

# GLOVER MIDDLE SCHOOL

SPOKANE, WA



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Glover Middle School realizes a new way to deliver education and community support with a building exemplifying their student-centered values while fostering unconditional belonging and access.

Fundamental to the Glover Middle School culture is the importance for staff and administrators to

meet students on their level to keep them in school, supporting them socially and emotionally while also keeping them on track academically.

The opportunity to realize this culture in a new building arrived via bond passage in 2018. Through community, student, and staff visioning activities, the

concept of discovery became the core planning element with the goals of sparking a sense of curiosity; encouraging students to explore and connect with various programs throughout the school, with views into all academic, student support, and outdoor learning environments; and supporting discovery of oneself, while connecting to the broader

community.

Responding to the natural environment, the aesthetic inspiration was derived from the “Bowl and Pitcher”, a geological feature within nearby Riverside State Park. Using biophilic connection to the greater landscape deepens the students’ connection to their community.

## SCOPE OF WORK & BUDGET

OWNER	TOTAL SITE AREA	COST PER SQUARE FOOT	CONSTRUCTION COST	OCCUPANCY DATE	SQUARE FEET PER PUPIL	STUDENT CAPACITY	GRADES HOUSED	BUILDING GROSS AREA
Spokane Public School	17 acres	\$305.38	\$42,760,000	8/2/2021	187	750	6-8	140,024 GSF

# PROJECT GOALS:



## **DISCOVERY:**

The building design encourages students to engage with programs and activities that may feel out of their comfort zone, promoting exploration within a safe and encouraging environment.



## **COMMUNITY:**

Foster students' individuality while also understanding how the school and students connect to the broader community.



## **CONNECTION:**

Minimize barriers to access basic needs, such as food and clothing, while also supporting social, emotional, and academic needs for students and families.



## **INCLUSIVITY:**

Create a variety of learning environments that support the unique needs of each student throughout the day. Staff and administrators must meet students on their level, with spaces that make the student feel comfortable regardless of the topic being discussed.



Multiple space configurations within a Learning Neighborhood promote student choice and agency.



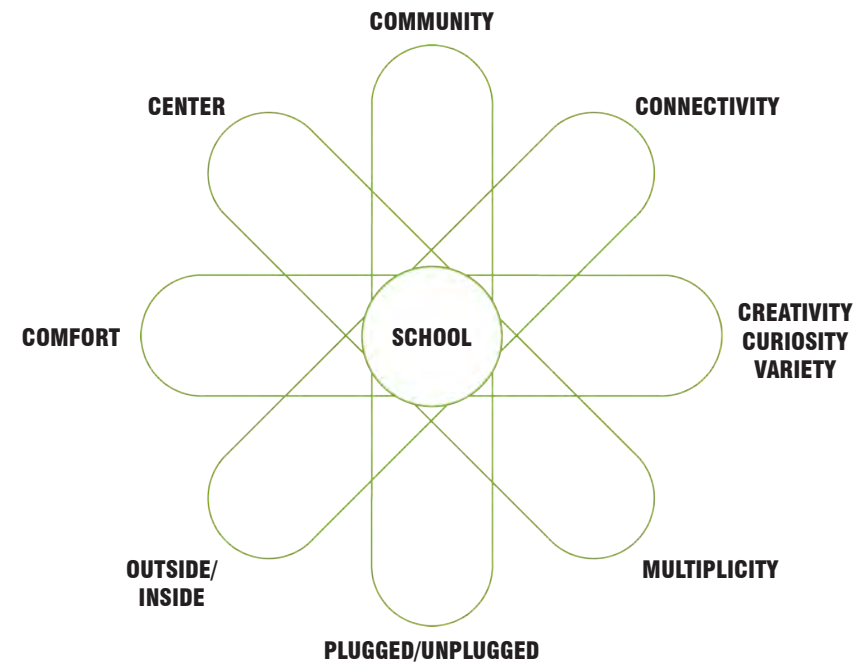
# SCHOOL & COMMUNITY RESEARCH / ENGAGEMENT

The original Glover Middle School was built in the 1960's in northwest Spokane and serves one of the lowest socio-economic zip codes within Washington State. The school is a refuge for many students and families, with multiple generations of family being proud Glover graduates.

Prior to the commencement of the Glover Middle School Educational Specification and design process, a series of district-wide workshops were held culminating in a three-day Community Facility Design Forum. The primary goal: develop principles to guide the design and development

of the six middle schools across different Spokane communities. This visioning process engaged stakeholders and representatives from the entire Spokane Public School (SPS) community. Located in Eastern Washington, Spokane Public Schools is the third largest school district in the

state of Washington and the largest on the east side of the state, serving 28,000 students, including approximately 5,500 middle school students.



**DISTRICT-WIDE DESIGN PRINCIPLES**



The Community Facility Design Forum generated eight Middle School Facility Design Principles; these district-wide principles were interpreted through the lens of the Glover Middle School staff, students, and advisory committee. Through this foundational work of reimagining Glover Middle School utilizing the framework of the district-wide principles, the following Challenges and Assets were identified.

## CHALLENGES:

- Challenging old habits and educational delivery for staff.
- The majority of students live with difficult socio-economic conditions often needing broad support to access necessities.
- Retaining the Glover culture as the school expanded to serve 6th Graders in a new school (historically a 7-8 model).
- Existing school needed to remain in operation as the new school was being built on an already tight site, while also preserving existing west playfields.

## ASSETS:

- Strong school culture with innovative, student-focused leadership.
- Established, experienced, and well-connected staff despite isolation of existing building design.
- Staff initiated programs developed to address students' and families' needs, including the Glover Closet.

From the beginning of the District-Wide Facility Design forum to the Glover design workshops it was crucial to bring all voices to the table to identify the positive components of the culture and highlight elements that could be improved with the new building. The inclusive and welcoming process established trust for students, families, and staff before any design began. Student voices were encouraged and elevated from the beginning of the process, highlighting to kids that the school is truly for them.



Student collaboration and discussion at the Glover Middle School Student Workshop #3.

# EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The Glover design process was initiated with two workshops open to school staff, and

six workshops for students. Workshop members identified the images and words that

embodied the vision of the middle school facility design principles through the lens of

Glover's values: Provide Services for All, Student Growth, & Culture / Climate.

## ESTABLISHED SCHOOL CULTURE

## WORKSHOP EXAMPLE

## FEEDBACK

### Provide Services For All:

What is required to support the whole student and / or family at Glover?

### Student Growth:

What contributes to student growth?

### Culture / Climate:

How could the built environment support culture / climate at Glover?



Example Workshop Board - workshops included six boards with worksheets to explore principles.

