

Valley Pathways School

Palmer, AK



Using prototype school designs often result in bland, ordinary buildings that do not respond to the character of a particular school or community. Not so at Valley Pathways where an enlightened owner and robust planning process created a unique expression of a special learning program and community setting. All school districts run on tight budgets with a strong focus on teaching and learning. Using prototype school designs are one way to reduce facility costs and propagate successful solutions. Valley Pathways demonstrates that when done right these schools can be every bit as vital and engaging as schools designed from scratch.

The Valley Pathways promise is achieve-

ment for all learners. Creating an environment that easily adapts to the necessarily varied teaching strategies was paramount to meeting that promise. The academic wing organizes classrooms around shared lab spaces, making specialized spaces accessible to all grade levels. L-shaped classrooms provide opportunities for varied teaching/learning settings with shared breakout spaces.

Informal learning happens in circulation spaces, nooks and the main gathering spaces. Because of their reliance on technology for delivering course content, the traditional media center was transformed into a multimedia presentation room, a showpiece of academic achievement connected to the commons.

New Construction/Addition

Entire school/campus building

McCool Carlson Green

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DESIGN TEAM

PND Engineers, Inc., Structural & Civil
 AMC Engineers, Mechanical & Electrical
 Spiral Design ELEMENTS, Interior Design
 Collins Construction, General Contractor

OWNER/CLIENT

Valley Pathways School
 Palmer, AK
 Dr. Deena Paramo, Superintendent
 Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District
 907/746-9200

KEY STATS

Grades Served: 7-12
 Capacity: 250
 Size of Site: 20 acres
 Building Area: 50,000 sq. ft.
 Space per Student: 200 sq. ft.
 Cost per Student: \$64,000
 Square Foot Cost: \$320
 Construction Cost: \$16,000,000
 Project Cost: \$20,000,000
 Completion Date: August 2014

Photography: Kevin Smith

