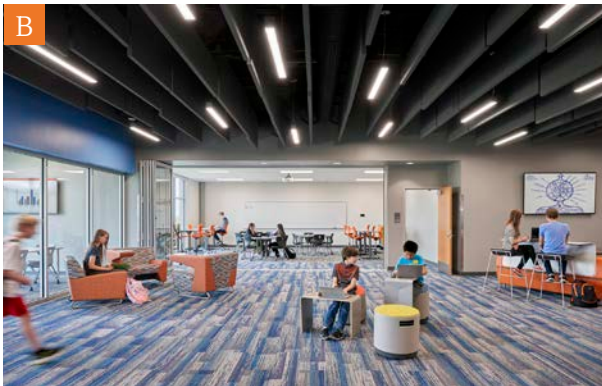
Learning studios have a variety of operable partitions, some opening to collaborative learning environments, others opening studios to one another for team teaching. A variety of scaled collaborative areas from small group rooms, front porches, and whole class collaboration facilitate different types and sizes for learning.



A



B



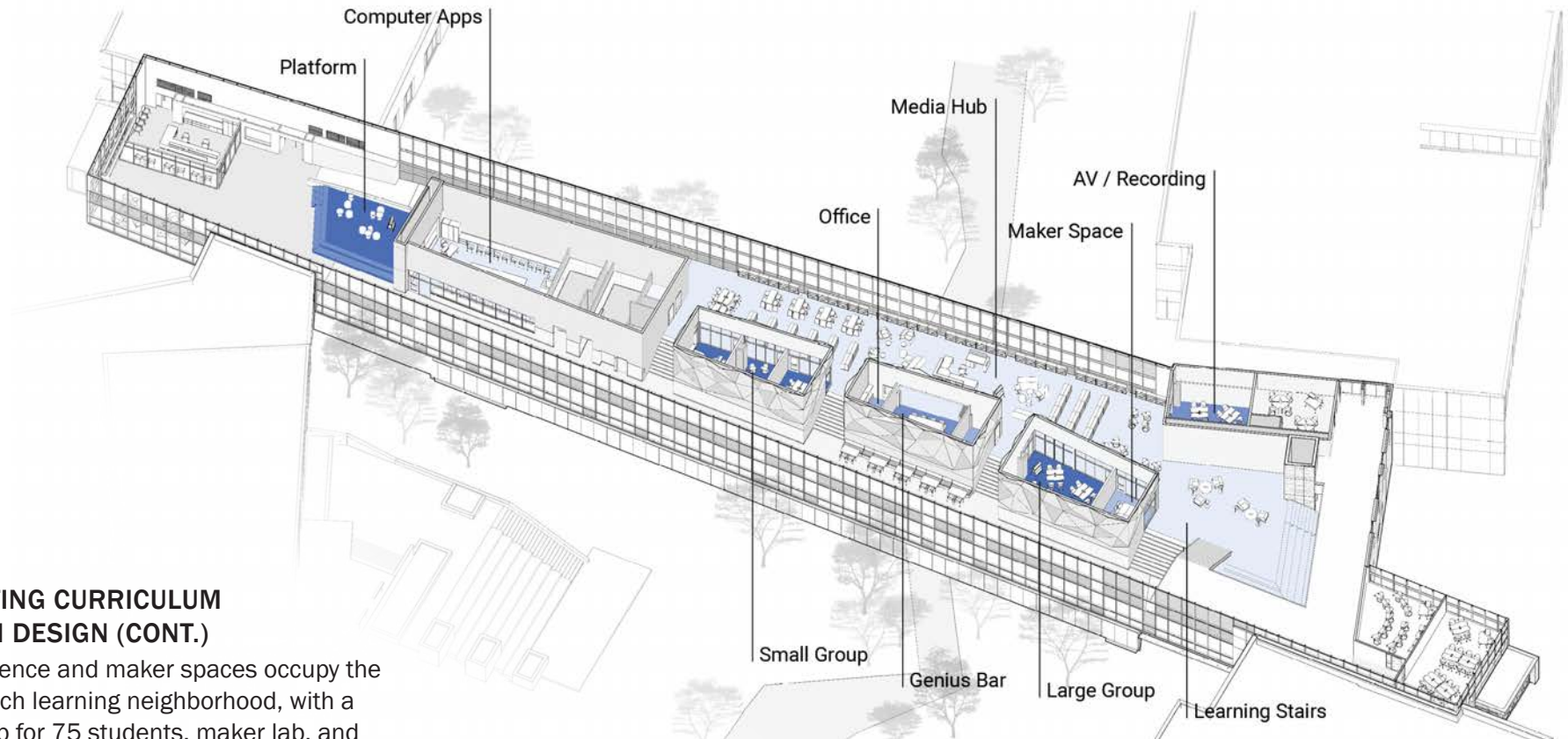
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## Educational Environment

# The Bridge



### SUPPORTING CURRICULUM THROUGH DESIGN (CONT.)

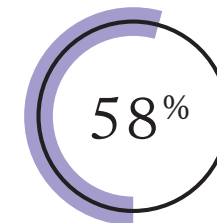
Diverse science and maker spaces occupy the heart of each learning neighborhood, with a large CoLab for 75 students, maker lab, and formal science lab.

These types of spaces are further emulated in the media hub - or bridge of the school. With additional maker labs, AV/Recording, and genius bar spaces, the hub of the school becomes an active zone of hands-on learning (a significant component of inquiry-based learning).

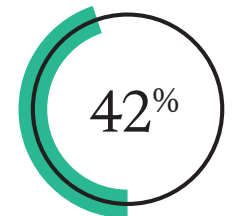
Transparency throughout allows these spaces to be on display for learners and educators to see learning happening.



Teaching and learning consistently happens outside of the neighborhood. When happening, teachers report utilizing:



outdoor learning spaces



media center/  
library



## Educational Environment

*80% of students surveyed agree that the neighborhood design makes them feel like learning is valued.*





## Educational Environment

# Learner-Centered Design

### ADAPTABILITY & FLEXIBILITY

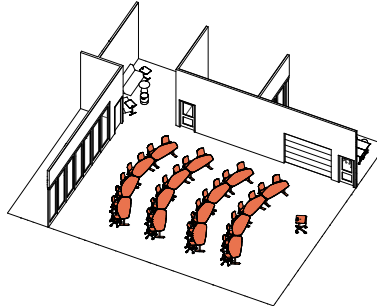
At all core learning neighborhoods, educators do not own their spaces. This allows for spaces to be specifically chosen to facilitate certain activities well, rather than try to make a space do everything “okay.” Adaptability of spaces allows them to ebb and flow in size with operable partitions, and the flexibility of furniture within yields opportunity for creating multi-modal learning spaces.