### STAFF VALUES:

- Large gathering spaces
- Passive supervision
- Active engagement between students and teachers

### SHARED VALUES:

- Belonging
- Discovery

### STUDENT VALUES:

- Individual / Flexible Space that is customizable
- Sense of community
- Personal Scale





SERVE



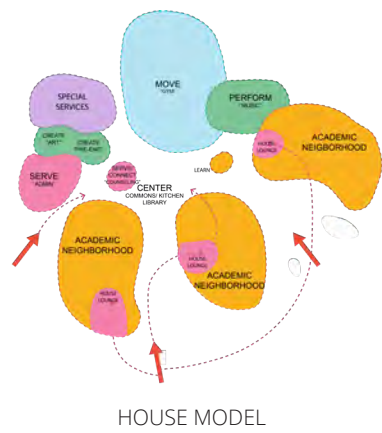
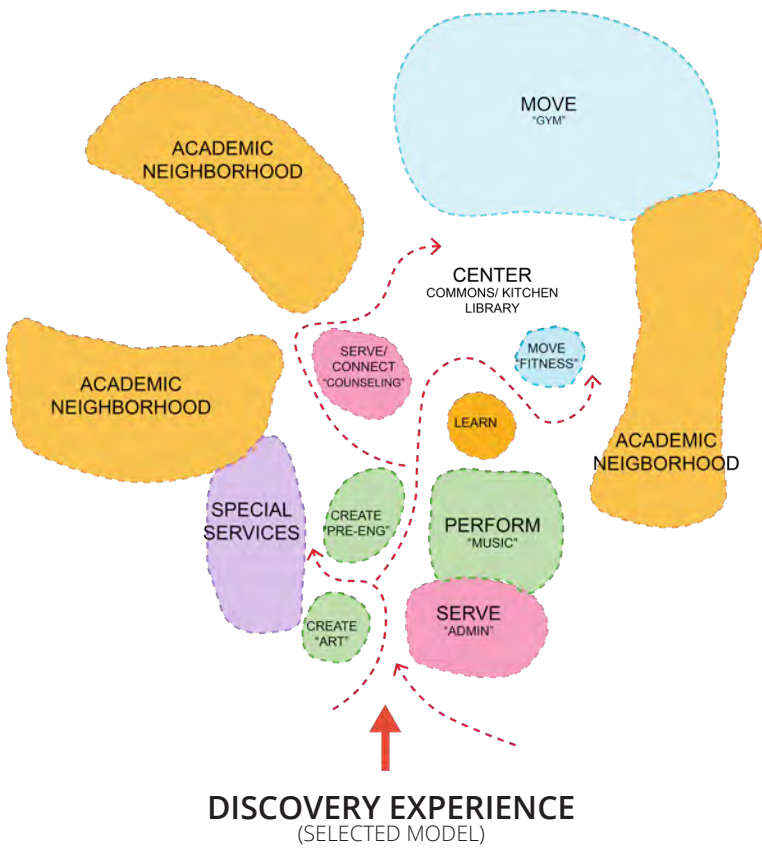
CREATE



LEARN

Diagrams supporting educational and cultural objectives in different ways were explored to realize feedback shared in initial workshops. Ideas valued by participants were translated into different floor plans; for example, the student values of Personal Scale and Sense of Community were translated into the "House" experience model; the "Town Square" experience model responded to the Staff values of Large Gathering Spaces and Passive Supervision.

In the end, the Discovery Model piqued the interest of the Glover steering committee because it accomplished the shared ideals of Students and Staff – Belonging and Discovery. In this model, curriculum and teaching are leveraged to create a sense of discovery through the building layout, creating a unique educational environment, customizable for each student.



MOVE



LEARN



CREATE

Discovery ideals blending with Spokane River inspiration.

### Schematic Design floor plan

## Design Development floor plan

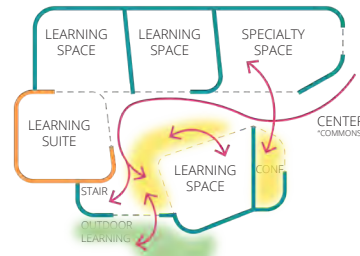
Center is also housed in a centrally located and welcoming space, with easy access for students, to encourage interaction with their support services, emphasizing the importance of emotional and social well-being to the learning process.



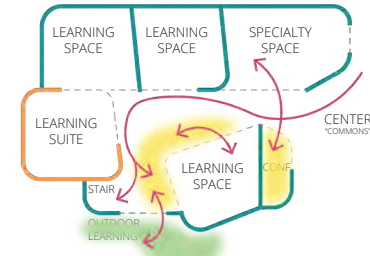
The transition from elementary school to middle school can be challenging. The committee focused on creating small learning communities within the school, called Learning Neighborhoods, which reflect some familiar qualities of an elementary school environment.

Appropriate scale and removal of traditional corridors ensured that the space is focused on learning, supporting various types of teaching styles and activities. Through diagrams and discussion, shared spaces were created, including small glass huddle spaces and flexible spaces with operable walls that allow for continual customization of the Neighborhoods to support educational delivery. The six Academic Neighborhoods house the core academic spaces such as English, history and math, along with a learning suite outfitted for science. The central collaboration space is connected to the classrooms with both fixed and operable glass walls, allowing for visual connection while also providing acoustical separation as needed. The operable walls were thoughtfully placed to allow for classrooms to expand and foster collaboration across learning disciplines, creating a dynamic environment that can respond to a variety of needs.

## CONCEPTUAL LEARNING NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY

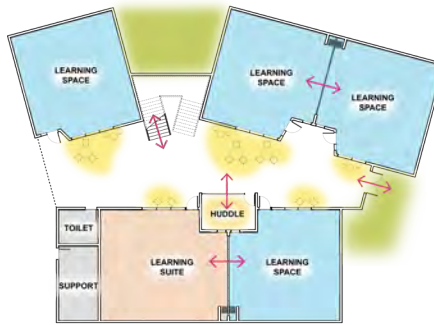


PEEK-A-BOO 1ST FLOOR



PEEK-A-BOO 2ND FLOOR

## SCHEMATIC DESIGN LEARNING NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY



LEVEL 1



LEVEL 2

## FINAL LEARNING NEIGHBORHOOD FLOOR PLAN



LEVEL 1



LEVEL 2





Huddle rooms within the Learning Neighborhoods provide visible but acoustically secure spaces for student groups, intervention meetings, or instructor and student one-on-one meetings.

Learning Neighborhoods are not only flexible unto themselves but are adaptable and flexible on a much larger scale. The six Academic Neighborhoods are housed within three “wings”, two Learning Neighborhoods per wing. This planning allows

the school the flexibility to increase the scale of a Neighborhood to go from six independent communities to 3 large communities if needed to support current academic programming. Interdisciplinary instruction occurs within

the Neighborhoods, merging different subjects and class periods through movement of operable walls between rooms, or between rooms and Neighborhood corridors spaces.





