



Ross Valley School District White Hill Middle School

Fairfax, CA

New Construction/Addition

Campus master planning

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DESIGN TEAM

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OWNER/CLIENT

Ross Valley School District
 San Anselmo, CA
 Eileen Rohan, Superintendent
 415/454-2162

KEY STATS

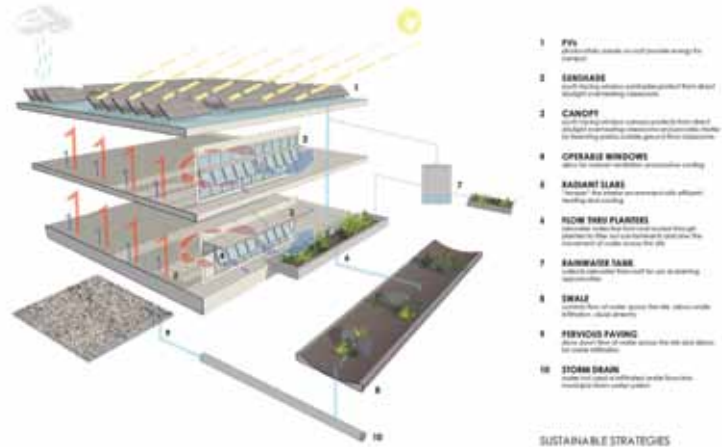
Grades Served: 6–8
Capacity: 700 students
Size of Site: 22 acres
Building Area: 42,000 gross sq. ft.
Space per Student: 60 sq. ft.
Cost per Student: \$25,857
Square Foot Cost: \$407
Project Cost: \$18,100,000
Completion Date: January, 2014
Sustainability Rating System/Applied/Status/Level: Designed to CHPS Guidelines

PHOTOGRAPHY: DREW KELLY

Originally built in 1969 and facing increases in student enrollment, White Hill Middle School required more flexible, safe, sustainable, accessible and technology-enabled facilities. In response, we delivered a master plan synthesized from stakeholder input; a technology-forward design with multi-use, adaptable learning spaces that take advantage of the school's natural setting—in fact, using it as a teaching opportunity—and a campus that fits into its community and context.

Ross Valley School District's goal to create an enhanced sense of connectivity, both within the campus and to its picturesque hilly surroundings, drove building configuration and placement. The Small Learning Community model, recently adopted by the District, inspired the notion of separate “houses,” or intimate learning spaces serving 7th and 8th graders. The District also wanted to make evident the systems that support the school so the buildings and landscapes themselves could double as teaching tools.

The first phase of the project includes the two new classroom buildings, the “houses,”



- 1 FIN
 - 2 ROOFING
 - 3 CANOPY
 - 4 OPERABLE WINDOWS
 - 5 RADIANT SLABS
 - 6 FLOW THRU FLANGES
 - 7 RAINWATER TANK
 - 8 SHALE
 - 9 PERVIOUS PAVING
 - 10 STORM DRAIN
- SUSTAINABLE STRATEGIES

for the 7th and 8th graders; a modernized 6th grade wing; and enhanced art classrooms. The new classroom buildings are organized around a central outdoor gathering space that extends the existing entrance courtyard to the north. “Teaching patios” support outdoor learning, making conservation a part of the everyday experience. These new outdoor spaces accommodate a variety of activities that range from small social gatherings to large school assemblies, reducing the amount of building square footage and lowering the total cost of the project by 15%.

Designed to support flexibility, collaboration, and a connection to the outdoors, the classrooms are divided by moveable, acoustically sound walls that have a magnetic and writable surface. Likewise, each “house” has an open flex classroom that can be

used for break-out sessions, small group learning, or collaboration with adjacent classrooms.

The new facilities leverage wind and light, views, and the campus' location at the base of a watershed. The classrooms are naturally daylit and ventilated, with radiant heating and cooling for comfortable conditioning with very low energy. The controls for the radiant heating and cooling are made visible to provide teaching opportunities. Viewing the campus' direct access to water as another opportunity, we embraced stormwater management with bioswales, pervious concrete paving and flow-through planters that weave between the classroom buildings and throughout the site. This strategy allows the site itself to serve in an educational role, using water conservation and value as a major theme.