Diversity of furniture not only supports flexible teaching and learning by giving choice to how and when collaboration happens, but also accommodates a wide range of body types, making every learner and educator comfortable. Different studios have different types of furniture, prompting learners and educators to pick spaces based on the activities it needs to facilitate.

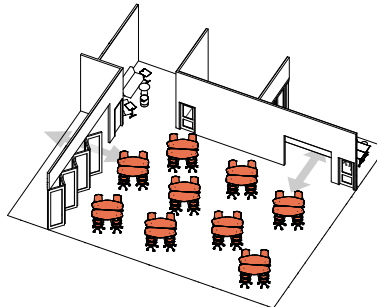
*Students surveyed cite being able to choose their table or seat as a key factor in engaged learning.*

*Students who answered questions about furniture claimed that the comfort was “pretty good” to “great.”*

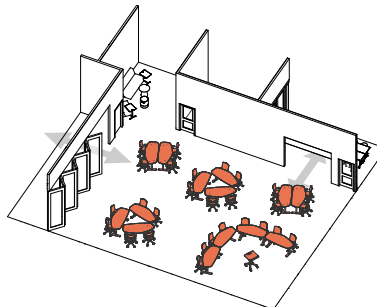
Spatial Agility -  
Reconfiguring the CoLab



Activity: Lecture



Activity: Small Group



Activity: Multiple Modalities

CoLab - Project Launch



CoLab - Small Group Collaboration





## Educational Environment

# Learner-Centered Design

### LEARNER & EDUCATOR SUPPORT

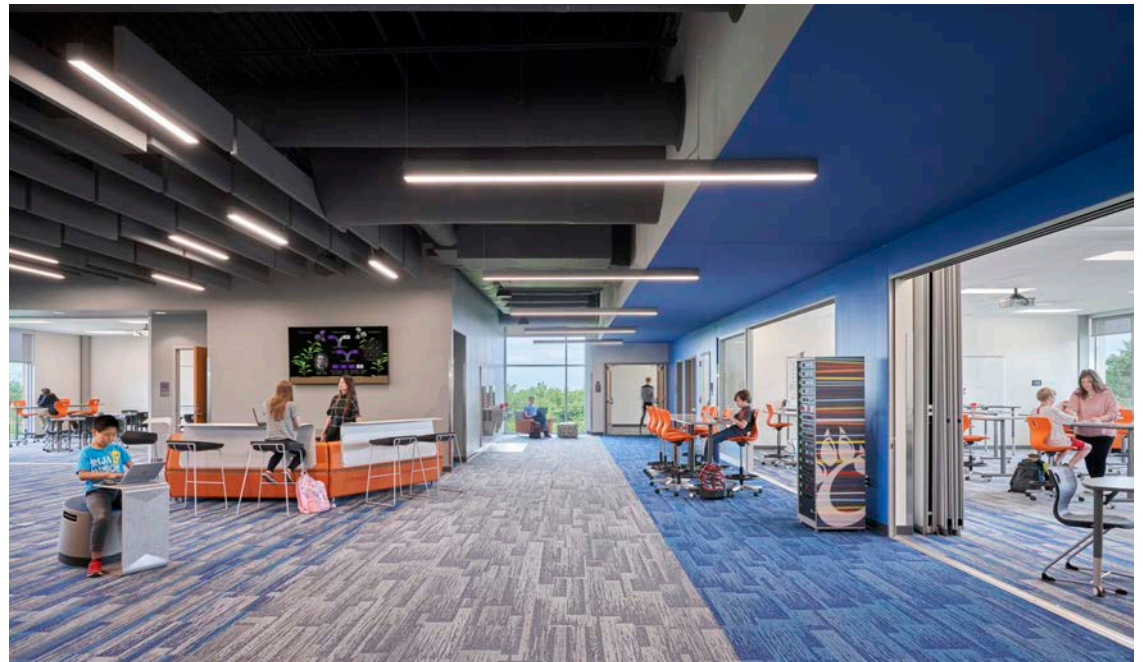
Each learning neighborhood is outfitted with an educator planning center - or essentially office space for the grade level team of educators.

Just as learners are expected to collaborate as part of their learning, so too are the educators. Spaces like the educator planning center and an educator conference center allow impromptu and planned collaboration within the realm of the learning community. With transparency into these spaces, learners can see their educators leading by example.

Educator collaboration happens in formal and informal ways. Formally, collaboration occurs in small group or open collaboration areas. Informal collaboration may occur during a free period in a classroom or in the dining area/staff lounge. This in turn blurs the line of control and creates a sense of ownership for all.

Administrative presence exists in each learning community to give students access to school leadership and foster critical relationships between the two.

*52% of teachers have created shared lesson plans and activities as a direct result of being in a neighborhood.*





## Physical Environment

# Understanding the Environment

### PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

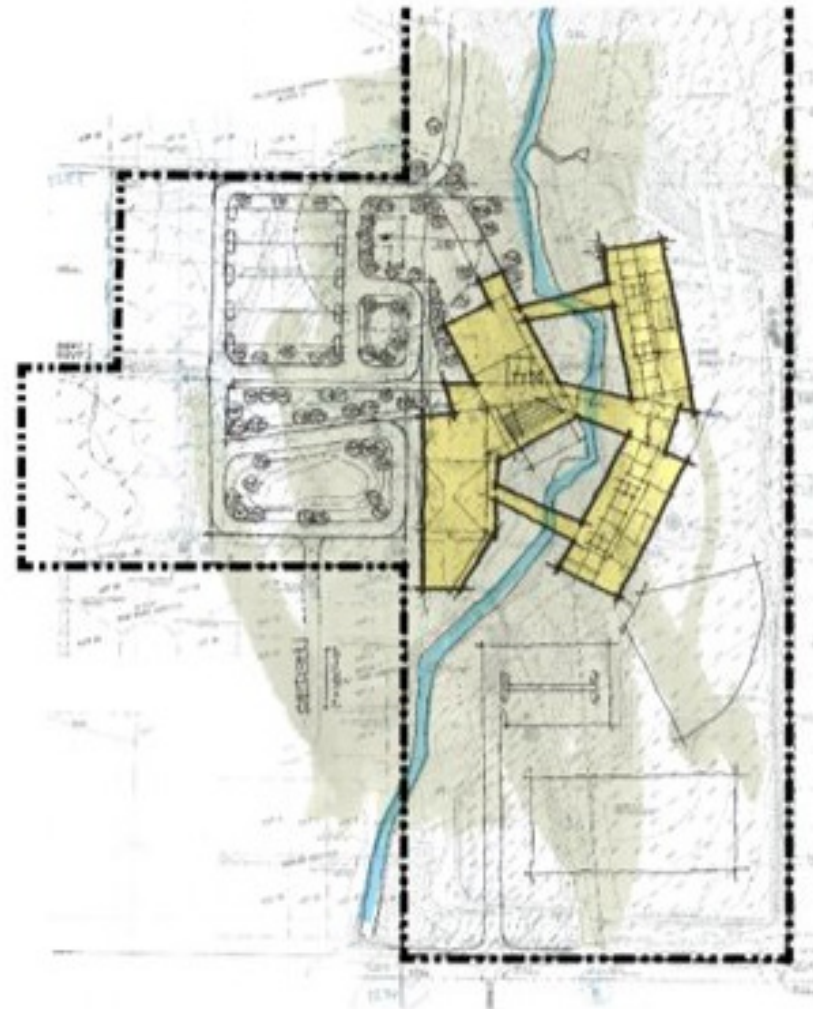
The building proper, heavily influenced by its natural setting, sits on the east and west side of a bisecting creek. Connecting the two structures is an innovation hub in the form of a 250-foot bridge positioned over the creek, with media resources, computer applications, maker labs, and broadcasting studios.