# RESULTS OF PROCESS

The final design used scale, transparency, and removal of barriers, to allow students to explore, grow and learn more thoroughly, supporting both academic and mental health of students and families. The building responds to the student by using district elevated

principles such as connectivity, community, variety, multiplicity, and a focus on understanding the student perspective. Design elements like built-in benches, varying scale, and biophilia all support and create a comforting environment for children to connect and learn. Flexible,

soft furniture solutions, middle school focused outdoor play equipment, and even a ping pong table in the commons are just a few signals to the students that they own the building. Varying space types, including a learning stair in the commons, a seating area

under Learning Neighborhood stairs, and a built-in learning bar near the commons supports individualized learning anytime, anywhere, while also meeting the social and emotional needs of students.



Overlooking the Learning Commons with views into the flex 'maker' classrooms, enticing students to try new curriculum.

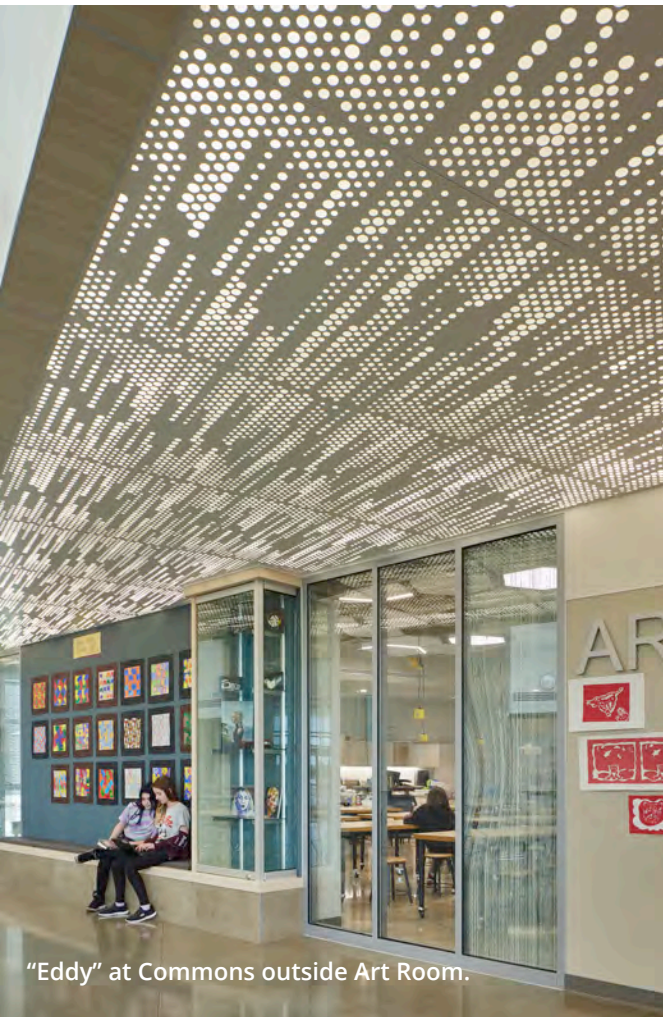


# DISCOVERY

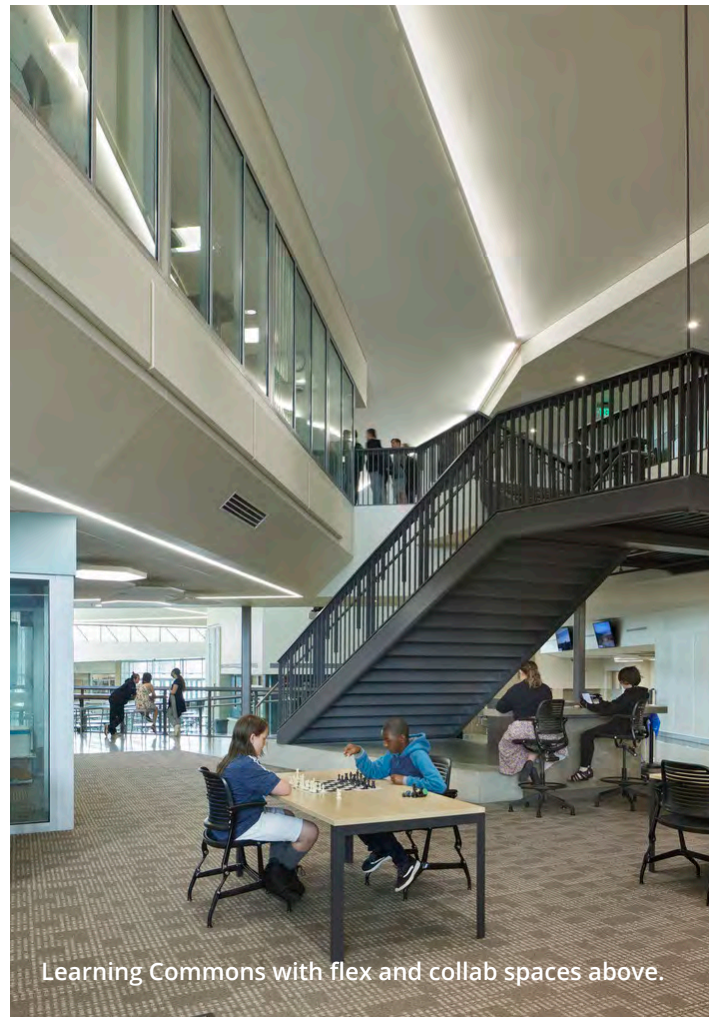
Like the basalt boulders found in the Spokane River, specialty learning environments like music, art, and CTE are distributed thoughtfully throughout the commons, featuring all the exciting learning opportunities that Glover provides to its students. The students, like the river, flow around these spaces. Windows

highlight and encourage students to explore. Benches, like small eddies, are found throughout the commons and Learning Neighborhoods, to allow for reflection and connection. The building exemplifies the student-centered values of the Glover staff and administration, strengthening their ability to enhance that

culture, to truly deliver experiences that foster both unconditional belonging and access for generations to come.



"Eddy" at Commons outside Art Room.



Learning Commons with flex and collab spaces above.



Looking down at Events Entry from second floor fitness rooms.





