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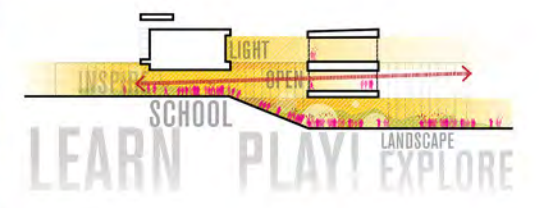


DURHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

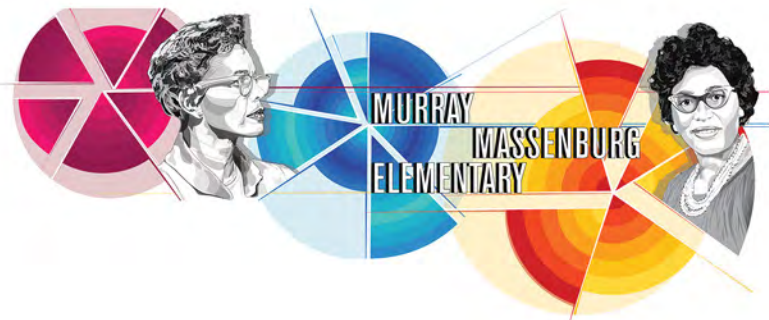
Murray-Massenburg Elementary School
Durham, NC



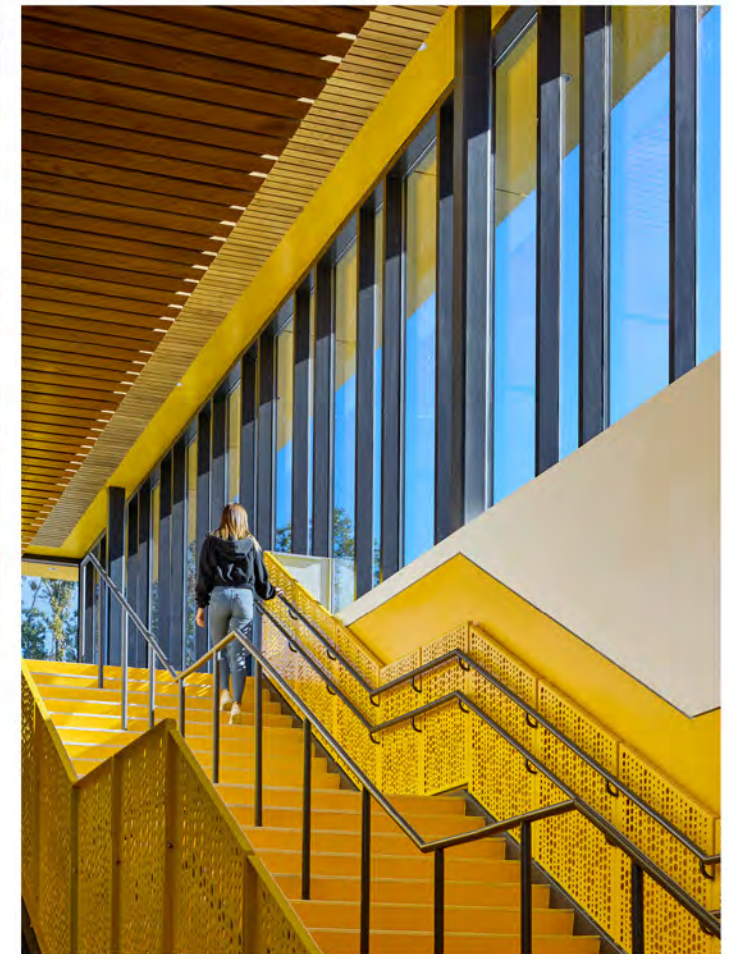
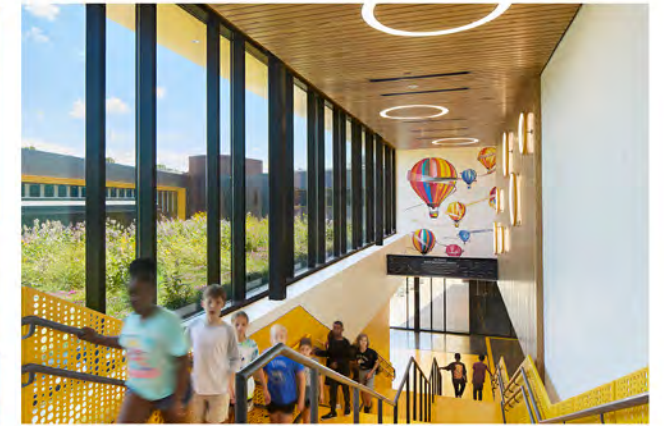
*"My favorite window is the corner of glass upstairs.
I like being able to see the front of the school.
I can see the trees and the clouds in the sky."
-Danna, 2nd Grade*



SITE STORIES
The desire to preserve and engage the site's natural features - 70' of grade change, an existing forest with native flora and fauna, and a nearby stream - drove the design. To maximize natural light, the school incorporates high-performance glazing, minimizing energy use and improving the learning environment by providing moments of pause and opportunities to connect with the natural site.