Along the creek's east bank are three core learning neighborhoods – all of which architecturally respond to the creek's natural dips and bends. Each neighborhood is identifiably different and draws from the site strata - a lush green top layer, the red clay soil, and the blue from the creek itself, meant to metaphorically carry 8th grade learners into high school and beyond. Learning studios open up with glass operable walls to collaborative hubs dubbed “front porches,” many of which promote visual connections to nature.

Outdoor learning is at the forefront of this campus design. Garage doors open to the outdoor environments such as an art patio, learning stairs cascade down from the Commons, and large boulders create “campfire” areas underneath the bridge. During the planning of the building, it was realized that no better science classroom could be created than the creek itself, lending opportunities to engage the creek itself throughout the outdoor learning environments.



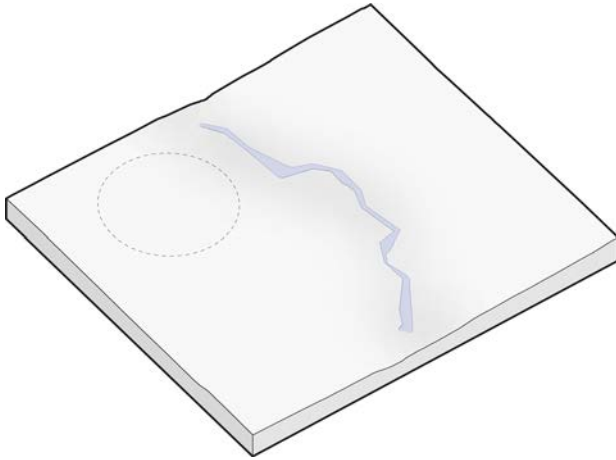
*When asked what factors are important for engaged learning, both students and teachers selected “hands-on activities/learning”*





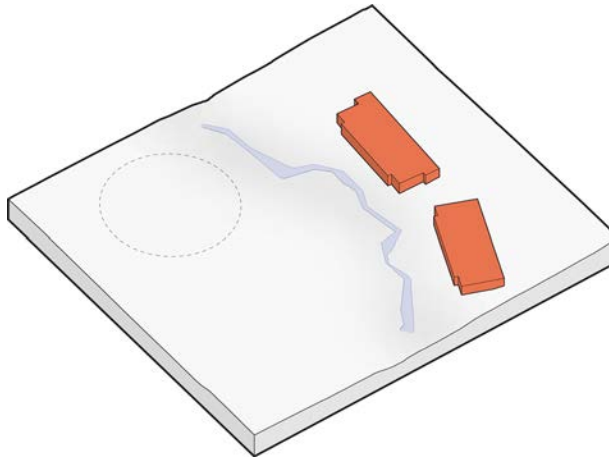
## Physical Environment

# Nestling Into the Site



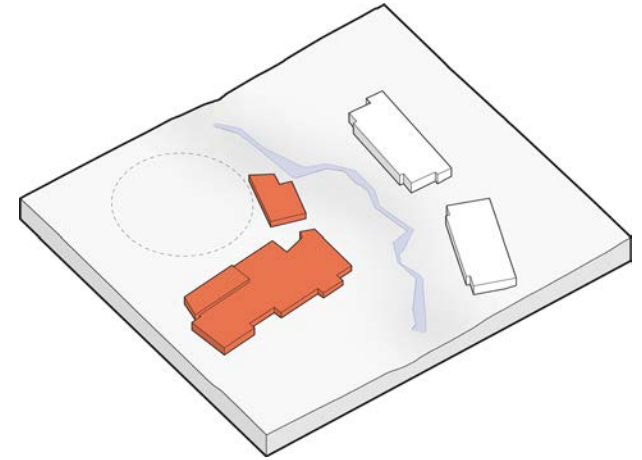
### EXISTING

*Bisecting the middle of the site is a natural creek surrounded by dense vegetation. Adjacent to it, an existing cell tower with a 160' fall radius.*



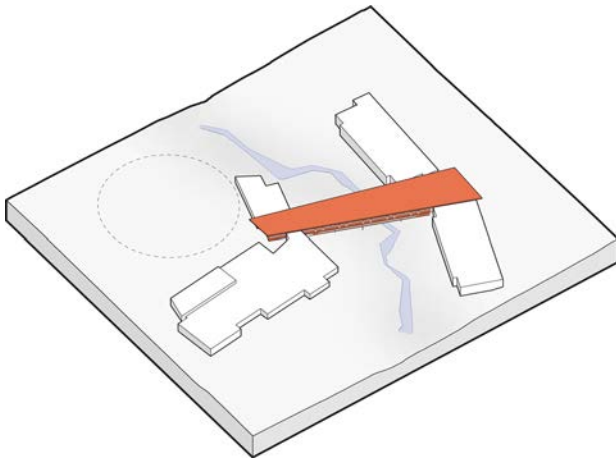
### BEND

*Learning communities (introspective realm) placed on the east portion of the site respond to the bends of the creek, positioned on the east bank with access to views and natural light.*



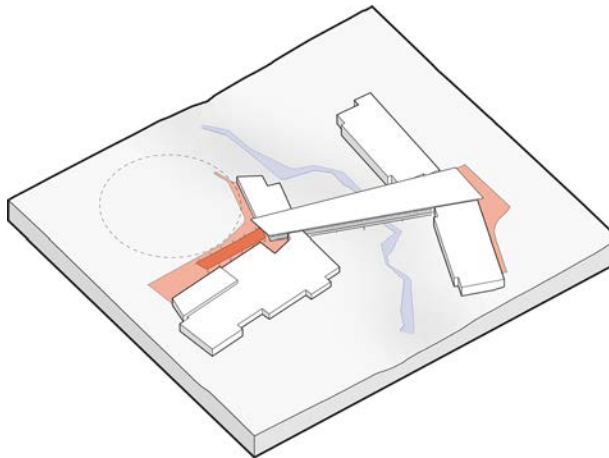
### APPROACH

*Administration, athletics, electives and commons (active realm) placed on the west portion of the site engages drop-off and public entry spaces.*



