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2026 AIA Fellowship

Candidate Paul G. Klee
Organization Grimm + Parker Architects
Location Darnestown, Maryland
Chapter AIA Maryland; AIA Potomac Valley

Category of Nomination

Object 2 (Practice Management, Technical Advancement) > Practice (Technical Advancement)

Summary Statement

Through decades of school design innovation and sharing his expertise across the profession, Paul Klee built a new framework of 21st century design principles and space types that redefine the standards for K-12 schools.

Education

1. University of Maryland, 1992 - 1994, Master of Architecture
2. University of Maryland, 1990 - 1992, Bachelor of Science in Architecture, Graduated Summa Cum Laude Honor

Licensed in:

1. Virginia
2. Maryland

Employment

Grimm + Parker Architects, 1990 - 2024

August 20, 2025

Sanford Garner, FAIA, Jury Chair
2026 Jury of Fellows
American Institute of Architects



Re: Nomination of Paul Klee, AIA

Subject: Sponsors Letter

Dear Mr. Garner:

The most valuable takeaway from serving as AIA President was gaining insight into what drives architects who are advancing the profession of architecture and demonstrating the power of design to society. The quality I discovered was their passion and consequent belief in the human mission of architecture. Design matters. Yet, these exceptional leaders of our profession appreciate further that it is the impact of design that matters most. Architects shape lives. Among the thousands of architects I know, none personifies these exceptional leadership qualities more urgently and influentially than Paul Klee, AIA. It is truly a privilege to serve as Paul's Sponsor for elevation to the AIA College of Fellows.

I have known Paul for two decades through the AIA Potomac Valley Chapter where we served together on the Board and later as Chapter Presidents. In parallel, as a competitor and also as a resident of this region I have known Paul as an architect who has contributed immensely to the transformation of public education. The difference Paul made is evident in the before and after "pictures" of public education in more than one hundred communities.

But the enormous number of schools only begins to tell the story of Paul's architectural career, so too the countless design awards Paul's schools garnered. To know the impact of Paul's work begins by understanding him as a person. Paul was not drawn to K-12 schools simply as an interesting building type. From his first experiences out of architecture school, Paul connected person-to-person with the children whose lives he was touching. He jumped at the chance to practice a new approach to architecture that aligned with emerging educational concepts that were transforming education from 19th century precedents to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Paul's innate empathy led him into a career-long investigation of next generation school design, as Paul terms it, articulating a cohesive set principles and spatial solutions that define a sea-change in K-12 design.

While Paul has always been engaged in AIA and other professional organizations advancing K-12 school design, notably including the Association for Learning Environments (A4LE), Paul did something further that is beyond remarkable. Paul stepped away from a lucrative architectural practice to devote himself fully to sharing his perspectives and expertise on next generation school design principles and practices, disseminating them nationally and even internationally.

As you will see in Paul's Reference Letters from colleagues and clients as well as those working with Paul today on promoting next generation school design, Paul's impact is both in the substance of the Foundations and Learning Space Types that he formulated through decades of project work and also in the force of his personal dedication to improving the lives of children during their formative years. And how! Paul's completed school projects have uplifted the learning and development of more than two million children. Very few architects have done as much to demonstrate the power of design at scale across struggling urban neighborhoods, suburban communities playing catch up building social infrastructure, and rural communities who came to appreciate the benefits of 21st century schools.

I wholeheartedly endorse the elevation of Paul Klee, AIA, to the AIA College of Fellows, a remarkable person who has personified the human value of architecture to, literally, millions.

Cordially,
Quinn Evans

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Elefante".

Carl Elefante, FAIA Emeritus
Principal Emeritus

WINNER OF 2024 AIA ARCHITECTURE FIRM AWARD

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Paul Klee, AIA, ALEP, LEED AP Architect 2026 AIA Fellowship Submission Object 2: Practice Technical Advancement



Paul Klee, AIA
Photo by Scott Henrichsen

Summary Statement

Through decades of school design innovation and sharing his expertise across the profession, Paul Klee built a new framework of 21st century design principles and space types that redefine the standards for K-12 schools.

Elevating Standards for K-12 School Design

After more than three decades with Grimm + Parker Architects (G+P) designing one-hundred and four K-12 school projects across all three age cohorts (elementary, middle, and high school), Paul Klee's built work and design leadership reflect nothing less than a paradigm shift for K-12 school design for 21st century student needs. Working with some of the most progressive educators in twenty-eight school systems, he created a clear and broadly applicable framework of design principles and learning space types for schools to share with school architects and their educational clients.

Paul's design vision was both a reaction to the troubled legacy of traditional, conventional rote learning school models that are failing students and an impassioned endorsement of the student-centered educational philosophies and community-centered social infrastructure espoused by forward-thinking educators striving to meet the needs and aspirations of a 21st century society. Whether working in rural, suburban, and urban communities, Paul saw that school design was not keeping pace with the challenges of social and technological change, the increasingly diverse student populations, and the growing demands on school systems to provide for the wellbeing of children far beyond reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Crafting a New Design Framework

Over the last seventeen years, Paul knew that a new generation of space types was essential to spark students' curiosity and creativity—places for spontaneity, structured collaboration, discovery, teamwork, and quiet focus. He codified his evolving understanding of school design principles and practices by developing G+P's *Next Generation K-12 School Design Framework Manual* (See Exhibit 3.1), a framework of 21st century learning principles and new space types for all project teams, clients, and projects. Acknowledging the great diversity of learning modes and developmental needs, the Manual detailed a process for designing student-centered schools that emphasize experiential learning and age-appropriate environments that nurture the "whole child". Now Paul is teaching this framework as a design tool.

Sharing a New Design Framework

But the impact of Paul's work is evidenced by much more than the staggering quantity of schools he designed and built. Paul became a leading voice advocating for a new kind of K-12 school design that addresses 21st century circumstances, challenges, and opportunities. Over the past thirty-five years, Paul has reached far beyond his project work and roles with Grimm + Parker Architects, taking his place among acknowledged K-12 school design experts nationally and internationally.

A significant focus of Paul's activities has been through the Association for Learning Environments (A4LE), publishers of *Learning by Design* and known among school design architects for their "next generation" education design training. Notably, Paul is an expert faculty member and authored a multi-disciplinary curriculum for the A4LE Academy's Advanced Certificate Program titled *Next Generation Learning Spaces for the 21st century* (See Exhibit 3.8).

Paul has also authored a series of seventeen articles for the *New Designs for School* initiative of Next Generation Learning Challenges Website (NGLC), an influential advocate and non-profit helping architects and educators improve public education under the banner: "Why Schools Need to Change" (See Exhibit 3.9). Paul's articles were developed to answer NGLC's foundational question about school design: "What Does Next Generation Learning Look Like in Practice?"

Through thirty-five years of practice, learning from educators, and creating a new framework for designing next generation learning environments, Paul has reached thousands of people who care about education and he has directly improved the educational outcomes of more than two million students and counting. His pioneering ideas and architectural solutions for 21st century schools have advanced – and are still advancing – school design for architects and the children they serve around the region, nation, and world.

Curriculum Vitae

Education

University of Maryland School of Architecture, Planning & Preservation

Master of Architecture (1994)

Bachelor of Science in Architecture, Summa Cum Laude (1992)

American Architecture Foundation Scholastic Award (1991)

University of Maryland, Phi Kappa Phi (1991)

National Honor Society, Golden Key Award (1991)

Professional Experience

Grimm + Parker Architects (1990 – 2024)

McLean, Virginia; Calverton, Maryland

Partner, Owner, and Shareholder (2021 – 2024)

Principal, K-12 School Architecture Studio Lead (2008 – 2021)

Vice President (2007 – 2008)

Associate (2002 – 2007)

Project Design Lead (1994 – 2002)

Project Team Member (1990 – 1994)

Registrations / Certifications

Accredited Learning Environment Planner with A4LE (2025 – Present)

Commonwealth of Virginia Registered Architect (2008 – Present)

NCARB Certified Architect (2008 – Present)

State of Maryland Registered Architect (2007 – Present)

LEED Accredited Professional (2006 – Present)



Paul begins every design solution by listening to all Stakeholders

Professional Affiliations

American Institute of Architects (2007 – Present)

AIA Maryland

Board of Directors (2012 – 2014)

AIA Potomac Valley Chapter

President (2011)

Board of Directors (2009 – 2012)

National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (2008 – Present)

Certified Architect

United States Green Building Council (2006 – Present)