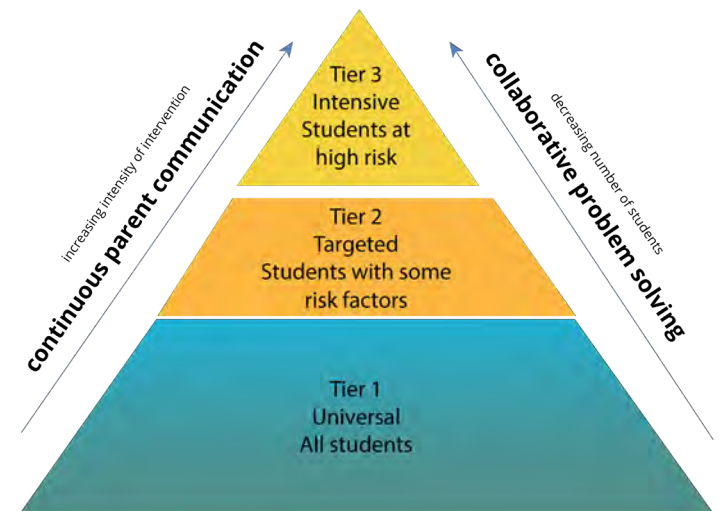
# COMMUNITY

The environment now promotes the multi-tiered support system utilized by administrators and staff, allowing them to meet the academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs of the students. For example, Learning Neighborhoods provide visual connection, fostering student independence, promoting staff-to-student, and staff-to-

staff support. The variety of connected learning spaces allow teachers and students to find the environment that works best for them. This same variety of physical spaces also serves the emotional and behavioral needs of students. In the old building, teachers looking to address student behavior were left with few options and most situations

ended with the student being asked to leave the classroom - their community. The stigma of leaving the classroom community can damage the student-teacher relationship, causing mistrust. Teachers or intervention staff can now meet students within the Neighborhood, addressing the issue while also maintaining the

management of the class. With behavioral discipline stigmas removed, student-teacher relationships are maintained, which fosters better outcomes for the whole child and enables all learners to be successful.



TIER OF STUDENT SUPPORT





# INCLUSIVITY

Varying spaces offer students the opportunity to find a place that is right for them, throughout the day. Whether that space is an overlook into the commons, an open, more social learning stair for larger interactions, or outside in the student play areas, there is a place for everyone to find what they need to reflect and

recharge. The planning and design of Glover continually reinforce a sense of discovery and inclusion. The concepts of density and connection of space were purposefully constructed to reduce travel time and allow for more student-to-student and teacher-to-student interaction in the Learning Neighborhoods, thus strengthening relationships

and reinforcing the idea of a safe home base. The design also supports inclusion through the seamlessly integrated ramp in the center of the learning stairs, the incorporation of special education classrooms within Learning Neighborhoods, and sensory breakout spaces that are welcoming and accepting to all students and staff.



Bench near Learning Commons and Intervention



Sensory space in Neighborhood



View of Learning Stair with accessible ramp at Commons





# CONNECTION

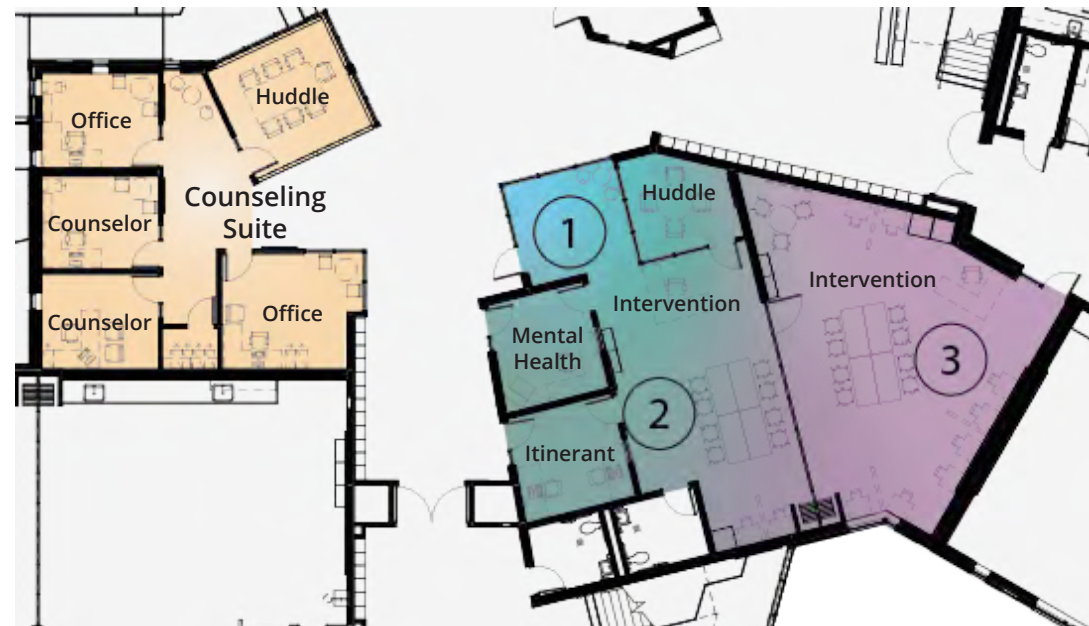
To be sensitive to families and caregivers who may have a negative association with authority, the administration elected to have a distributed model of service. The stigma of “visiting the office” is removed, with traditional administrative spaces woven throughout the building. Although families are greeted in the office, staff members now have multiple

meeting locations to choose from throughout the building, including the FCRC (Family Community Resource Center), Counseling, Intervention, and Huddle Rooms. From the relaxing quality of the FCRC to the doorless Counseling Suite, it is made clear to students that they are the priority. Adults are available to support them in the students’ environment. Adjacent

to Counseling is the Intervention room which is centrally located to encourage students to seek support. Students understand that academic success and mental health and wellbeing are on equal footing. This whole child approach at Glover has successfully served students as they transitioned back to school after the pandemic.



Huddle Rooms provide acoustical privacy but passive visual supervision.



The low barrier Counseling Suite welcomes students and is directly across from Intervention. Intervention meets the needs of different students throughout the day, including students who cannot resolve conflict or modify behavior within their Learning Neighborhoods.

1. The glass entry into Intervention is a space for students to check in with an interventionist and talk about their daily goals or a specific event.
2. Students in this zone are working with an interventionist on their goals or speaking to a drug counselor.
3. Students in this zone are spending time working on plans to repair relationships and correct behavior before returning to their communities.



# SUMMARY OF RESULTS

In a pre / post observational study utilizing ethnographic methods, each student was observed for one of the below five types of engagement.