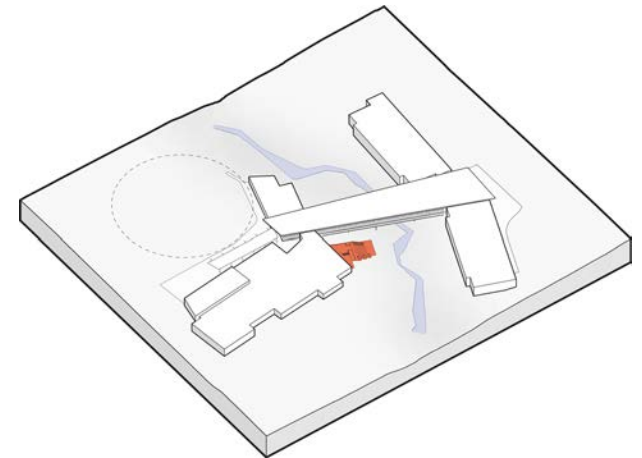
### BRIDGE

*The connector, or bridge, comprised of all media hub resources, maker labs, AV/recording, genius bar, etc.*



### SEPARATE

*Locating car and bus drop on the west and east sides of the creek, respectively. Clear and separate site circulation.*



### ENGAGE

*Outdoor learning environments spill out and down from the building to connect learners with the creek environment.*



## Physical Environment

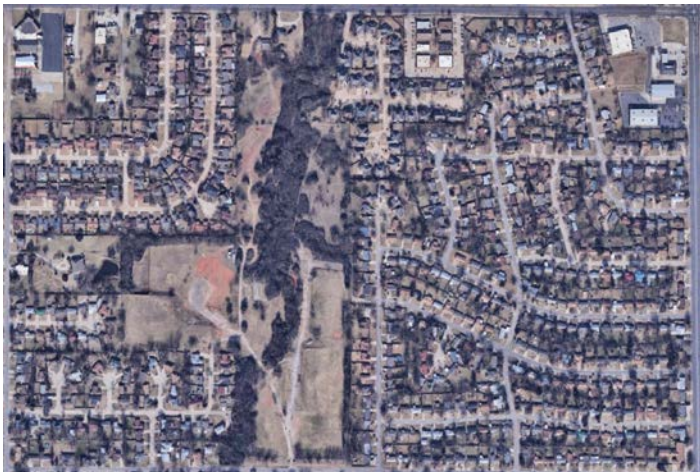
# Nestling Into the Site

### FITTING WITHIN CONTEXT

The park in which Capps Middle School is situated had been a community amenity for the surrounding neighborhood for years. In order to preserve as much of the natural environment as possible, the building was sited in portions of the park with the least amount of existing foliage, and at a point in the creek where a limited number of trees would be impacted. In turn, the building and site look like they have been there for years.

Putnam City Schools operates the campus as a community asset, allowing neighbors to come and use outdoor amenities throughout the day as the park it once was, and largely still is.

With the building situated so centrally, the design allows for the future addition of a community center or pool facility at the north end of the site as a partnership with the city Parks and Recreation Department.



### SITE PLAN KEY

- A. Main Entry
- B. Car Drop-Off
- C. Guest/Staff Parking
- D. Practice Field

- E. Softball Field
- F. Student Entry
- G. Bus Drop-Off
- H. Outdoor Learning Stair

- I. Creek Dock
- J. Service Drive



## Physical Environment

# How does the project inspire and motivate?

As one of the learner-driven guiding principles, Capps Middle School was to be a place that kids wanted to go, not somewhere they had to.

Rooted in nature and naturalness, the new facility both inside and out draws from the natural surrounding that it is set within. By doing so, the building feels sophisticated and inspiring, treating middle school learners more like the “adults” they want to be.

This campus has subsequently inspired other districts not only to re-envision their learning environments, but how that looks with a whole systems shift.

When it was time for Putnam City High School to pick a venue for their 2021 prom, they wanted it at Capps Middle School. They loved the school as a venue, they requested it again for the 2022 prom.

As the Superintendent himself said, it's a testament to the success of this campus when one of your high schools choose to host senior prom two years in a row at a middle school facility.





## Sustainability & Wellness

# Outdoor Science Classroom

*"The building allows me the flexibility to take teaching and learning outside the walls of a classroom, I can team-teach with Geography for a unit, or we can go to the creek to collect worms and water samples. The opportunities are endless."*

*- Cait Wilbur,*

*6th Grade Science Teacher*

Part of the 6th grade science curriculum is to test the PH level of the creek water every year to compare with previous levels.





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## Sustainability & Wellness

# Inspiration from Environment



### ENERGY-EFFICIENCY

Knowing that the bridge would want to take full advantage of the views to nature through ample glass, the building was situated in a way to elongate the bridge in the E/W direction and expose the most frequently occupied space (the media hub) to only northern exposure.

Structurally, the bridge roof is equipped to be able to take on the addition of rooftop photo-voltaic panels in the future and is angled to provide maximum southern exposure.

Where the building has predominately eastern and western exposure, exterior window louvers help shade the learning environments from receiving direct sunlight in the morning or afternoon, as well as mitigate the heat gain in said spaces.

The two-story connector of the building, the bridge, became a very tall volume to condition. As a result, the media hub is elevated 7' above the finish floor level to break down that volume and decrease the amount of space needing conditioning. Furthermore, it elevates the media center to "come out taller than the trees."



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## Sustainability & Wellness

# Durable & Green Materials

The exterior materials of Capps Middle School, comprised of brick, fiber cement, and glass storefront/curtain wall, limit the number of finishes to maintain while drawing inspiration from the surrounding site.

Most notably, the terra cotta fiber cement draws from the iron-rich soil in Oklahoma that is an intense orange color. Exposed throughout the site by the creek, glimpses of this vibrant soil are present throughout the campus.

The buff color of the brick harks back to the color of the vegetation in the winter months, making the building feel “of the place” even in seasons when the vegetation is predominately dormant.

With such beautiful views out of the building, ample glazing offers opportunities to visually connect, and reflects the colors and textures of much of the tree canopies and vegetation on the exterior.