LEED Accredited Professional

University of Maryland, School of Architecture, Planning, + Preservation (2024 – Present)

Architecture Mentorship Program

Mentor

Next Generation Learning Challenges Website (2025 – Present)

Contributing Author

Association for Learning Environments (A4LE) (2013 – Present)

A4LE Academy Expert Faculty (2025 – Present)

James D. MacConnell Design Award Jury (2017 – 2019)

Virginia Chapter

Chapter President (2016)

Board of Directors (2013 – 2018)

Awards Committee (2013 – 2018)

Learning By Design

Architecture and Interiors Awards Jury (2025 – Present)

Association Builders and Contractors (2024)

Virginia Chapter Networking Committee

Montgomery County Maryland Citizens Advisory Board (2018 – Present)

Chairperson (2021)

Darnestown Maryland Civic Association Executive Board (2017 – Present)

Vice President (2022)

Paul's Impact by the Numbers

104

K-12 school projects completed
44 Elementary School
19 Middle School
41 High School

2,000+

Attendees to AIA Accredited CEUs on K-12 school design led by Paul

\$2 billion

Worth of school construction value of Paul's K-12 projects

2 million+

Children have learned in K-12 schools Paul designed

35 years

Pioneering K-12 educational facility designs

20 million

Square feet of planned and built K-12 schools

Community Diversity

18 Urban Schools
57 Suburban Schools
29 Rural Schools

91

AIA and Project Awards

28

K-12 School Districts

20

Authored articles on the impacts of 21st century learning on K-12 school design

5,000+

Stakeholders Paul collaborated with during K-12 school design

56

Publications and articles

A Paradigm Shift in K-12 School Design

Paul Klee's 35-year career-long exploration of K-12 school design helped chart a new course for public education for the 21st century, a profound transition that represents both an evolution away from educational models developed during the 19th century and the incorporation of a new generation of progressive educational principles and practices.

Public education in the United States was established at scale after the Civil War as our country expanded across the continent and became the world's premiere industrial powerhouse. The conventions of public education were established following Horace Mann's ideas for the "Common School" that deserves tremendous credit for promoting education for all people, boys and girls, in both urban and rural communities. Yet that admirable legacy was also a creature of its time, an industrial-era approach to education that was constructed on a foundation of rote learning. The architecture of public education also reflected this one-size-fits-all approach, with identical classrooms along double-loaded corridors with desks in rows facing a solitary teacher, the fountain of all knowledge.

The demands on public education changed dramatically as the knowledge economy emerged in the closing decades of the 20th century. New ideas about education responded to the changing circumstances of the information age, the astounding pace of technological innovation, and a rapidly growing knowledge-based workforce. These societal changes coincided with evolving ideas about educating children that acknowledge the diversity of individuals, the corresponding need for diverse modes of learning, and for holistically nurturing body, mind, and spirit as children age and grow. Concepts for "student-centered" learning became the design brief for the next generation of schools.

The stage was set for a revolution in K-12 school design as Paul completed his studies at the University of Maryland, School of Architecture and joined Grimm + Parker Architects (G+P). Paul had the great good fortune of learning from the best. Stephen Parker, FAIA, co-founder of G+P, was already recognized as a leading designer in the transition of school design.



It's All About Them!

Paul immediately found his professional purpose in designing spaces for the education and development of children. For the next decade, Paul fulfilled his internship requirements, obtained licensure, and became an indispensable contributor to G+P school design practice.

Of course, Paul's professional development was a continuum. Yet, a notable moment in that process occurred in 2006 when Paul served as lead designer for the Washington-Lee (renamed Washington-Liberty) High School in Arlington, Virginia. A close-in suburb of Washington DC, Arlington is in many ways a model community that has prided itself on its progressiveness for generations. (The first school in Virginia to be racially integrated after the Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court decision, was Arlington's Stratford Junior High School. Designed by Rhees Burket, Stratford was also the first "International Style" school building constructed in the National Capital Region.) Paul worked with Sarah Woodhead, FAIA, Director of Design and Construction at Arlington Public Schools. Washington-Liberty stands as a milestone in the evolution of Paul's "Next Generation" K-12 school design principles and architectural solutions.



Washington-Liberty High School



Washington-Liberty High School



Kent Island High School

An Exemplary Portfolio of K-12 Schools

The scope of Paul Klee’s K-12 school design portfolio is truly staggering. Over thirty-five years, Paul completed one-hundred and four schools for twenty-eight school systems, their construction value totaling more than \$2 billion. It is no exaggeration to say that Paul is one of a small handful of architects who transformed primary and secondary education across the entire Middle Atlantic Region in the closing decades of the 20th century and the first decades of the 21st. Paul’s impact on the lives of, literally, millions of children cannot be overstated.

The diversity of Paul’s school design portfolio is equally staggering, comprised of forty-four elementary schools, nineteen middle schools, and forty-one high schools. Paul’s next generation school design principles were shaped profoundly by an understanding of the evolving learning needs of children as they age and grow. The diversity of Paul’s school portfolio is also visible in the diversity of communities he served. While working with progressive and well-resourced communities like Arlington, Virginia, afforded Paul opportunities to learn from leading educators, Paul found that the direct and collateral benefits of next generation school design were at times even more deeply embraced in communities struggling with social and economic hardships, communities where investing in social infrastructure was even more relevant and urgent.

Nearly every one of Paul’s schools has been recognized with national, regional, and/or local design awards from AIA and other organizations celebrating excellence in school design. The list (See Section 2.2) notably includes two AIA Maryland Public Project of the Year Awards as well as the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) Walter Taylor Award – for the project that best meets a difficult design challenge – and Shirley Cooper Award – for the project that best meets the educational needs of students. (In 2013, the AIA Committee on Architecture for Education integrated AASA awards into their awards program.) As Paul’s roles at Grimm + Parker Architects (G+P) advanced, so did recognition of the firm’s accomplishments and impact. In a national assessment of school design firms, G+P was ranked number three nationally by Architectural Record in 2015. Fortune Magazine ranked G+P number forty of the one-hundred top workplace firms in the United States in 2024.

One of Paul’s fondest memories is returning to the Discovery STEM Academy after its completion (See Exhibit 3.4). Paul was greeted by a 4th grader, a child Paul got to know during design-phase interviews, who threw his arms around Paul, thanking him “for my beautiful new school.” No design award has ever meant as much to Paul.



Matapeake Elementary School

“I want to take this opportunity to comment on the quality of the design team led by Paul Klee for our newest school, Discovery STEM Academy. I have been engaged in the design process for public schools for over 20 years and this project has been a pleasurable experience that ranks the highest. Paul brought thought provoking questions, keen insight, attentive listening skills, and enthusiasm that was contagious to the design process. Students, staff, and community members were led through a methodical process to arrive at what we believe will be the most significant educational facility in the state of Virginia.”

—
Mr. Keith Webb, EFP
Executive Director,
Newport News Public Schools



Discovery STEM Academy—Outdoor Garden

“What does next generation learning look like in practice?”

This question is quoted from the non-profit Next Generation Learning Challenges Website (NGLC). Paul’s work with NGLC is described later. The tremendous scope and exceptional quality of Paul Klee’s K-12 school design work is clearly demonstrated in the number and caliber of his awards and recognitions. But the core of Paul’s nomination to the AIA College of Fellows is the importance of Paul’s work in a paradigm shift that has influenced architectural practice broadly and profoundly. Yes, Paul’s impact on the profession is inexorably intertwined with his projects, opportunities that allowed Paul to work tirelessly to answer NGLC’s question. In other words, what constitutes the transition from Horace Mann’s “Common School” to the student-centered school design that Paul devoted his long career to exploring, refining, consolidating, and sharing with the architecture profession and educators? Over many years, Paul created a framework for 21st century learning environments based on six guiding design principles, or “Foundations” as Paul terms them:

1. Make Design Inclusive and Engaging
2. Support Diverse Learning and Teaching Modes
3. Develop the Whole Child
4. Celebrate Community and Culture
5. Secure Schools are Nurturing
6. Design for Economy and Evolution

Of course, along with codifying these six overarching principles for 21st century learning environments, each school project provided Paul opportunities to explore different architectural solutions for embodying next generation education. Through the design and construction of many, many projects, these “Learning Space Types”, as Paul terms them, evolved into a menu of next generation spaces that are layered onto familiar school program spaces including classrooms, gymnasiums, auditoriums, cafeterias, libraries, etc. Several space types are designed as resource centers to support experiential learning, including Learning Studios, Collaborative Learning Commons, and Learning Commons Resource Center. Others provide spaces of different sizes and with different technologies and equipment to accommodate group activities, ranging from Small Group Learning Pods, Large Group Learning Spaces, and Maker Spaces. Others interject learning and teaching capabilities into circulation spaces and common areas, like stairways that double as informal amphitheaters and eddy spaces along corridors for student display and impromptu exploration. Other space types provide quiet spaces where students can retreat from the intensity of the modern world and demands of engaged learning, including Huddle Spaces and Reflective Nooks. The character and uses of many of Paul’s space types and the strategies he used to weave them into the school program and floor plan are illustrated in Section 3, Exhibits.