Lobby | A transparent, colorful lobby provides clear sightlines and a direct connection to the courtyard. The school's namesakes, Pauli Murray and Betty Massenburg—two prominent African American women whose likenesses appear in the vibrant environmental graphics along the reception wall—extend their legacies of equity and excellence through an environment where every child sees a path forward.



Main Stair | Bathed in “Gusto Gold” and clad in bold wall graphics featuring beloved children’s book quotes, the lobby stair radiates playful energy as the heart of Murray-Massenburg Elementary School—sparking curiosity and confidence and transforming each trip between classes into a celebration of imagination and growth.

Green Roof | A vegetative roof above the cafetorium reduces runoff and boosts thermal performance, acting as a unifying design element that connects students with nature.

My favorite window is the skywalk. It is my favorite because when you walk down the hallway it feels like you are walking on air. You can see what people are doing in the gym and on the playground. The whole hallway has walls made of windows."
- Yaritza, 2nd Grade



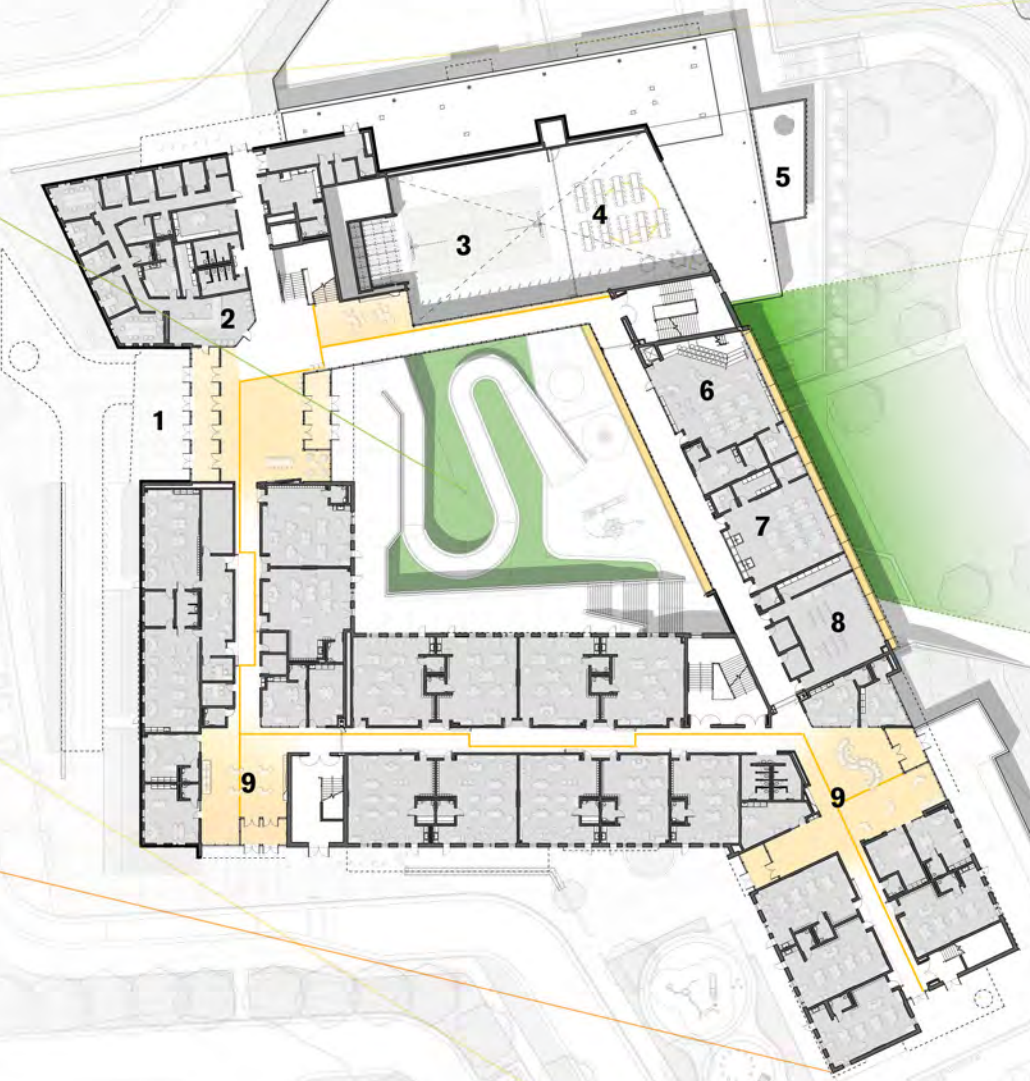
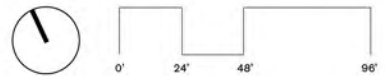
Cafetorium | The Cafetorium brings together daily activity, assembly, and performance within a single light-filled volume. Expansive glazing and clerestory windows draw daylight deep into the space and establish visual connections to circulation and learning areas above, reflecting the school's emphasis on transparency, adaptability and community.