## Sustainability & Wellness

# Draw to Nature

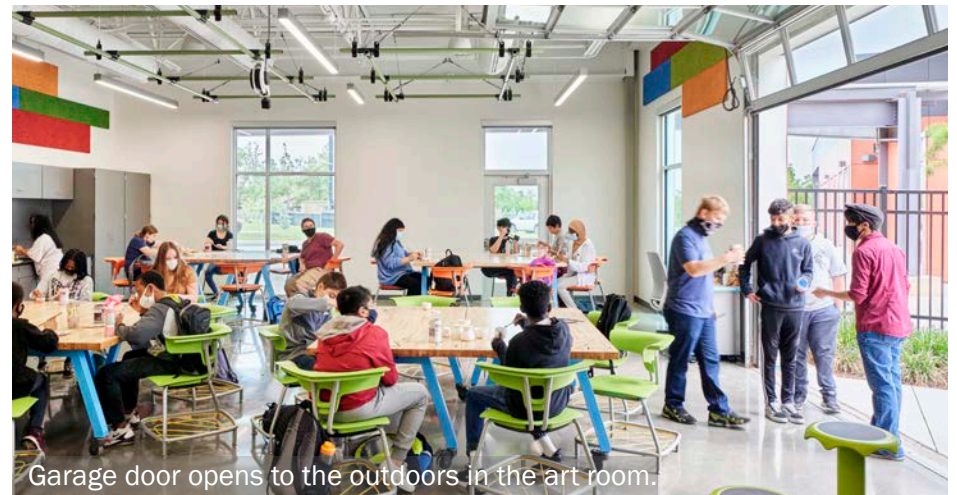
### THOUGHTFUL SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

The facility was planned with site in mind first and foremost. The existing creek and forested area not only informed the location of major portions of the building, but also the length of the bridge. It was important that as much of the site trees, foliage, and natural landscape be maintained as a new building was constructed. Furthermore, being a natural use area prior, the campus is meant to be maintained as a park amenity to the surrounding neighborhood.

Existing large boulders found on site were leveraged in lieu of new manufactured retaining walls. The result provides the appearance of a naturally formed landscape through sustainable material use, which in turn, allowed a portion of the budget to be re-focused on educational spaces.



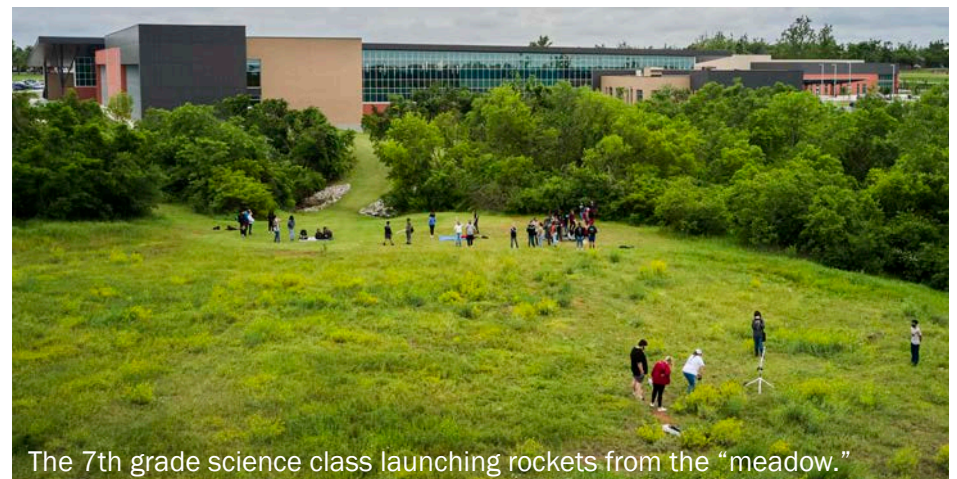
Boulders found on the site were re-purposed as retaining walls.



Garage door opens to the outdoors in the art room.



Under the bridge is a campfire space for presentations or storytime.



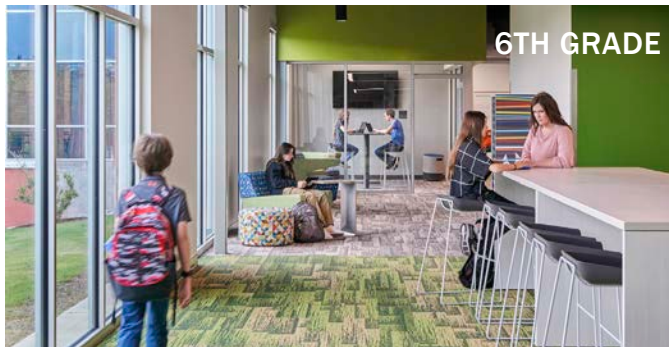
The 7th grade science class launching rockets from the “meadow.”



## Sustainability & Wellness

### OUTSIDE-IN AND INSIDE-OUT

Along the creek's east bank are three core learning neighborhoods – all of which architecturally respond to the creek's natural dips and bends. Each neighborhood is identifiably different and draws inspiration from the site strata - a lush green top layer, the red clay soil, and the blue from the creek itself, meant to metaphorically carry 8th grade learners into high school and beyond. Learning studios open up with glass operable walls to collaborative hubs dubbed “front porches,” many of which promote visual connections to nature.



## Making Learning Scalable: The FINNS Framework

*Activating Design Research to Empower Learners and Educators*

### *Flexibility: Movement Matters*

*Best practices for sight lines, acoustics, doors, and furniture must be followed for operable spaces to impact student outcomes.*

### *Individualization: Physical Needs are Unique*

*High student engagement is linked to an enhanced ability to sit, stand, or lounge in the classroom.*

### *Naturalness & Nature: Health & Comfort Matter*

*Students and teachers rated thermal comfort and acoustics the lowest among all naturalness factors.*

### *Stimulation: Activate the Senses*

*Students are significantly more engaged when they perceive collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking reflected in and valued by the design of the school.*



## Educational Specifications + Educational Brief

### EDUCATIONAL SPECIFICATIONS

Putnam City Schools did not develop Educational Specifications in a traditional way, but defined the specifications and program through the educational visioning process, which is outlined below.

### EDUCATIONAL VISIONING DOCUMENTS

*The learning environment supports the desired instructional model, pedagogy, and learning.*

#### Design Guidelines

As a framework for enhancing student-centered learning, a set of design guidelines was developed early by establishing a design thinking process to develop a new vision for learning within the new facility. These design guidelines are to provide a positive user experience, so why not start with the learner voice to develop intentionality and direction for the design of the school. Learners were asked what school learning would look like in the future and asked to share ideas and thoughts that ultimately ended in design guidelines.

**The guiding principles established were: learn by teaching, challenge-based learning, scalable learning environment, cross pollinated core curriculum, school is a place kids want to go, and collaborative learning.**

#### Learner Profile

Although we cannot predict with certainty the types of jobs that will exist in the future, we know that today's students will need a variety of

skills to be successful in life. Knowing this, we must ask what learning experiences will provide students with the essential skills to be prepared for an ever-changing world. Taking this into account, the learner profile is the tool to identify necessary traits and competencies for learners to gain through the ideal learning experiences. Beginning with the Profile of a Learner, Capps Middle School staff envisioned that learners would take an active role in their learning process. They would be able to look at information and problems from various perspectives and use that information to develop problem solving skills and a solution-focused mindset. They would have a focus on their future and the decisions they are making now that will affect that. Learners would have a healthy respect for others and value the perspectives and abilities they bring to group conversations. When the students take an active role in their own learning process, their self-motivation will increase and they will take pride and ownership of their growth; thus creating future-focused citizens who are critical thinkers and creative problem solvers.