Rocktown High School- Collaborative Learning Commons [visualization]

“ Paul Klee did an outstanding job for us at Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools on our new school project. I have been involved in multiple design projects, dating back to the early 1990’s, I can honestly say that working with Paul has been the best experience I have had in design.”

—
Dr. Robert T. Becker, Jr. Ed.D
Assistant Superintendent for Operations
Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools



Students During a Next Generation Learning Work Session

Promoting Next Generation School Design Standards

As Paul’s role at Grimm + Parker Architects (G+P) evolved, his focus broadened from designing individual projects to guiding G+P’s growing K-12 studio. New roles brought with them demands to better share his ideas about the design of next generation learning environments with both his colleagues at G+P and the school systems they worked with. Through the preparation of design briefs for projects and proposals for work G+P pursued, Paul authored many editions of what ultimately became known as *G+P’s Next Generation K-12 School Design Framework Manual* (See Exhibit 3.1). As the previous paragraphs describe, the Manual addressed the need for a paradigm shift in primary and secondary education. Paul’s foundations and space types of next generation school design provided guidelines for integrating them into school programming and planning. The Manual guided G+P’s K-12 studio pursuits and design philosophy for nearly two decades.

As Paul’s leadership at G+P grew, so did his involvement beyond the firm in professional associations dedicated to primary and secondary education, most notably including AIA, the Association for Learning Environments (A4LE), and Next Generation Learning Challenges Website (NGLC). Paul’s activities with AIA Potomac Valley Chapter (AIAPV) and the Virginia Chapter of A4LE spanned more than two decades. Among other volunteer roles, Paul served on the Board of Directors of AIA Maryland and AIAPV and as AIAPV Chapter President in 2011. Likewise, among other roles with A4LE, Paul served on the Virginia Chapter Design Awards Committee, Chapter Board, and as Chapter President in 2016.

Paul’s efforts to share knowledge about 21st century schools and to promote the benefits of next generation school design for students and communities have taken many paths. Throughout his thirty-four years with G+P, Paul’s projects were the subject of numerous articles

in professional publications including *AIA Architect*, *Architectural Record*, and *Learning by Design* as well as news outlets including *The Washington Post* (See Section 2.3). Paul also made presentations about his work and design philosophy at regional, national, and even international education and architecture conferences and regional architecture schools (See Section 2.4).

From early in his career, Paul devoted most of his energies promoting next generation school design through activities with A4LE. A cross-disciplinary professional association established in 1921, A4LE is dedicated solely to school design, its mission to “drive the evolution of learning environments.” A4LE conducts conferences and professional development workshops regionally, nationally, and internationally; publishes *Learning by Design* and posts hundreds of webinars on its YouTube channel; provides training and certificate programs for architects and other professionals; and conducts project and professional recognition programs including the James D. MacConnell Award. In 2025, Paul became an Accredited Learning Environment Planner (ALEP), completing A4LE’s most rigorous credentialing program. While serving on the A4LE Virginia Chapter Board, Paul worked to update the regional design awards criteria to acknowledge the application and advancement of next generation design principles. From 2017-19, Paul served on the jury for the James D. MacConnell Award, A4LE’s highest school design honor.

Since stepping away from G+P two years ago, Paul’s professional focus has been sharing his knowledge and promoting next generation design to architects and educators. The culmination of Paul’s decades of work with A4LE, he developed the curriculum for a new A4LE Academy professional certificate program translating his Foundations and Learning Space Types Framework into a seven-part course titled *Next Generation Learning Spaces for the 21st Century* (See Exhibit 3.8). Paul also focused on educating educators about pedagogical opportunities in student-centered experiential learning environments.



Westmoreland High School–Dining Commons

“ Paul Klee provided exemplary leadership throughout the entire process of the Westmoreland County Public School Division’s initiative to construct a new high school in our rural community.

We have the school we have today largely due to Paul’s passion and commitment. After completion, we were visited by many larger school divisions, and all left with plans to incorporate many of Paul’s design concepts.”

—
Mr. J. Ralph Fallin
Chairman, Westmoreland County School Board
Westmoreland County Public Schools



Moncure Elementary School–
Collaborative Learning Commons

2.1 Significant Work

For the non-profit organization Next Generation Learning Challenges Website (NGLC), Paul has authored a seventeen part series of articles for their *New Designs for School* initiative. Aimed primarily at helping public school systems in under-resourced communities, NGLC addresses school design as a tool for promoting educational excellence and equity (See Exhibit 3.9). Paul's articles illustrate to educators the direct connection between architectural decisions and student development and empowerment.

Elevating and Preparing the Next Generation

It is no coincidence that designing nurturing environments for children became Paul's lifework. Paul is by nature an exceptionally personable individual who takes time to connect with everyone he meets. Getting opportunities right out of architecture school to work on school building types was beyond a happy accident. For Paul, it felt like destiny. He was drawn to primary and secondary school design because those are the years most crucial in shaping character and setting expectations for children. Almost singularly, Paul devoted his career to creating spaces and places for young children to become young adults. Look at the terms Paul adopted in his architecture. It is telling that he developed design thinking for next generation schools. Elevating and preparing the next generation have given Paul's life, both professionally and beyond, purpose and meaning. In his project work, Paul insisted on engaging not only responsible authorities as stakeholders, but also students themselves. By Paul's estimate, he interviewed and/or engaged in design workshops more than two thousand students in designing their schools.

This drive to share and mentor carried over to Paul's other professional activities in addition to his project work. Of course, much of the time Paul dedicated to mentorship was spent in programs within Grimm + Parker Architects (G+P). Paul took a leading role in G+P's highly structured – and highly effective – staff mentorship program. G+P prioritized helping their emerging professionals complete internship requirements, prepare for exams, and obtain licensure. In

2014, G+P's mentorship efforts were acknowledged with the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) Architectural Experience Program (AXP) Firm Award. Paul aided twenty-eight individuals at G+P to become registered architects. Paul has also been active for more than three decades in the Washington region's architecture schools. Paul is a perennial participant in design studio and thesis juries. For several years, Paul has been engaged in a University of Maryland initiative that pairs architecture students with alumni in a year-long, one-to-one, Architecture Mentorship Program.

Paul Klee has dedicated a long and successful career to designing primary and secondary schools. His masterful portfolio has been heralded by the AIA and other professional organizations promoting educational building design. Paul's commitment to school design runs far deeper than simply arranging spaces for architectural merit – he acknowledges his agency to shape the lives of thousands upon thousands of children by providing facilities that encourage nurturing and empowerment. Paul did not stop at accolades – he embraced the privilege of his opportunities to articulate a cogent and replicable framework for designing schools to serve the next generation. Paul shared his experiences and expertise with peers in the architecture profession as well as educators. Paul translated what he learned while transforming education in the Middle Atlantic Region into guidance and resources for architects everywhere. There are few architects who have so directly touched the lives of, literally, millions of children as well as countless architects and educators across the nation and world. Paul's work has advanced the standards and practice of primary and secondary school design both widely and profoundly.



Moncure Elementary School – Learning Studio

“The design of Kent Island High School by Paul Klee brings together a building and people with a clear purpose. The architectural design supports the education we want to provide for all students. You have clearly taken into consideration our philosophical direction and educational focus, to provide a building in which we can live and learn.”

—
Mr. James J. Bennett
Principal, Kent Island High School
Queen Anne's County Public Schools



Jordan Springs Elementary School –
Collaborative Learning Commons

2.2 Significant Awards, Honors, and Recognition

During his 34-year tenure with Grimm + Parker Architects, Paul Klee served as lead designer for dozens of projects that received AIA and other professional association awards. Paul's projects received accolades for school design excellence, sustainable design, and community impact. While Paul served in leadership roles, including head of the firm's K-12 School Architecture Studio, Grimm + Parker received national recognition both as a school design practice and as an exemplary workplace.