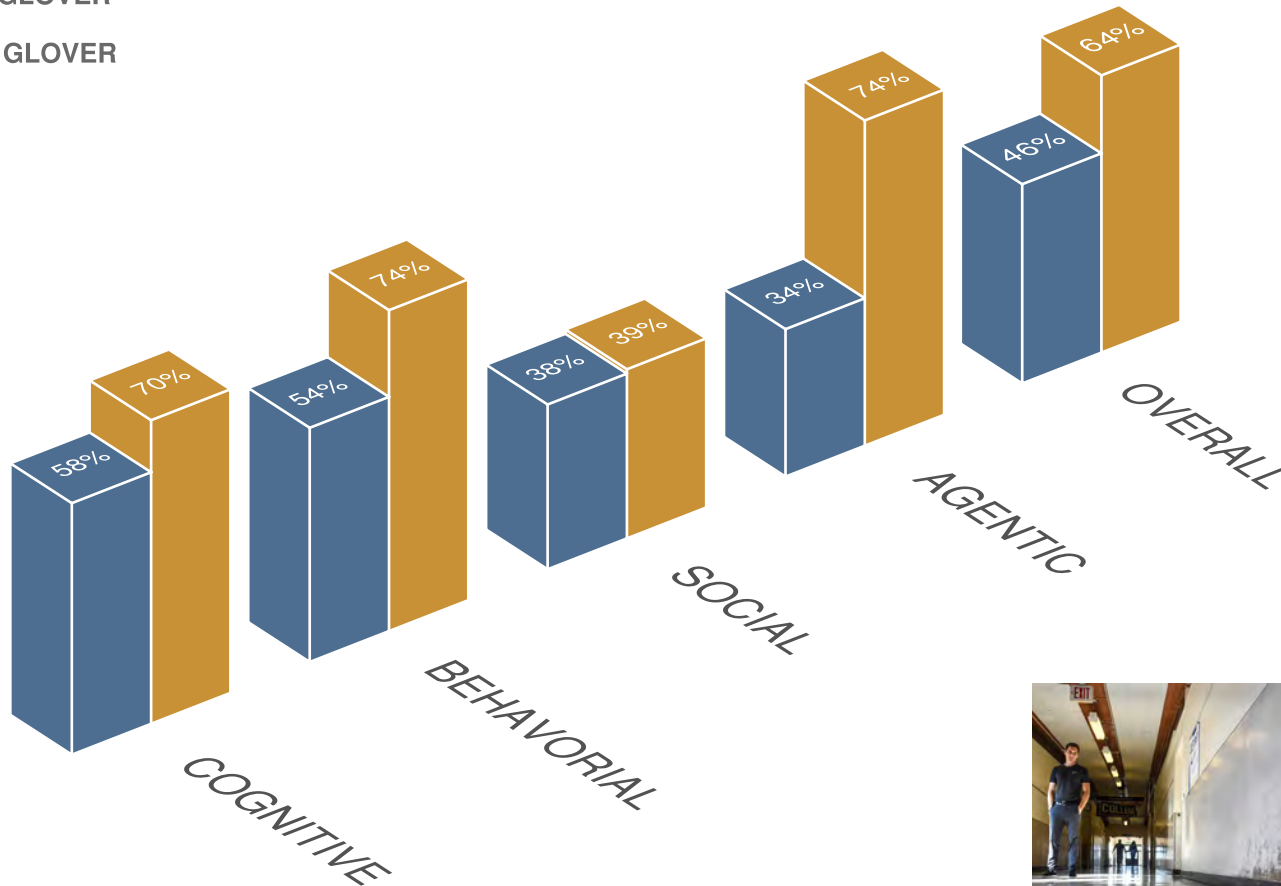
Classes observed included four teachers and students of all grade levels, from the choir, creative arts, career exploration, English and Math programs. In

both cases the building staff and student were made aware of the observer attending their class. The overall increase in engagement is significant

between New Glover and Old Glover, increasing 18.4% with the student focused design.

## ENGAGEMENT CHART

OLD GLOVER  
NEW GLOVER

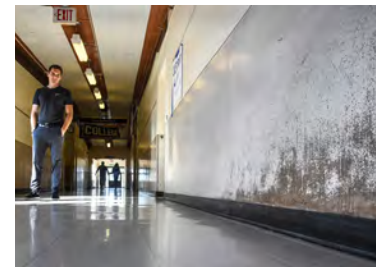


**Cognitive Engagement:**  
Remaining on task with attention on object of the lesson

**Behavioral Engagement:** Physical interaction with object of the lesson

**Social Engagement:**  
Interaction with peers or teachers at the appropriate time

**Agentic Engagement:**  
Engaging in academically oriented tasks during 'free time' or unstructured class time



Old Glover Corridor  
Photo Credit: Dan Pelle

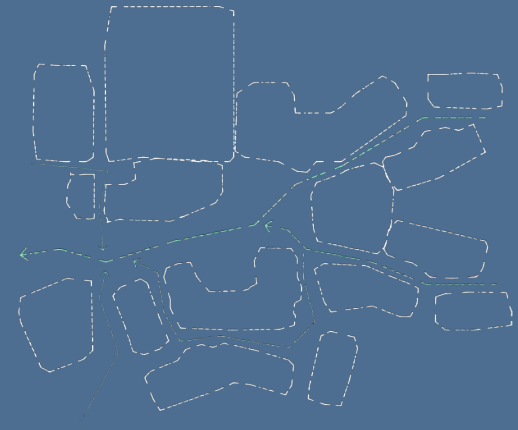


New Learning Neighborhood at Glover

# PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

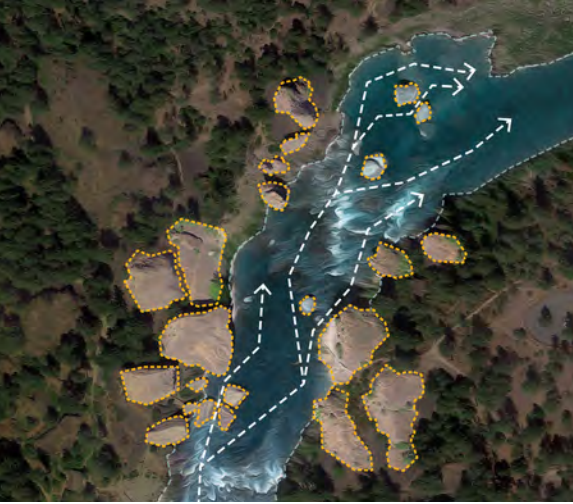
The building is inspired aesthetically by the well-known Bowl and Pitcher geologic feature within nearby Riverside State Park. Students move through the school on a central path, akin to how the Spokane River meanders through the rock formations. On the path,

students navigate around brick volumes that house learning areas with rich texture and colors that reflect the local landscape.