A Capps Middle School learner would:

- Collaborate and Communicate
- Focus on the Future
- Have Set Skills and Attributes
- Cultivate Social/Emotional Awareness
- Develop Critical Thinking Skills
- Be Self Motivated

#### Educator Profile

Aligning the Educator Profile with the Learner Profile develops the “why” in transforming learning experiences to move beyond content knowledge and achievement and to also prepare learners for a rapidly changing world. The Educator Profile is a collective vision for the qualities, characteristics, and competencies for all educators. This sets a vision for defining and developing holistic skills to create an ideal to strive toward.

A Capps Middle School Educator would:

- Be Student Centered
- Be a Team Player
- Be a Facilitator
- Have set Skills and Attributes





## Educational Specifications + Educational Brief



### Expectations and Practices

In alignment to the Learner Profile and Educator Profile, academic expectations and practices were developed. This process provides clarity for educators as they shift to the new Inquiry teaching and learning vision. With the campus focus on how the environment becomes a tool for the learning experiences, educators confidently and effectively transition into a new student-centered approach.

#### A1. Teacher Collaboration

- Cross curricular teaching/planning
- Vertical (subject area) and horizontal (grade level)
- Teachers taking risks by trying something new
- Resource teachers (SpEd, Title, EL) working in collaboration with classroom teachers for ALL students

- Collaboration with students to allow for direction and flexible lessons. Example: Going deeper into how Alexander Hamilton fits into the study of the American Revolution

#### A2. Student-Centered Learning

- Extension of learning - going deeper into the subject area or unit
- Purposeful remediation - targeted to align with data from CFAs or Unit assessments
- Student ownership of learning
  - Voice and Choice
- Students taking risks
  - Growth mindset
- Engagement

#### A3. Inquiry Based Learning

- Problem/Project Based Learning
  - Active learning/movement
  - Variety

Engaging

Higher-level questioning

Effective small group instruction

- Minimum two PBL lesson experiences per quarter to start OR minimum of one PBL cross curricular (two or more content areas) experience per quarter
- If not in PBL lesson, use a variety of teaching practices to ensure all learners are reached:
  - Collaboration
  - Lecture
  - Modeling
  - Reorder/reconfigure classrooms for different learning models
- Gradual release model
  - Specify what that looks like at Capps
- Effective use of technology

#### A4. Focus on the Future

- iCap - Connect performance to future goals
  - Connect learning to career pathways
- K20 activities
- Goal setting
  - Know where they are going and how to get there

### Summary

For the learning environment to perform as intended for the desired instructional model, pedagogy, and learning, a clear process must be followed to articulate the vision, align the organizational systems, and provide professional support and development in the implementation within the new facility. Space matters and becomes a tool within the learning environment when it positively supports student-centered experiences.



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## Project Results

*School design communicates a sense of community, critical thinking, creativity, hands-on learning, and collaboration more than “taking tests.”*





## Project Results

# Finding Success

### EDUCATIONAL GOALS ACHIEVED

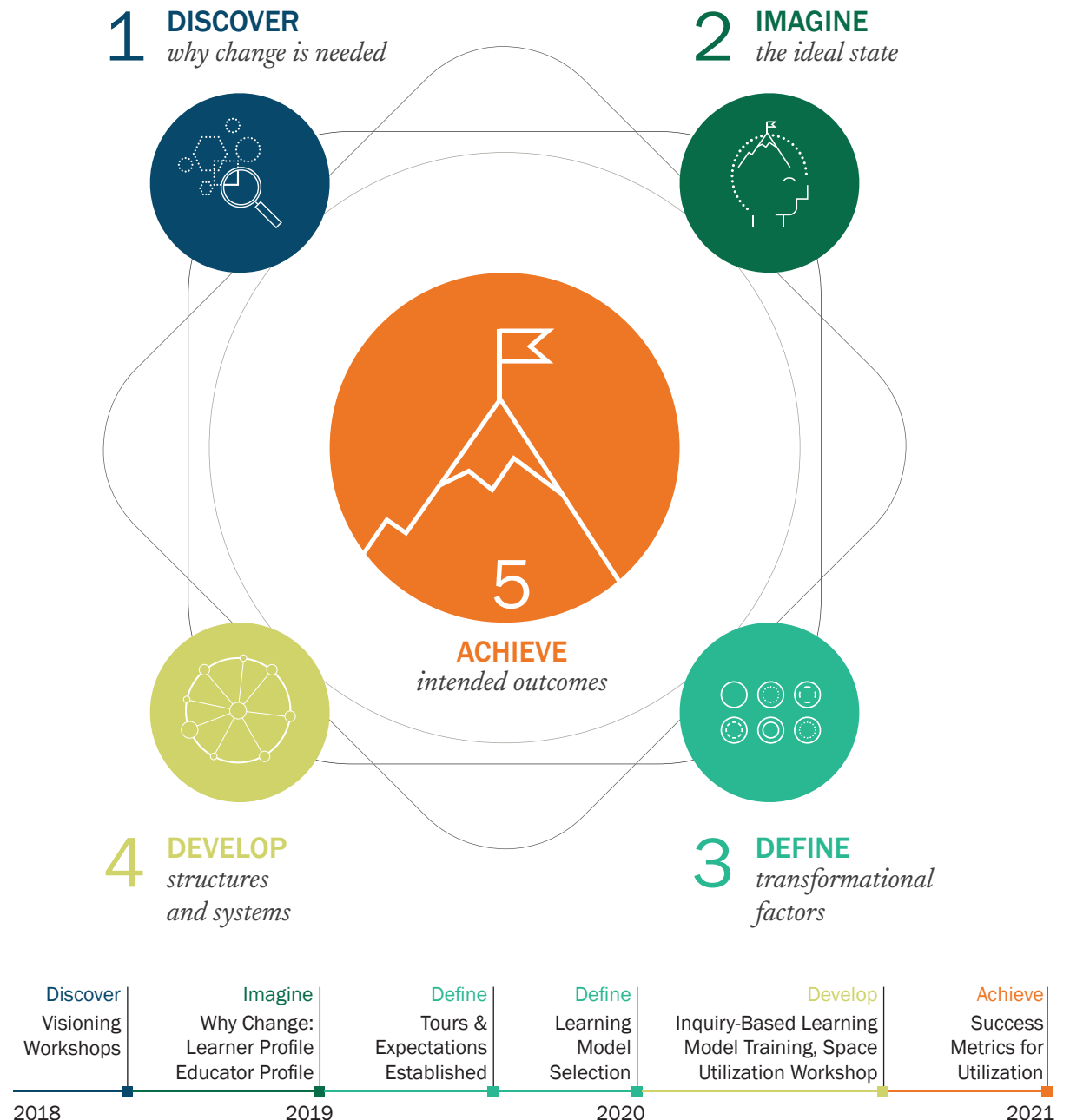
We identified the school's instructional model of inquiry-based learning and implementation process that united administrators, educators, and learners with shared goals, a clear understanding of how to reach those goals, and a common language for discussing progress. This instructional model helps educators understand how to design effective experiences that engage students in their ownership of learning.