Firm Awards

- 2024 Fortune Magazine, ranked #40 of Fortune's 100 Best Small Workplaces
- 2016 Building Design + Construction, ranked #50 nationally in Top 100 Architecture Firms
- 2015 Architectural Record, Top 5 Design Firms, G+P Ranked #3 Nationally in K-12 Design
- 2014 National Council of Architectural Registration Boards AXP Firm Award
- 2008 Architectural Firm of the Year, Associate Builders and Contractors, Metropolitan Washington, DC Chapter
- 2007 Architectural Firm of the Year, Associate Builders and Contractors, Metropolitan Washington, DC Chapter

The American Institute of Architects [AIA] Awards

AIA Potomac Valley Chapter

Grand Honor Award

- 2005 Myrtilla Miner Elementary School, Washington, DC

Honor Award for Architectural Excellence

- 2004 Matapeake Elementary School, Stevensville, MD
- 2003 Queen Anne's County High School, Centreville, MD
- 2000 Charles Flowers High School, Springdale, MD
- 1998 Kent Island High School, Stevensville, MD
- 1997 Albert Einstein High School, Kensington, MD
- 1993 Walt Whitman High School, Bethesda, MD

Merit Award for Architectural Excellence

- 2001 Carlin Springs Elementary School, Arlington, VA

Citation Design Award

- 2017 Discovery STEM Academy, Newport News, VA
- 2009 North Harford High School, Pylesville, MD

AIA Maryland

Public Project of the Year Award

- 2004 Matapeake Elementary School, Stevensville, MD
- 1999 Kent Island High School, Stevensville, MD

Honor Award for Architectural Excellence

- 2003 Myrtilla Miner Elementary School Washington, DC
- 1999 Kent Island High School, Stevensville, MD

Citation Design Award for Architectural Excellence

- 2020 Moncure Elementary School, Stafford, VA
- 2018 Discovery STEM Academy, Newport News, VA
- 2009 North Harford High School, Pylesville, MD

Other AIA Awards

Citation Award in Historic Architecture

- 2016 Francis L. Cardozo Education Campus, Washington, DC *In association with Hartman Cox Architects*

Award of Design Excellence

- 2014 Francis L. Cardozo Education Campus, Washington, DC *In association with Hartman Cox Architects*

National Citation Award for Exemplary Learning Environment

- 1999 Kent Island High School, Stevensville, MD



Jordan Springs Elementary School—
Learning Commons



Discovery STEM Academy Collaborative
Learning Commons

National Awards

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA), A4LE, and AIA

Walter Taylor National Award

In association with the Association for Learning Environments and the American Institute of Architects
2005 Matapeake Elementary School, Stevensville, MD

Shirley Cooper Award for Outstanding Educational Environment

In association with the Association for Learning Environments and the American Institute of Architects
2003 Carlin Springs Elementary School, Arlington, VA

Citation Design Award

In association with the Association for Learning Environments and the American Institute of Architects
2011 Washington–Liberty High School, Arlington, VA
1999 Kent Island High School, Stevensville, MD
1992 Grasonville Elementary School, Grasonville, MD
1990 Walt Witman High School, Bethesda, MD

Association for Learning Environments (A4LE)

Gold Design Award

2022 Moncure Elementary School, Stafford, VA

Best New High School Design Award

2015 Louisa County High School, Mineral, VA
2009 Washington-Liberty High School, Arlington, VA
1999 Colonial Forge High School, Stafford, VA

Project of Outstanding Distinction/Best Design Award

2016 Discovery STEM Academy, Newport News, VA
2015 Louisa County High School, Mineral, VA
2005 Matapeake Elementary School, Stevensville, MD
2005 Kenmore Middle School, Arlington, VA
2005 Kent Island High School, Stevensville, MD
2004 Myrtilla Miner Elementary School, Washington, DC
2003 Queen Anne’s County High School, Centreville, MD
1991 Parkside Technology High School, Salisbury, MD

Learning by Design

Grand Prize Design Award

2020 Moncure Elementary School, Stafford, VA
2017 Discovery STEM Academy, Newport News, VA

Honorable Mention

2003 Queen Anne’s County High School, Centreville, MD
2000 Samuel Tucker Elementary School, Alexandria, VA

Citation Design Award

2023 Westmoreland High School, Montross, VA
1998 Albert Einstein High School, Kensington, MD

School Planning and Management Magazine and A4LE

Impact on Learning Award:

“Safety and Security Through Design”

2000 Charles Flowers High School, Springdale, MD
1999 Kent Island High School, Stevensville, MD

Educational Design Showcase: Honorable Mention

2003 Queen Anne’s County High School, Centreville, MD

School Construction News + Design Share

Honor Design Award

1999 Kent Island High School, Stevensville, MD

Honorable Mention

1999 Salisbury Middle School, Salisbury, MD

Recognition Award

2000 Brooklyn Park Middle School & Community Center, Brooklyn, MD

National School Boards Association (NSBA)

Special Citation: Learning by Design

1995 Charles Flowers High School, Springdale, MD

Award for Architectural Excellence

1993 Walt Witman High School, Bethesda, MD

Citation Design Award

2003 Carlin Springs Elementary School, Arlington, VA

1999 Kent Island High School, Stevensville, MD
1998 Albert Einstein High School, Kensington, MD
1992 Parkside Technology High School, Salisbury, MD

Association of School Business Officials (ASBO)

Certificate of Excellence Award

2013 Waverly PK-8, Baltimore, MD
2004 Matapeake Elementary School, Stevensville, MD
2003 Queen Anne’s County High School, Centreville, MD

Merit Design Award and Certificate of Excellence Award

2003 Queen Anne’s County High School, Centreville, MD

American School & University Magazine

Outstanding Architectural Design

1998 Kent Island High School, Stevensville, MD

Outstanding Interior Design

1998 Kent Island High School, Stevensville, MD

American School Board Journal

Honor Award

1998 Albert Einstein High School, Kensington, MD

United States Green Building Council

Wintergreen Award For Excellence in Green Building

2013 Ducketts Lane Elementary School, Elkridge, MD

United States Army Corp of Engineers

Excellence In Design

2003 Myrtilla Miner Elementary School, Washington, DC

Commercial Real Estate Development Association (NAIOP)

Award of Excellence

2013 Francis Cardozo Education Campus, Washington, DC
In association with Hartman Cox Architects

Regional Awards

Virginia Department of Education (VDOE)

Award of Excellence

2001 Carlin Springs Elementary School, Arlington, VA

Outstanding New School Building Design

In association with Virginia Educational Facility Planner (VEFP)

2009 Washington-Liberty High School, Arlington, VA

2003 Carlin Springs Elementary School, Arlington, VA

Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA)

Award of Excellence

2001 Carlin Springs Elementary School, Arlington, VA

Platinum Level Distinguished Design Award

2009 Washington-Liberty High School, Arlington, VA

People's Choice Award

2023 Westmoreland High School, Montross, VA

2016 Louisa County High School, Mineral, VA

Gold Design Award

2010 J. Blaine Blayton Elementary School,
Williamsburg, VA

2010 Lois Hornsby Middle School, Williamsburg, VA

Silver Design Award

2017 Discovery STEM Academy, Newport News, VA

Citation Award

2003 Carlin Springs Elementary School, Arlington, VA

Honorable Mention Award

2020 Moncure Elementary School, Stafford, VA

Virginia Educational Facility Planners (VEFP)

Merit Award for Interior Architecture

2005 Kenmore Middle School, Arlington, VA

Best New High School

In association with The Association for Learning Environments (A4LE)

2015 Louisa County High School, Mineral, VA

Design Arlington

Award of Excellence

2009 Washington-Liberty High School, Arlington, VA

Office of the Governor

Governor's "Visions" Smart Growth Award

2004 Aberdeen High School, Aberdeen, MD

2000 Brooklyn Park Middle School + Community Center,
Brooklyn Park, MD

Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB)