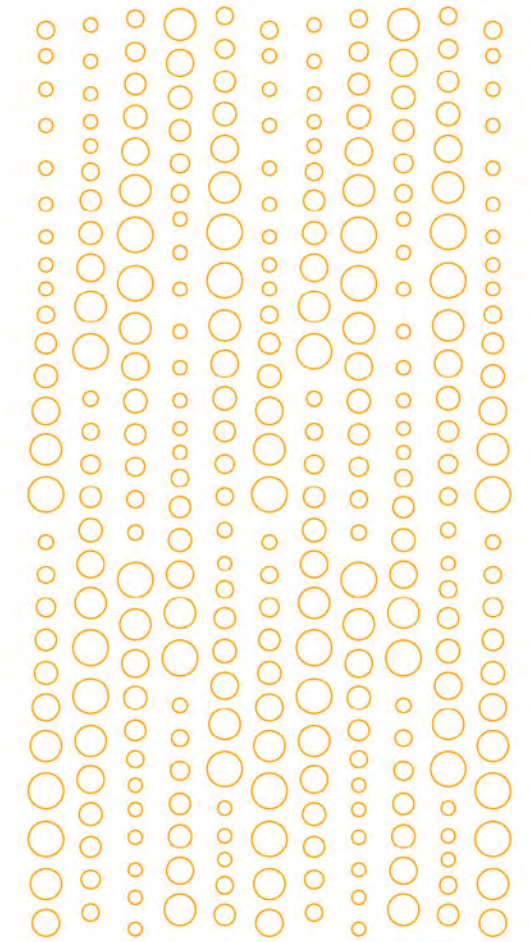
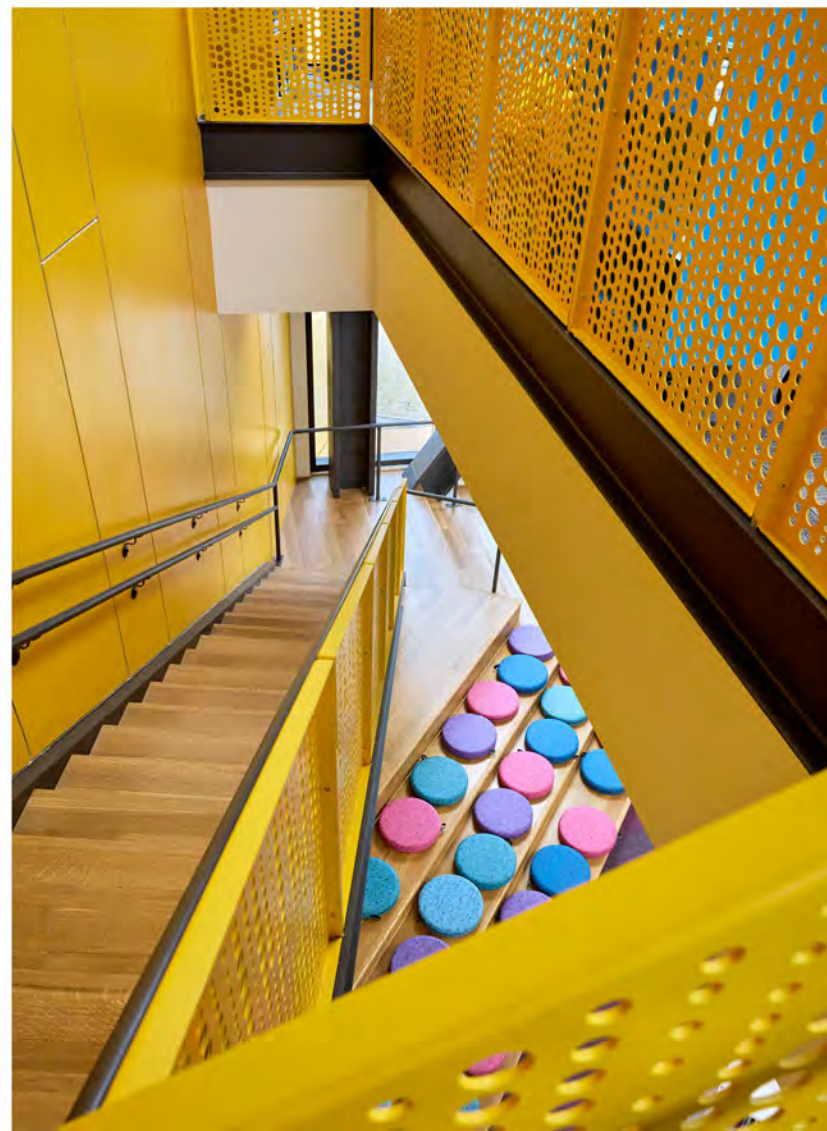