We created key factors for a positive school and classroom climate where educators and learners feel safe, supported, engaged, and accepted.

*Students claim they somewhat to strongly agree that they have "a lot of interactions with kids in the neighborhood who have other teachers."*

This claim supports that students get to interact and work with students in other classes to support cross-curricular projects and student collaboration. Interacting with others helps build social skills and develop a sense of belonging which is linked to higher levels of social, emotional, physical and academic performance, an important focus on this campus.

Finally, we developed clear expectations and practices that build capacity, ownership, and understanding that provide for more prepared and confident educators. These expectations improve engagement and performance and they clarify the path forward.





Project Results

# Finding Success

The following is a summary of achievements reported from the survey of 579 Capps Middle School students and 78 teachers/staff.

SCHOOL DISTRICT GOALS ACHIEVED				
<div><div>Sustained Community Involvement</div><div><p>Capps Middle School promotes an environment where everyone feels safe, healthy, and ultimately happy. The environment is designed to welcome community engagement.</p><p>As COVID-19 restrictions end, the staff seek to better engage the community to achieve long-term outcomes. With the physical environment that provides visibility to others and to nature, educators and learners have a sense of acceptance, inclusion, and identity that promotes a sense of belonging and community.</p></div></div>	<div><div>Safe Working And Learning Environments</div><div><p>Providing a safe learning environment is a key focus. With clear procedures that target individual growth, relationships, and learner empowerment, the learning environment is safe physically and emotionally. Learners are engaged, connected, and supported in their learning.</p><p><i>71% of students who answered a survey question about neighborhood feelings of safety and belonging claimed that the neighborhood makes them feel safe.</i></p></div></div>	<div><div>High-Performing Collaborative Teams</div><div><p>The new environment and focus on learning allow the educators to function as high-performing teams. These teams are composed of individuals with specialized expertise and complementary skills who are goal-oriented and hyper-focused on achieving clear, outstanding results.</p><p><i>52% of teachers have created shared lesson plans and activities as a result of being in a neighborhood.</i></p><p>Together they collaborate and innovate to produce work at the highest levels.</p></div></div>	<div><div>Efficient Operations</div><div><p>By aligning the educational systems to the desired outcomes, Capps expectations are efficient and effective. Achieving organizational alignment, educators and learners understand what is expected of them, how to organize action, and how to increase engagement.</p><p>Efficient operations allow for greater innovation that Capps has capitalized upon.</p><p><i>The values that students think are reflected in the school align with the values that teachers see from school leadership.</i></p></div></div>	<div><div>Intense Focus On Student Achievement</div><div><p>Utilizing the evidence-based instructional model of inquiry learning, the students are engaged and involved in their learning process that ultimately improves achievement. The inquiry cycles help students to develop intellectually disciplined and thinking skills by providing questions that engage them through curiosity. Utilizing this model, students also develop skills in collaboration, communication, and creativity, all of which are attributes for college, career, and life success.</p></div></div>

On a scale from 1-5, Capps students and teachers scored above 3 on all measures of collaboration: student-teacher trust, learning new things from peers, sharing information with peers, and easily finding help from teachers.

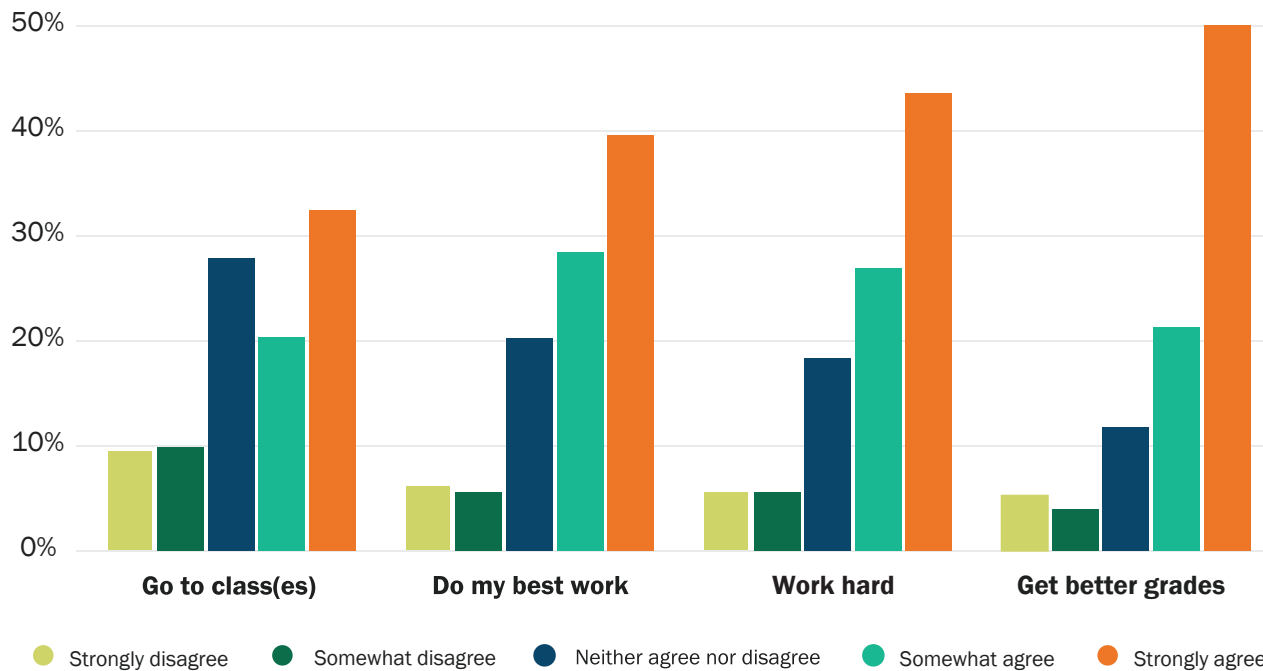


## Project Results

# Finding Success

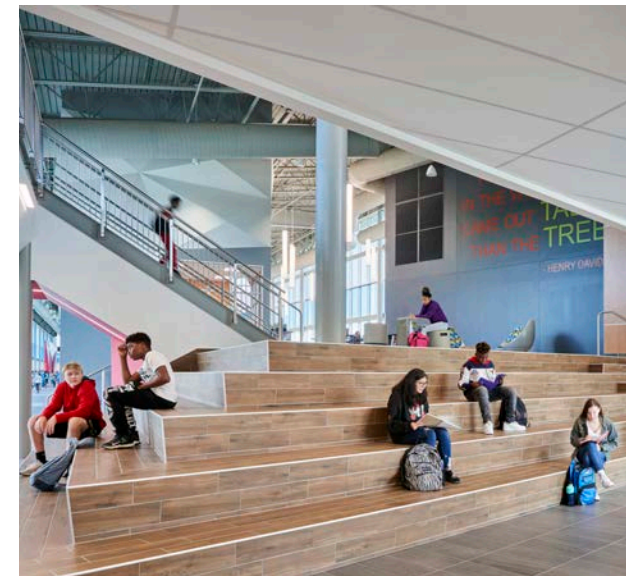
Students: "Being part of a neighborhood makes me want to..."