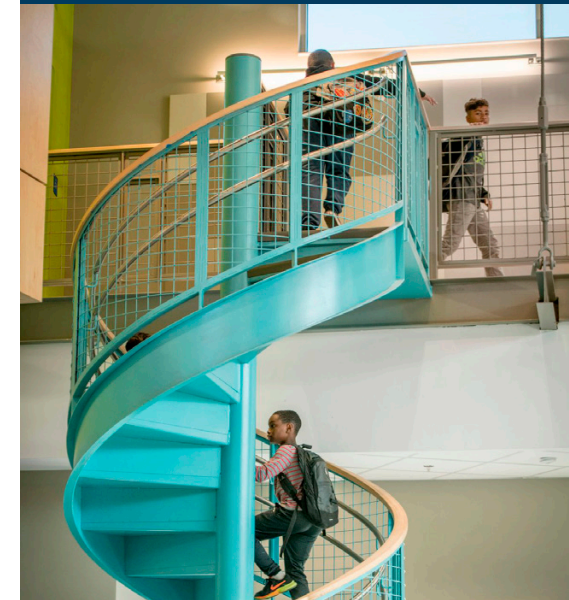
Excellence in Historic Preservation

2014 Francis L. Cardozo Education Campus,
Washington, DC

In association with Hartman Cox Architects



Kent Island High School



Moncure Elementary School



Discovery STEM Academy

Paul's Model Examples in School Design Books by Roger Yee

Paul Klee's projects have been featured multiple times in Roger Yee's authoritative books on school design, *Educational Environments*. His books bring welcome news at a critical time for America's educational community, now preparing students for an increasingly uncertain and volatile world. He provides a thoughtful look at many of the newest and most inspired K-12 educational facilities as designed by some of the nation's leading architects. Roger included several of Paul's projects in his books:



Washington-Liberty High School

"Washington-Liberty High School (founded in 1925) is now replaced with a new school. The building features outstanding classrooms, a library, a cyber café, and facilities available for community use, including an 840-seat auditorium, 10-lane swimming pool, flexible instruction/gallery, and alumni conference room. The LEED Gold design enhances superb educational facilities with a green roof, expanded green space, and numerous other sustainable features, prompting Paul Jamelske, Assistant Principal, to declare, "There are so many aspects of the new Washington-Liberty that we're proud of."

Charles H. Flowers High School

"The design creates a distinctive, state-of-the-art environment featuring four identifiable "houses" or quadrants devoted to science and technology, culture/arts, recreation, and classrooms grouped around a central gathering area for social activities, student services, and dining. The school's exceptional quality prompted David Lever, Director of Planning and Architectural Services, Prince George's County Public Schools, to declare, "Grimm + Parker has provided the County with an exceptionally attractive and workable facility, one that will serve as a civic and educational landmark for many years."

Carlin Springs Elementary School

"The primary design goal was to address the needs of students representing over 50 nationalities with such

facilities as language training rooms, reading recovery clinic, and ESL-oriented media center, along with more conventional K-6 accommodations."

Kent Island High School

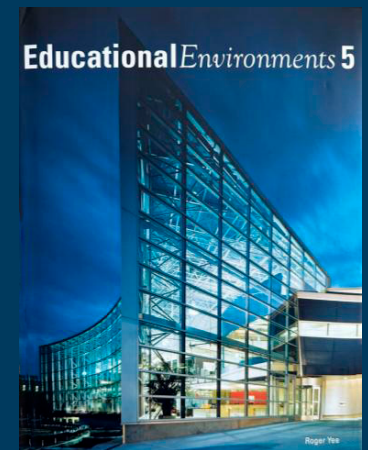
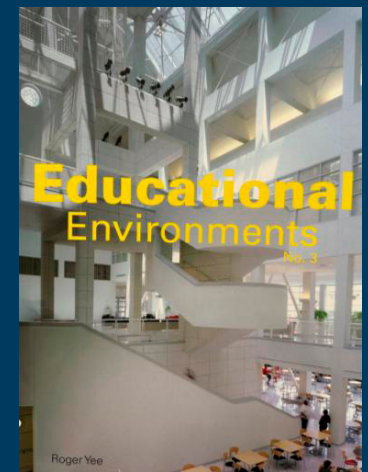
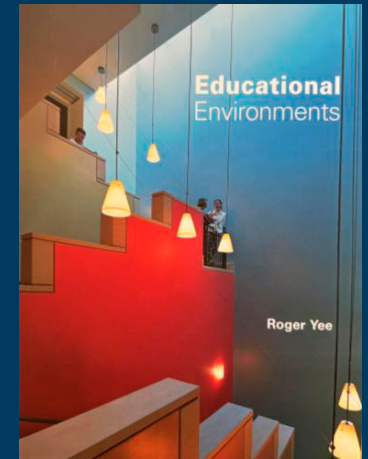
"The design treats its site in Maryland's Chesapeake Bay as an ecological resource for a community-oriented school with sophisticated technological systems. Inside, students and faculty thrive with the support of such facilities as the multimedia resource center and student commons. Space is organized around a linear Main Street where program elements act as neighborhoods, inspiring Dr. Carol Williamson, Superintendent, Queen Anne's County Public Schools to observe, "Your efforts resulted in a very unique design that has made it possible for us to achieve our educational goals..."

Queen Anne's County High School

"The work on Queen Anne's County High School has made a 40-year-old structure into a working model and symbol of a content-based curriculum where collaborative projects test multidisciplinary thinking."

Myrtilla Miner Elementary School

"The design establishes a school "Village" in which classrooms form "Houses" around common cluster spaces for team teaching within an architectural vocabulary of collaboration."



International Documentaries on 21st Century School Furnishings and Safety

Paul Klee was the lead interviewee in two international film documentaries released by VS America and the International Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Association (CPTED). Paul shared several key 21st century Framework Learning Principles and Space Types to demonstrate how interior design and architecture can enhance learning environments and add to the children’s safety.

VS America

Filed in 2017, this documentary by VS America, headquartered in Germany and seen all over the world, focused on Paul’s use of furnishings for learning space types in the Discovery STEM Academy project (See Exhibit 3.4). Developed for an audience of architects and school district leaders, Paul discussed how furniture design can foster more flexible learning environments, integrated technology, ergonomics along with improved student collaboration and wellbeing. He described how interior design, furnishings and architecture must work together to meet the emerging priorities of 21st century education.



The International Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Association (CPTED)

Filed in 2000, the influential International Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Association sponsored a safe school design documentary that highlighted Paul’s Kent Island High School in Stevensville, Maryland. Paul spoke of how the project introduced security trends for the wellbeing of children 25 years ago that are still incorporated in schools today. He created a school environment that is open and inviting and promotes safety and wellness that involves both the physical spaces and the social atmosphere within the school where teachers and students feel welcome and safe. A safe school is essential to protect the physical, emotional, and psychological wellbeing of students, teachers, and staff. A well-designed school fosters an environment where students can learn and grow without fear, distraction, or harm.

Kent Island helped lay the groundwork for the AIA School Safety Standards in 2018. Paul’s enduring strategies include: building access control, natural surveillance, constant communication, and target hardening.

Building Access Control — Clearly defined, limited building entrances that are monitored but welcoming with intuitive circulation and layered access that supports safety.

Natural Surveillance — Clear sight lines in corridors, classrooms, and outdoor areas allow staff and students to see and be seen, deterring negative behavior and promote accountability.

Constant Communication — Devices made available to all staff members that can be used to advise school occupants during times of crisis.

Target Hardening — Physical building features to prohibit intruder access and promote occupant escape.

Clockwise from Top Left: Discovery STEM Academy, Huddle Space with Flexible Furniture Design, Kent Island High School



Top to Bottom: Huddle Space with Flexible Furniture Design at Discovery STEM Academy, Small Group Privacy at Dining Booth Seating at Discovery STEM Academy, Natural Surveillance at Kent Island High School

Paul Klee’s contributions to K-12 school design have been the subjects of dozens of both national professional and educational publications as well as regional media, receiving accolades for their design excellence, advancement of educational pedagogy and school design practice, and their connection with and impact on local issues and culture.