View of Spokane River at icon Bowl and Pitcher







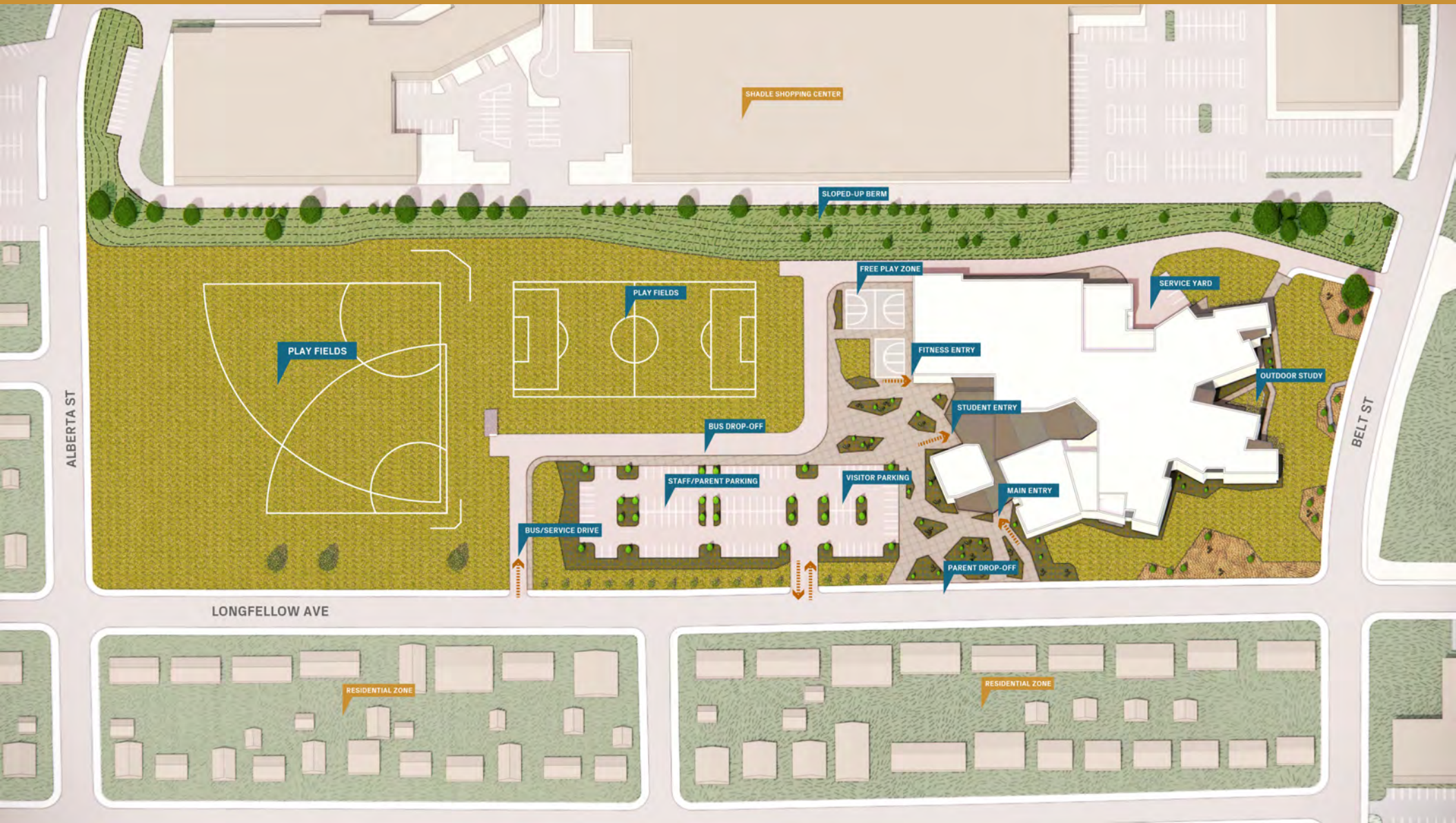
The 17-acre existing suburban site has an active shopping center to the north, a park and library to the east, and a residential neighborhood to the south and west. The original building was placed at the center of the site, and the

existing building had to remain in operation during construction of the new school. The footprint of the new building was located on the east side of the site to improve the connection between the library and the park while also preserving the

existing playfields to the west. Riverside State Park bookends the Glover community to the west, and it provides identifiable and iconic natural landscape that is well known to the community.

*"We want to look at middle schools through the lens of student. When we look at middle school now, we want to bring up the long-term relationships that the elementary school staff and students have and not push down a feeling of racing to finish high school starting in middle school."*

Greg Forsyth- SPS Director of Capital Projects





Derived from a local geological feature, the Bowl and Pitcher within Riverside State Park immediately west of the school, students move through the central path, similar to the river. The learning environments, like the rock formations are sprinkled throughout the building and often housed in dark textured brick like the local basalt boulders. Introducing biophilia connects

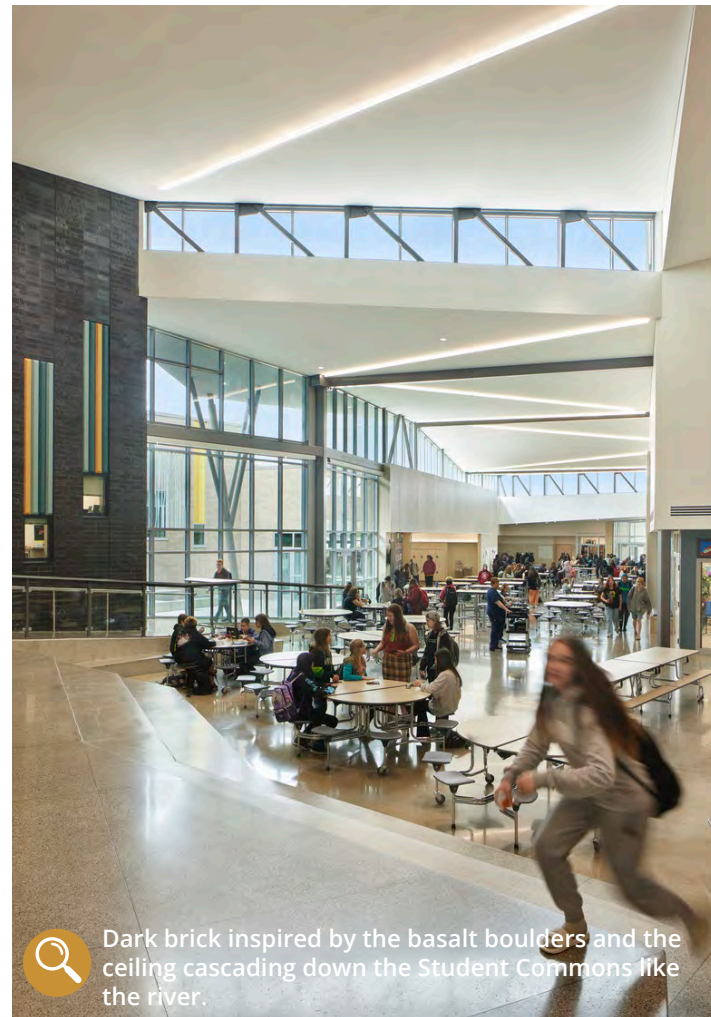
the students to the greater landscape of their community. Continuing to draw upon nature, natural light is prevalent throughout the building. The design purposefully allows for direct sunlight in the Learning Neighborhoods along with passive sunlight that seeps through the fixed and operable glass classroom walls. Embracing the soft natural light entering the building the lighting

