



Guiding Principles: North Forest Early Childhood Center

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding Principles articulate a school's vision, values, hopes and ideals to the design team. Guiding Principles will be used to "test" the decisions that are made throughout the design process, since every element of the building must be created to support the school's vision and values.

North Forest Early Childhood Center's Guiding Principles:

School Readiness through Literacy

Literacy is at the heart of all learning. The library will be the learning hub in our new facility. All things will flow to and from the library both physically and instructionally. Students will have access to various genres of literature and text through whole group experiences, individual self-reflective experiences, and by accessing information via the worldwide web. All of these experiences in addition to dramatic interpretation of literature along with opportunities for self-expression will be made possible in the library.

Safe Flow of Students

Our school facility facilitates a safe flow of students to school, throughout the day, and through departure. The building and site should make it evident how students, parents, and staff move throughout the site. Finding one's way around the building should be intuitive, regardless of literacy or language acquisition through icons, signage, and marked pathways. Arrival and departure systems should provide for all-weather safe transitions for car riders, bus riders, and families that walk.

Technology

Our school facility will reduce the impact of the digital divide by allowing students to frequently access the worldwide web from any learning area in the school. Wireless access and facility design will allow students to explore, discover, and learn from the internet using desktop computers, laptops, iPads, or Smart boards with ease.

Sustainability

Our school facility will help teach our students the personal and environmental benefits of sustainable living. The building will maximize the amount of natural light, limit the impact of the heat in the summer, and use natural heat in the winter. True recycling will be integrated into the students learning activities and facilitated by students. Outdoor learning spaces, a physical fitness area, and student developed gardens will expand learning opportunities.

A Flexible and Interchangeable Space

Our new school will have space and materials that can be constantly changed throughout to best meet the students' needs and interests.

Collaborative Space

Having space where, teachers, students, parent, and community members can come together for collaboration is a must in the 21st century learning environment. Students will have space where they can collaborate with one another that is safe, warm, and interactive. Teachers will have a space where they cannot only come together to share ideas and prepare for their classes, but that can be used for an optional teaching environment. And finally, our facility will have a space where parents can perform volunteer duties and conduct meetings.

Community

We hope that within and out, our school campus building will facilitate and provide a warm sense of community among its members within and out. Our facility will include the following:

- A multi-purpose room-- for parent meetings, teacher directed parent workshops, parent computer classes, parents workroom; secluded cooking areas where 1 teacher and 25 students are able to sit safely from the oven area when oven door is opened
- Small and large presentation areas for puppet shows, speakers, presentations
- Small niches inside and outside for a class for story telling or story reading
- Inside small garden area and outside larger garden areas
- Multiple secluded cooking areas where 1 teacher and 25 students are able to sit safely from the oven area when oven door is opened.