Professional & Educational Publications

Paul’s articles on the 21st century learning framework for the Next Generation Learning Challenges Website include:

Next Generation Learning Challenges Website

“A Focus on Wellness for a Healthier School Environment”

Paul Klee | Winter 2026

“Teacher Collaborative Planning and Development Spaces”

Paul Klee | Winter 2026

“Authentic and Experiential Learning Spaces”

Paul Klee | Winter 2026

“Research and Information Gathering Spaces”

Paul Klee | Winter 2026

“Differentiated Instruction Spaces”

Paul Klee | Fall 2025

“Small Group Learning Pods (“Caves”)

Paul Klee | Fall 2025

“Large Group Learning Spaces”

Paul Klee | Fall 2025

“Communal Learning Spaces”

Paul Klee | Fall 2025

“Interdisciplinary Learning Spaces: Bridging Knowledge Across Subjects”

Paul Klee | September 2025

“Reflective and Individual Nooks: Small Spaces for Deep Thinking”

Paul Klee | August 2025

“Take Learning Outside: Connecting Education with Nature”

Paul Klee | July 2025

“Peer Learning Pods: Where Peer-to-Peer Learning Thrives”

Paul Klee | June 2025

“Versatile Learning Spaces to Support Every Student”

Paul Klee | June 2025

“Informal Huddle Learning Spaces Increase Peer-to-Peer Learning and Reduce Stress”

Paul Klee | May 2025

“The Collaborative Learning Commons: Physical Space and Educational Philosophy”

Paul Klee | April 2025

“Learner-Centered Spaces for Innovation and Sustainability”

Paul Klee | April 2025

“Next Generation Learning Spaces to Improve Learning in Schools”

Paul Klee | March 2025

Association for Learning Environments Academy

“Next Generation Learning Spaces for the 21st Century to Improve Learning in Schools”

Paul Klee | February 2025

Learning by Design

“Article about Paul Klee’s Award Wining Project”
Westmoreland High School | Fall 2023

“Article about Paul Klee’s Award Wining Project”
Moncure Elementary School | Fall 2020

“Article about Paul Klee’s Award Wining Project”
Discovery STEM Academy | Fall 2017

School Construction News

“Safety Trends in STEM & STEAM Design”

Discovery STEM Academy

Paul Klee | June 2017

AIA Architect

“Article about Paul Klee’s Award Wining Project”

Francis L. Cardozo Education Campus |

August 2016

Building Design + Construction

“Top 100 Architecture Firms” | July 2016

VS America International

“Case Study – Discovery STEM Academy”

Discovery STEM Academy

Paul Klee | June 2016

Architectural Record

“Top 5 Design Firms” | January 2015

Educational Environments 5

By Roger Yee, Visual Profile Books, 2012

“Featured Projects”

Washington-Liberty High School

American School & University

“Article about Paul Klee’s Award Wining Project”

Matapeake Elementary School | November 2007

Design Cost Date

“Case Study: Educational Facility”

Great Seneca Creek Elementary School |

November 2007

Professional & Educational Publications Continued

Educational Spaces

Vol. 132, No. 20
Carlin Springs Elementary School
Charles H. Flowers High School | July 2006

Educational Environments 2

By Roger Yee, Visual Profile Books, 2004
“Featured Projects”
Queen Anne’s County High School
Myrtilla Miner Elementary School

School Planning & Management

“Education Design Showcase”
Queen Anne’s County High School | June 2004

Learning by Design

“Article about Paul Klee’s Award Wining Project”
Queen Anne’s County High School | Fall 2003

Educational Environments

By Roger Yee, Visual Profile Books, 2002
“Featured Projects”
Kent Island High School
Charles H. Flowers High School
Carlin Springs Elementary School

American School & University

“Architectural Portfolio Issue”
Kent Island High School | November 1999

International Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Association (CPTED)

“Safe School Design Principles”
Kent Island High School
Paul Klee | December 2000

Regional Media

News on the Neck

“Westmoreland Hosts Annual State of the Schools for 2023”
Westmoreland High School | October 11, 2023

Daily News-Record

“Board Oks \$87.24 M Max High School Cost”
Rocktown High School | November 6, 2019

The Citizen

“One High School Will Focus on STEM”
Rocktown High School | August 6, 2019

NNPS-TV

“First Day of School, Military Personnel Welcome Students”
Discovery STEM Academy | September 19, 2016

Daily Press

“New Discovery STEM Academy Welcomes Students on Tuesday”
Discovery STEM Academy | September 6, 2016

The Washington Post

“A New School Year, and a 204th School, as Enrollment Surges in Maryland District”
Hallie Wells Middle School
Donna St. George | August 28, 2016

WJZ-TV Baltimore

“A Decade in the Making, The New Waverly Elementary/Middle Opens Its Doors”
Waverly Park PK-8 School | August 10, 2014

The Baltimore Sun

“Long-Promised Community School Comes to Fruition”
Waverly Park PK-8 School | March 9, 2014

“Carver School Officially Dedicated in Towson”
George Washington Carver Center for Arts and Technology | November 20, 2012

Metro Architect

“Grimm + Parker Architects; The Architectural Firm that Gives Back to the Community Designing Sustainable Buildings that Stand the Test of Time”
Summer/Fall 2009

The Baltimore Sun

“Greener Building Proposed for the Carver Center”
George Washington Carver Center for Arts and Technology | December 3, 2008

Gazette.Net: Maryland Community News

“Einstein Arts Center is Coming”
Albert Einstein High School | June 22, 2005

The Kent Island Bay Times

“Welcome to Kent Island High School”
Kent Island High School | August 12, 1998

The Washington Post

“In MD Suburbs, Schools of Future are Going Up Now”
Albert Einstein High School | November 28, 1995

AIA Architect

The Washington Post

LEARNING BY DESIGN The Premier Source for Education Design Innovation and Excellence

American School & University

EDspaces Designing the Future of Education

Architectural Record

THE BALTIMORE SUN

SCHOOL Planning & Management

BUILDING DESIGN + CONSTRUCTION

Daily Press

As an established thought and design leader in K-12 design, Paul Klee has shared his experience, knowledge and insights with professional peers as well as educators, contributing to the advancement of next generation school design principles and practices. For the most part, Paul's presentations and tours have been through international, national, regional, and local education and design associations.

National/International

American Institute of Architects, Interior Architecture Knowledge Community

"Next Generation Learning Spaces for the 21st Century" 2025

International Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
"Safe School Design Guidelines" 2017

International Association for Learning Environments Annual Conference

"The Future of STEM Education" 2016

International Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Conference

"How to Develop a Safe School Design" 2014

International Association for Learning Environments Mid-Year Conference

"Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Curriculum at Discovery STEM Academy" 2014

International Association for Learning Environments Annual Conference

"Next Generation Learning Opportunities" 2013

International Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Conference

"Safe School Design Features and Pedagogy" 2010

International Association for Learning Environments Annual Conference

"Career and Technical Education Opportunities" 2010

International Association for Learning Environments Mid-Year Conference

"Showcase Washington-Liberty High School" 2010

Regional/Local

Loudoun County Public Schools

"VA Green Building Standards for Schools" 2022

Loudoun County Public Schools

"Universal Privacy Solutions for Transgender Students" 2021

Grimm + Parker Architects

"Procedural Guidelines in Response to COVID-19 Pandemic in Schools" 2020

Virginia School Boards Association Annual Conference

"How to Benefit from Next Generation Learning" 2019

Discovery STEM Academy

"A History of Architecture" 2017, 2018

Louisa County High School

"The Architecture Design Practice" 2016, 2017

Virginia School Boards Association Annual Conference

"Creating Healthy and Happy Learning Environments with Discovery STEM Academy" 2014

Virginia School Boards Association Annual Conference

"The Future of Career and Technical Education" 2012

Kent Island High School Career Day

"What is Architecture?" 2010, 2011



School Tours

Westmoreland High School, Montross, VA

- 2023 International Association for Learning Environments, Mid-Year Conference
- 2022 Opening with Westmoreland County Board of Supervisors
- 2022 Halifax County School Board, Prototype Design
- 2021 Stafford County Public Schools Design Committee, Next Generation Learning

Louisa County High School, Mineral, VA

- 2022 Halifax County School Board, Prototype Design

North Harford High School, Pylesville, MD

- 2019 Louisa County School Board, Prototype Design
- 2009 Maryland Association of School Business Officials

Discovery STEM Academy, Newport News, VA

- 2016 International Association for Learning Environments, Mid-Year Conference
- 2016 Opening with Newport News School Board

Fort Worthington Elementary-Middle School, Baltimore, MD

- 2016 Construction Tour for Maryland Governor Larry Hogan

Ducketts Lane Elementary School, Elkridge, MD

- 2016 Geothermal Tour for Students
- 2015 Professional Development Tour for Teachers
- 2013 Green Apple Day of Service

Cardozo Educational Campus, Washington, DC

- In association with Hartman Cox Architects
- 2015 National Council for School Facilities
- 2015 Greenbuild
- 2013 Center for Green Schools Construction Tour
- 2013 Opening with Washington, DC Mayor Vince Gray
- 2012 DC Preservation League Construction Tour

Waverly PK-8, Baltimore, MD

- 2015 3rd Annual DC/NOVA Green Schools Summit
- 2014 Opening with Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley
- 2013 AIA Construction Tour

Wilson Wims Elementary School, Clarksburg, MD

- 2015 Geothermal Tour for Students
- 2014 Geothermal Tour for Students
- 2014 Green Apple Day of Service

Bel Pre Elementary School, Silver Spring, MD

- 2014 Professional Development Tour of Sustainable Features
- 2014 Sustainable Tour for PTA and Back to School Night

Washington-Liberty High School, Arlington, VA

- 2010 International Association for Learning Environments, Mid-Year Conference
- 2009 Virginia School Boards Association

Matapeake Elementary School

- 2004 Maryland Association of School Business Officials, Annual Conference

Kent Island High School

- 1998 Maryland Association of School Business Officials, Annual Conference
- 1998 International Association for Learning Environments, Annual Conference
- 1998 International Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Association (CPTED)



Paul Leading Stakeholder Panel Discussion at Building Tour

“ Paul Klee was a patient and an active listener to the citizens and educators of Westmoreland County.