design relies on direct / indirect wall sconces to mimic a natural feel with some supplemental direct lighting from the ceiling. The shape of the building was deliberate so to continually provide views to the outdoors, connecting the students to what's happening beyond the building walls. Views of the rim of the river valley can be seen from the second floor which highlights the inspiration for

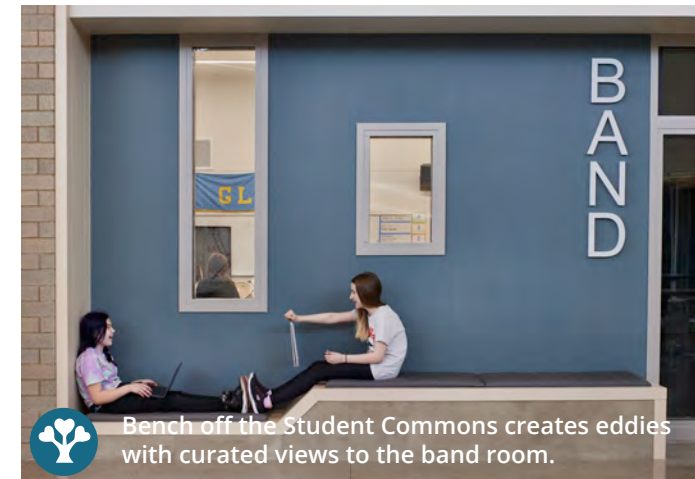
students and staff. An internal courtyard brings light into spaces deep within the building and serves as an outdoor learning environment.



All student spaces allow for passive supervision, while maintaining student autonomy.



Dark brick inspired by the basalt boulders and the ceiling cascading down the Student Commons like the river.



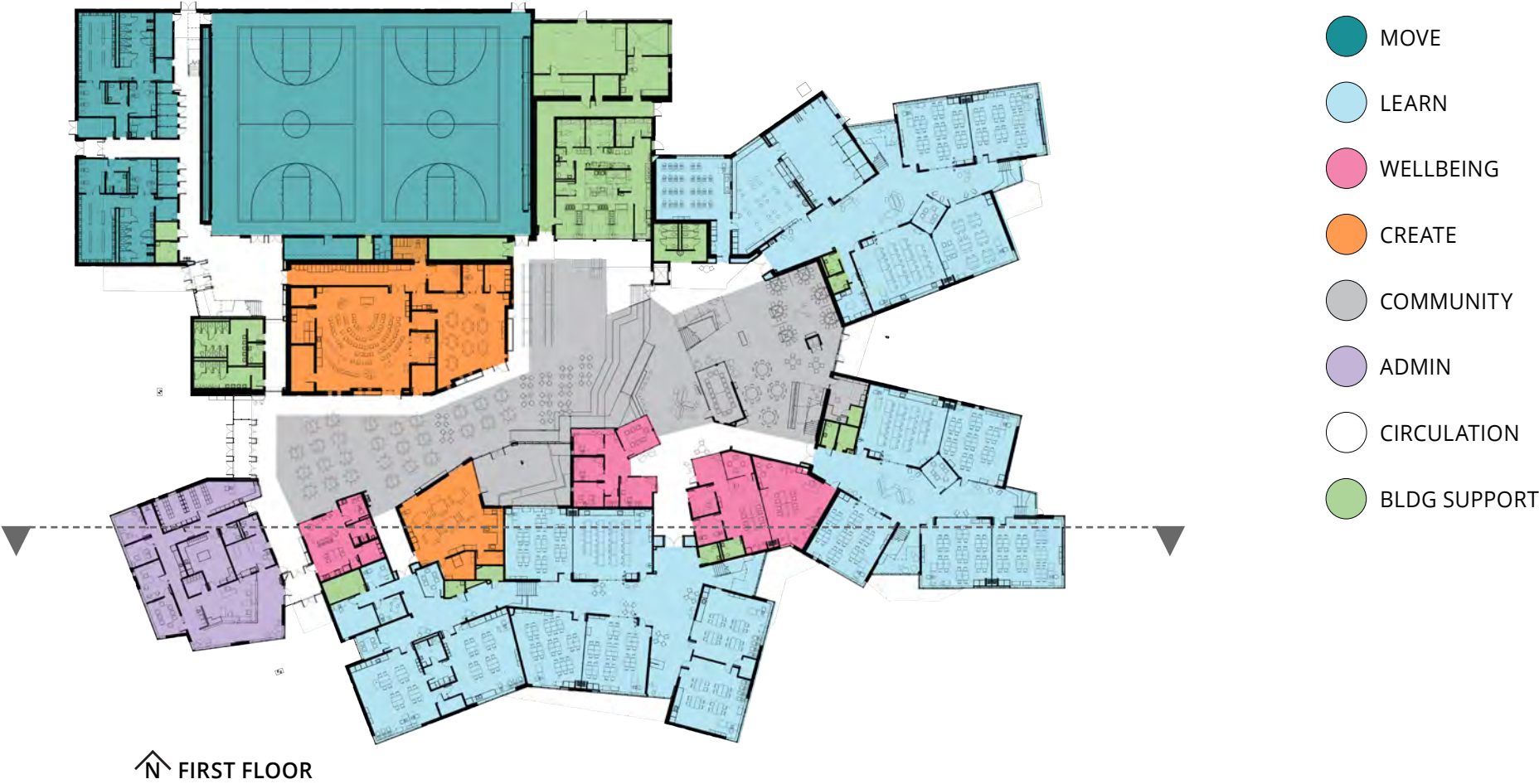
Bench off the Student Commons creates eddies with curated views to the band room.



Views out to promote biophilic connections throughout.



# OVERALL FLOOR PLAN - LEVEL 1



BUILDING SECTION HIGHLIGHTS THE STUDENT CENTERED DISTRIBUTION MODEL OF SERVICES AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES



# OVERALL FLOOR PLAN - LEVEL 2



Bowl & Pitcher at Spokane River.