- 1 Entry
- 2 Reception
- 3 Gym/Auditorium (L0)
- 4 Cafeteria (L0)
- 5 Outdoor Dining (L0)
- 6 Media Center
- 7 Art
- 8 Music
- 9 Learning Commons

FIRST FLOOR PLAN





Custom-designed "Bubble" railing detail



The 2-story media center provides direct views of the adjacent forest. The media center's lower level features a reading area for the younger grades



Classrooms | Colorful classroom “portals” mark each grade level, while a continuous golden path links commons areas, creating a clear, engaging wayfinding system for students.

Flexible classroom furniture promotes a multitude of learning environments that allow for ease of adaptation.

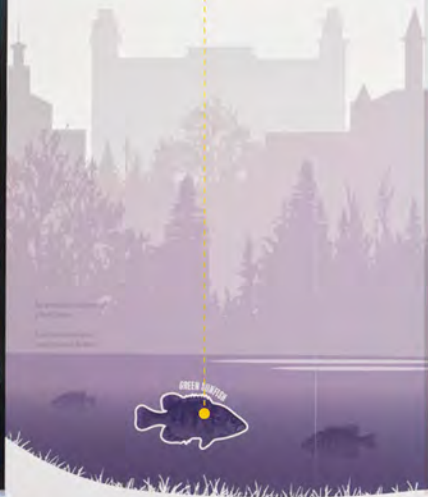


Learning Commons | Environmental graphics create impromptu opportunities for both learning and intuitive wayfinding. Integrated throughout classrooms and learning commons, wall graphics highlight local heritage, the histories and cultures of Indigenous communities native to North Carolina, and the ecological systems found in the area.

Mammals



Marine Life



Avian

Amphibians



SOUTHEASTERN PLAINS

The Southeastern Plains ecoregion in North Carolina is characterized by cropland, pasture, woodland, and forest. The Southeastern Plains are irregular plains located between the Piedmont to the north and the Coastal Plain to the south. The natural vegetation in this region mostly consists of longleaf pine forests. Southeastern Plains offer a rich diversity of plant and animal life.

La ecorregión de las Llanuras del Sureste en Carolina del Norte se caracteriza por tierras de cultivo, pastos, y bosques. Las Llanuras del Sureste son llanuras irregulares ubicadas entre el Piedmonte al norte y la Llanura Costera al sur. La vegetación natural de esta región se compone principalmente de bosques de pino de hoja larga. Las llanuras del sureste ofrecen una rica diversidad de vida vegetal y animal.





A 2nd floor Learning Commons expands onto a covered outdoor learning terrace, promoting learning environments not often found in traditional schools.

"My favorite window is the second floor balcony because there are lots of trees, birds and grass. When you look outside you see lots of nature. It's my favorite because I can watch for birds. It feels like a new place I have never been."
- Axel, 3rd Grade



ISSIPAHAW
ROKKEE NEUSIO
REEE HISTORY
TELD WOCCON
AXNAW NEUSIO
END CHEROK
SAURA CHOW
APONI SAURA
CON COREE K
ARAW POTESK
SAPONI SHAK
APUNGA TUSCA
TERAS OCCANE
ECOTAN CATAW
FERRIN KRYAUW

NATIVE TRIBES