He led us through an extensive exercise to reach out to the community and solicit input. He stood beside us in various meeting venues – Churches, Town Halls, Fire Departments, and Municipal Buildings. The confidence and expertise that we gleaned from Paul assisted in the creation of an educational vision and physical design for our new school facility. Westmoreland County Public Schools can say that Paul has always done what he said he would do and then go beyond the call of duty. In today’s business climate that means a great deal.”

—
Dr. Michael D. Perry Ed.D
Superintendent
Westmoreland County Public Schools



Paul Leading Tour at Westmoreland High School

Paul's Mentorship

Particularly noteworthy are three of Paul's mentoring activities. Colleagues, clients, peers, and emerging professionals numbering in the thousands have been impacted by Paul's career. Paul has always felt an obligation to celebrate the progress and accomplishments in his own career by helping others move forward in theirs. Paul's mentorship activities have been many, within Grimm + Parker Architects (G+P), through the AIA and other professional organizations, and with the architecture programs at universities across the Washington DC area. Paul has been a career-long AIA member and volunteer with the AIA Potomac Valley Chapter which serves the Maryland suburbs of Washington DC as well as much more of the State. (Paul served as Chapter President in 2011.) Paul is also a perennial volunteer for design and thesis juries at area architecture universities as well as for AIA and other design and awards programs.

National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, Architectural Experience Program (AXP) Firm Award

"The Internship Advisory Committee"
2014 thru 2017 awarded Grimm + Parker Architects (G+P) the AXP Award.

This recognition is with Paul's support who mentored twenty-eight emerging professionals at G+P to complete AXP and become registered architects. His legacy has been to inspire, teach, and mentor others about the values and importance of K-12 school design, advocacy, and commitment to professional service. The individuals Paul has personally mentored have gone on to be leaders in their own right: three Presidents of the local chapters of AIA (Maryland and Virginia), two Presidents of the Association for Learning Environments (A4LE), President of G+P, and CEO of G+P.

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University "Ed.D. Doctoral Research in Next Generation Learning" 2024

Paul was interviewed and served as a subject matter expert for Robin Accetta Riely, a Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies candidate at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) for her dissertation titled "Perceptions of Public High School Design Changes in Virginia Since the Implementation of a Profile of a Virginia Graduate." Riley was studying whether data supports the benefits of 21st century school design principles and analyzing qualitative data for themes relative to schools supporting 21st century pedagogy.

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, School of Architecture "A4LE SchoolsNEXT Student Design Competition" 2013 thru 2017

Paul challenged students with the Association for Learning Environments (A4LE) SchoolsNext Student Design Competition to plan and design resilient and 21st century learning spaces that encourage innovation, critical thinking, and collaboration. Their designs re-imagine the traditional school experience and create a nurturing and empowering environment where students can thrive academically, socially, and personally.

"Paul Klee provided integral insights to my research for my doctoral degree in education on school architecture and the development of next generation learning school buildings. His belief that environments should inspire and actively participate in the learning process informed my research on how physical spaces can support the development of critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, and citizenship, which are essential skills for future-ready graduates."

—
Dr. Robin Accetta Riley, Ed.D



3.0

Exhibits List



3.1 Grimm + Parker Next Generation K-12 School Design Framework Manual



3.2 Watershed: Queen Anne's County Public Schools



3.3 Moncure Elementary School



3.4 Discovery STEM Academy



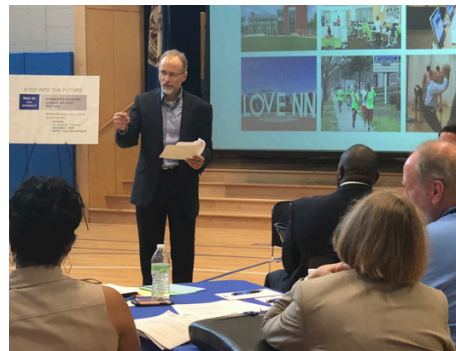
3.5 Westmoreland High School



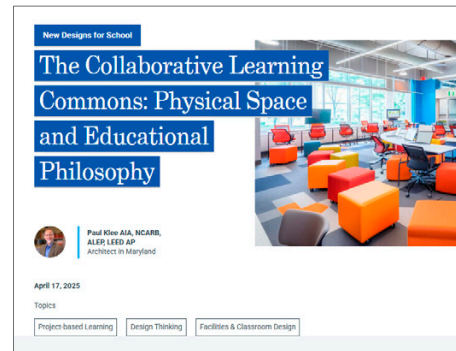
3.6 Louisa County High School



3.7 Rocktown High School



3.8 Next Generation School Design Curriculum for A4LE Academy



3.9 Next Generation School Design Articles for NGLC Website

3.1

Grimm + Parker Next Generation K-12 School Design Framework Manual

Design/Record Firm

Grimm + Parker Architects

Completion Date

2021

Role of Nominee

Design Partner-in-Charge

Declaration of Responsibility

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for the exhibit listed above. That responsibility included – the project was under the design direction of the nominee.

Ms. Kathleen O'Hearn, Principal -
Grimm + Parker Architects

Quote:

“Inspire and empower all learners to thrive.”

Grimm + Parker Architects

Synopsis

Paul Klee's 35-year career-long exploration of K-12 school design helped chart a new course for public education for the 21st century, a profound transition that represents both an evolution away from educational models developed during the 19th century and the incorporation of a new generation of progressive educational principles and practices. As Paul's role at Grimm + Parker Architects (G+P) evolved, his focus broadened from designing individual projects to guiding G+P's growing K-12 studio. New roles brought with them demands to better share his ideas about the design of next generation learning environments with both his colleagues at G+P and the school systems they worked with.

Through the preparation of design briefs for projects and proposals for work G+P pursued, Paul authored many editions of what ultimately became known as *G+P's Next Generation K-12 School Design Framework Manual*. The Manual addressed the need for a paradigm shift in primary and secondary education. Paul's Foundations and Learning Space Types of next generation school design provided guidelines for integrating them into school programming and planning.



1865 Traditional Classroom



2025 21st Century Classroom

Approach

Paul condensed decades of K-12 school design experience into a framework comprised of six guiding principles, or “Foundations” as Paul termed them, and a series of spatial solutions, or “Learning Space Types” as Paul termed them. Together they form a complete and replicable design philosophy and methodology for both project design teams as well as clients and project stakeholders to understand how conventional core school program elements, like classrooms, gymnasiums, auditoriums, cafeterias, libraries, etc., and next generation school design concepts and program elements work together to create schools for 21st century learning.

There are many alignments between the K-12 School Design Framework Paul developed for Grimm + Parker Architects (G+P) and the AIA Framework for Design Excellence. As the Foundations make crystal clear, like the AIA Framework Paul’s school design framework seeks to uplift the quality of school environments for the benefit of the occupants and communities they serve. The first and fourth Foundations (Make Design Inclusive and Engaging, Celebrate Community and Culture) clearly reflect the values underlying AIA’s Design for Equitable Communities. Design equity is also deeply nested in the second Foundation (Support Diverse Learning and Teaching Modes) which focuses broader principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion specifically on creating more inviting, accessible, and effective learning environments. As environments for nurturing children and young adults, the DNA of Paul’s third and fifth Foundations (Develop the Whole Child, Secure



Support Diverse Outdoor Learning

Schools are Nurturing) connects directly with the interests of AIA’s Design for Wellbeing and also Design for Discovery. Building sites are an integral part of available educational opportunities and raising environmental awareness and fostering environmental stewardship are core pedagogies in 21st century education.