308 Responses



## COMMUNITY GOALS ACHIEVED

Benefits of education are societal and personal. Education leads to more opportunities and a healthier life. Learning in an environment that supports movement and collaboration prepare individuals for learning, promotes appropriate behaviors, and allows for the development of social skills, all augmenting brain function. Capps Middle School is designed to promote learners that are more productive, have better communication, increase critical thinking skills, and have a great sense of discipline. This environment prepares learners with the skills needed for college, career, and life.





## Project Results

# Finding Success

### UNINTENDED RESULTS

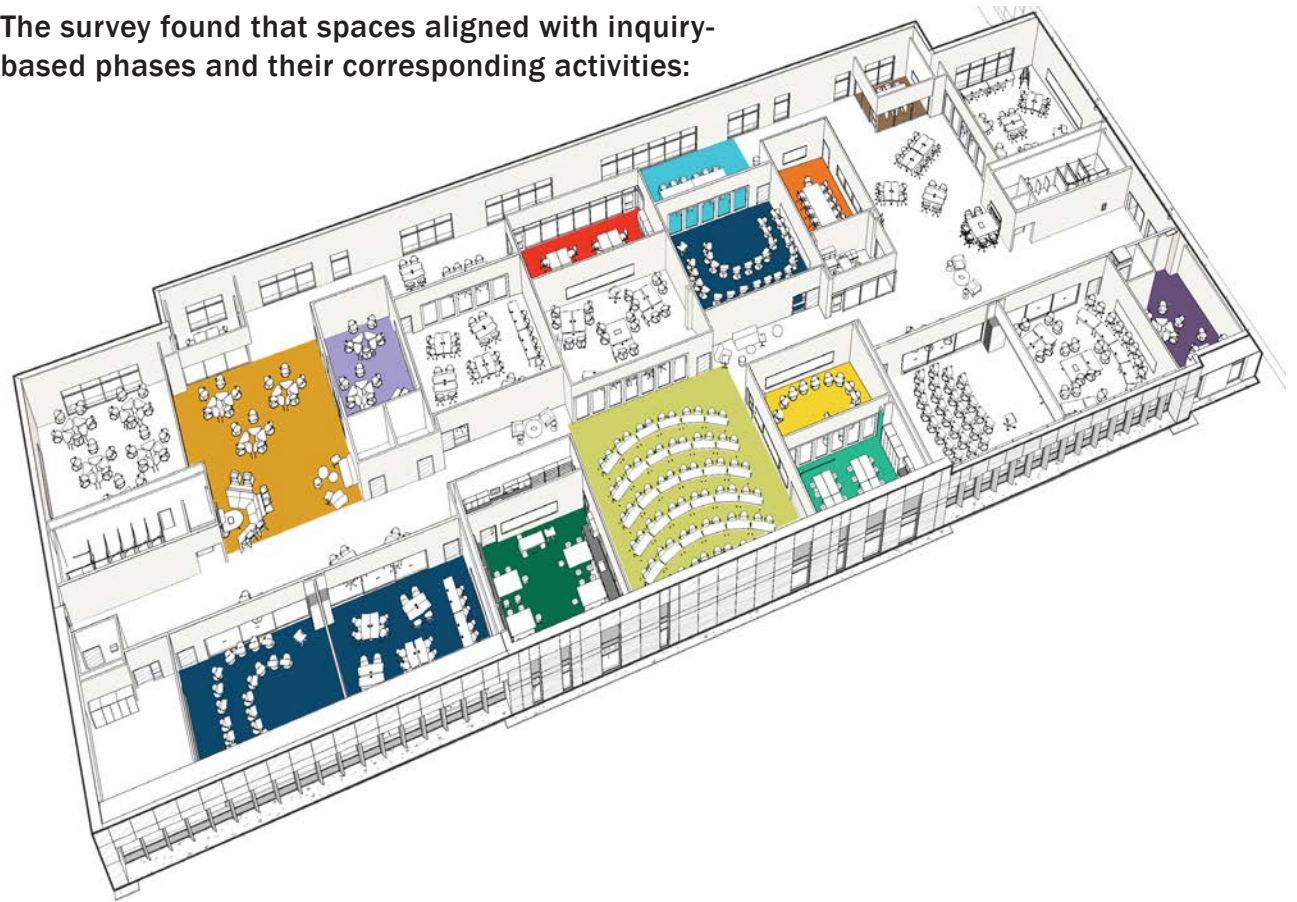
Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, education took a hit. Yet, the focus on inquiry-based learning in a collaborative environment allowed Capps Middle School to maintain student growth in a hybrid world. The training on inquiry-based learning with the staff and BOLD educators was a just-in-time solution. Educators took the academic expectations and translated them to a virtual setting to keep learning a focus.

Once the learners were back at their school environment, the learning was seamlessly translated back to an in-person experience.

The establishment of clear expectations, practices, and procedures that allowed for smooth transitions between virtual and in-person was an unintended achievement for Capps Middle School.

*75% of teachers say the neighborhood helps students take part in collaborative learning projects.*

The survey found that spaces aligned with inquiry-based phases and their corresponding activities:



**Learning Commons**  
sharing,  
revision,  
focus,  
reflection



**Resource**  
research



**Teacher Planning**  
reflection,  
small group,  
research,  
planning



**Front Porch**  
breakout  
space,  
small group,  
collaboration



**Teacher Workroom**  
collaboration,  
research,  
planning,  
designing



**Small Group**  
small  
group  
work



**Learning Studio**  
feedback



**Lab**  
creating,  
making,  
instruction,  
launch,  
design testing



**Colab**  
sharing  
design  
testing



**Maker Lab**  
creating  
making,  
instruction  
launch,  
presentations



**Discussion**  
focus  
reflection,  
small group



**Title One**  
focus,  
reflection



*Capps Middle School has done more than rebuild a campus. By leveraging the opportunity to have a building become a catalyst for cultural change, Putnam City Schools set their aim high - and the post-occupancy study confirms their design is supporting their learning community as they reinvent education.*