Floor Plan as boulder inspiration.



Discovery Model rotated.

# SUSTAINABILITY AND WELLNESS

This project exceeds the Washington Sustainable Schools Protocol (WSSP) requirements which equates to LEED Silver or greater achievement. This was accomplished through careful integration and consideration via an eco-charrette. The team and Owner identified sustainable targets for the project, not only to integrate into

the design, but to benefit the project operationally. As the team explored sustainable opportunities within the building, the mechanical system became key to achieving significant energy savings. This system, paired with enhanced filtration, created not only optimum air quality for building occupants, but also became

a system that saved energy. Indoor air quality was enhanced through natural concrete or linoleum floors, low emitting, natural materials for the walls, and ceilings that utilize significant recycled content. The building is designed to be solar ready, and during construction nearly 90% of site waste was recycled.

Sustainable choices were at the forefront throughout the design and construction process, resulting in a building that will provide a better environment internally and minimize its impact environmentally throughout the life of the building.



Exterior view of main school signage



# HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

While the definition of healthy continues to evolve, fundamental components in “whole body” health include enrichment activities that stimulate a variety of senses. The Glover outdoor spaces were crafted with the goal of extending opportunities for discovery of the natural environment, while also providing

opportunities for physical movement. The play areas are designed to support middle school students, while also having amenities that support the greater neighborhood; this extends the opportunity for engagement beyond the school community, to the entire neighborhood. Students were surveyed to understand

where they liked to meet their friends at recess, or what they would most like to have in an outdoor space. Their feedback guided the team to include both a sensory courtyard off the Learning Commons and a social courtyard off the Student Commons, in addition to other outdoor spaces. While academic activities are

supported in all of the outdoor spaces, these two spaces in particular are also intended to serve as additional support space for students to gather themselves and get a breath of fresh air in a quiet environment.



Near the Learning Commons, this student courtyard provides a welcoming space for students to connect outside the building.



A playground designed to be middle school friendly was placed near the student plaza, making all students feel welcome and included.

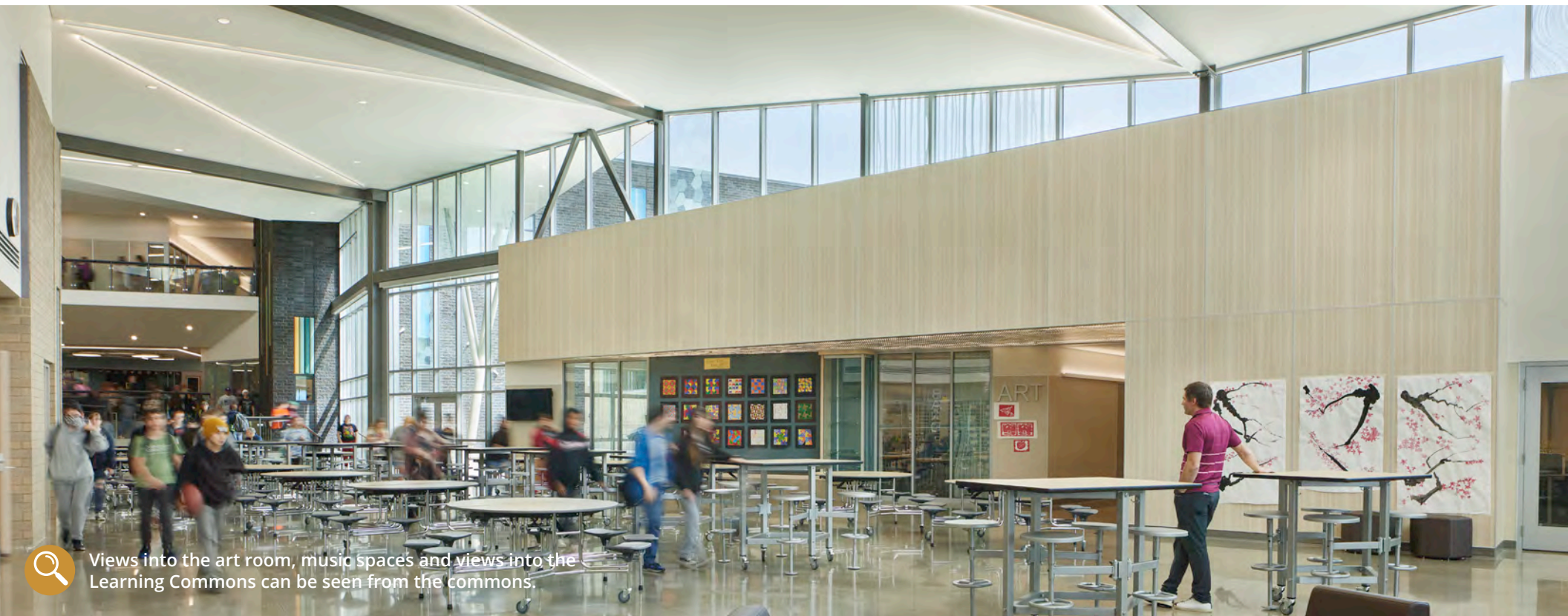
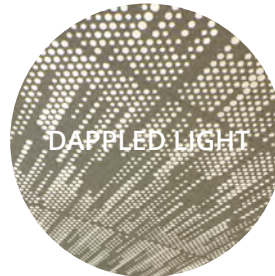


Student wellness is a priority at Glover Middle School and the built environment needed to reflect that goal. Connection and belonging are two foundation components that can support student mental health. It is well understood that

stress reactions can be a barrier to meaningful connection, and biophilia is a tool that can be a powerful stress reducer. The interior palette relied heavily upon the inspiration of the nearby Bowl and Pitcher. Soft warm colors welcome students,


as nature-inspired patterns mingle between spaces with intentional moments of color to support wayfinding. Views outside are framed with rich brick tones, and interior lighting mimics the filtered light of the forest canopy near the Spokane

River. Basalt-inspired tones are found in the flooring, creating a calm grounding experience. Many Glover students have challenging environments at home, so the school is a safe, soft, and welcoming retreat putting students at ease.



Views into the art room, music spaces and views into the Learning Commons can be seen from the commons.



A photograph of a modern school building at dusk. The building features a mix of dark brick, light-colored stone, and large glass windows. Some windows are illuminated from within, showing interior spaces. A prominent glass entrance is visible on the left. The sky is a deep blue. In the foreground, there is a concrete plaza and a small planter box with a young tree.

*"Our focus was to ensure that each space creates a sense of unconditional belonging and access for all students. At every turn we asked ourselves, 'How do we make sure students feel connected and truly noticed?'"*

Mark Lund  
Former Principal of Glover Middle School