The evolution of G+P’s 21st century learning environment design evolved in parallel with their focus on green and healthy schools as well as energy efficiency, building performance, and sustainable design. In the early years of Paul’s tenure with G+P, a few progressive communities were willing to pursue LEED ratings for their projects. Since, G+P has fully embraced the value of exemplary environmental performance into their projects, with or without client instigation, in tandem with progressive educational design. Design for Integration, Water, Energy, and Resources are fundamental goals in optimizing design decisions. And Design for Economy and Evolution (see Paul’s sixth Foundation) are baked into every project.

Foundational Design Principles:

Make Design Inclusive and Engaging – Process determines outcomes. The first design task in creating 21st century schools is cobbling together an accessible and purposeful design process for the school community, including administrators, staff, faculty, and students as well as the broader community, especially parents. Of the six principles, belief in openness and connection reflects Paul’s personal approach to life as well as architecture.

Support Diverse Learning and Teaching Modes – Acknowledging the individuality of children and providing multiple pathways for learning and growth. In the technology-rich and connected world of the 21st century, the transition from rote to experiential learning is crucial. School days are filled with cross-disciplinary, hands-on, and project-based learning involving both individual and group activities.

Develop the Whole Child – Schools must provide for the development of the body, mind, and spirit of children. School days are filled with activities that engage the students physically, mentally, and socially, developing personal capabilities and interpersonal competencies

3.1 Exhibit

Grimm + Parker Next Generation K-12 School Design Framework Manual



Secure Schools are Nurturing with Student Display



Design for Sustainable Discovery

Celebrate Community and Culture – Every school is a special place designed for a unique community and culture. Next generation schools provide for both school and community uses and creatively reflect the community’s identity.

Secure Schools are Nurturing – Providing physical security must go hand-in-hand with creating environments in which children feel secure. All-too-real dangers in today’s troubled world demand schools designed with robust security measures without compromising their effectiveness at helping children develop and grow.

Design for Economy and Evolution – Change is the only constant in 21st century learning. The technology revolution is accelerating and teaching methods and learning modes are evolving along with it. It is equally crucial to design spaces that are flexible, multi-purpose, and easily adapted as well as planning for expansion and renovation.

Learning Space Types Summary:

Programmatically, the most apparent difference in Paul’s next generation school design is the incorporation of a menu of learning space types that complement the conventional school program. Paul’s Manual presents these “Space Types” as a “kit-of-parts” that can be applied, combined, and modified as suits project aspirations and requirements. Over the years, the names, specific features, and characteristics of these space types fluctuated somewhat, but the following provides a good summary of 21st century learning principles that shaped Paul’s Learning Space Types.

Student-Centered Learning – Schools provide options for learning and places for self-reflection, independence, and personal growth.

Inquiry and Experiential Learning – Schools provide learning opportunities that are authentic and engaging, what educators term Active Project-Based Learning (APBL).

Collaborative and Social Learning – Schools provide opportunities for students to interact across a spectrum of group sizes and settings fostering both structured and spontaneous engagement.

Versatile and Flexible Learning – Schools accommodate learning environments that are resilient by anticipating curriculum evolution and technological change.

Ecological and Environmental Learning – Schools leverage both indoor and outdoor spaces to engage students in nature and their built surroundings.

Teacher Development and Resource Support – Schools provide educational resources beyond the classroom for both teachers and students.

Community Social Infrastructure – Schools are multi-use facilities that support community cohesion and express community values and culture.

Impact

The first versions of Paul’s Manual were developed for school pursuits and design development in 2010. They were instrumental in helping a broad spectrum of clients understand the concepts and values of next generation design including all 3 age cohorts and rural, suburban and urban communities. By 2008, Paul’s role as director of G+P’s K-12 studio was sufficiently developed that Paul began to formalize next generation design into guidance for design teams working on projects that he was not the design principal for.

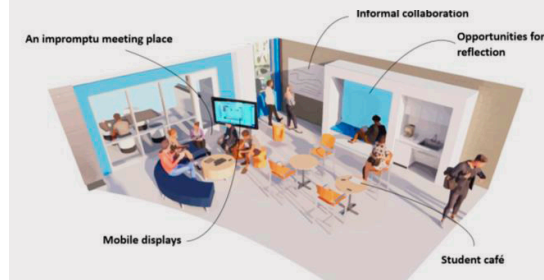
In 2015, the Manual was in full swing, being used to write proposals, development programming and preliminary design, and assess design. In 2015 G+P was also recognized as #3 leading K-12 school design firm by Architectural Record.

3.1 Exhibit

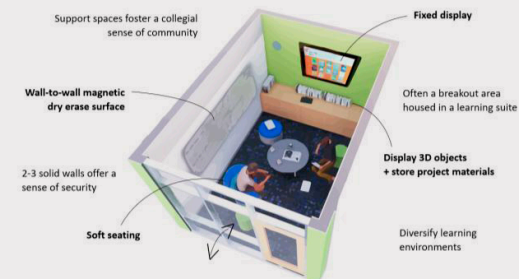
Grimm + Parker Next Generation K-12 School Design Framework Manual



Versatile Learning Space



Large Group Learning Space

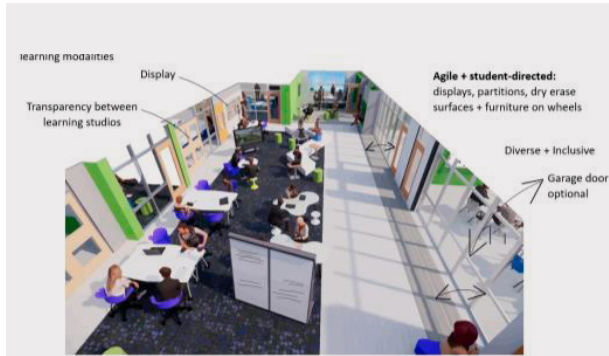


Small Group Learning Pod ["Cave"]

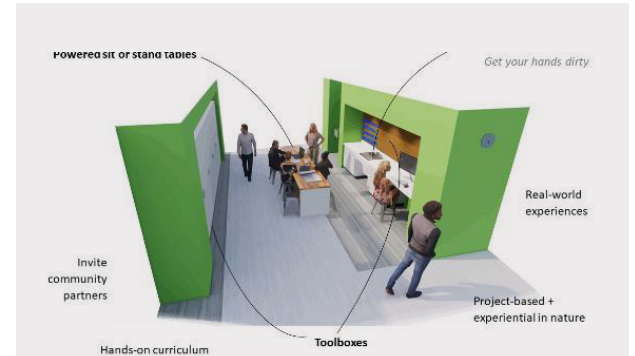
Learning Space Type Diagrams — A New Language of Learning Spaces for the 21st Century



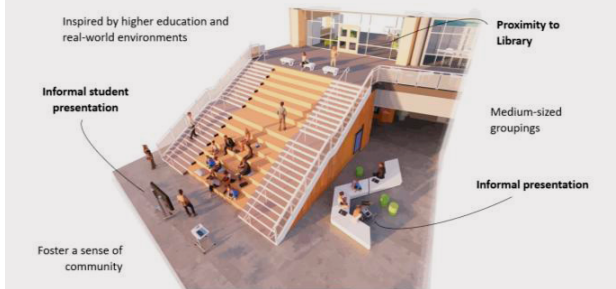
Learning Studio



Collaborative Learning Commons



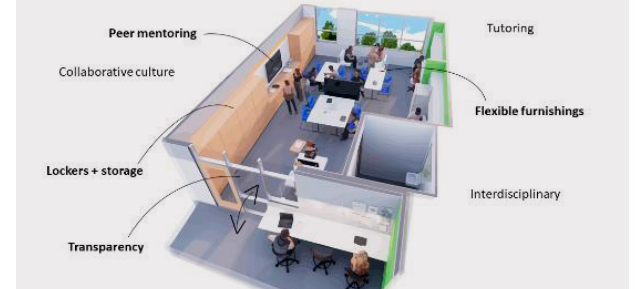
Learning Commons Resource Center



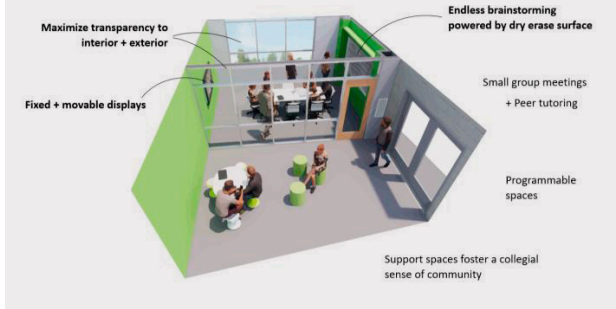
Learning Stairs



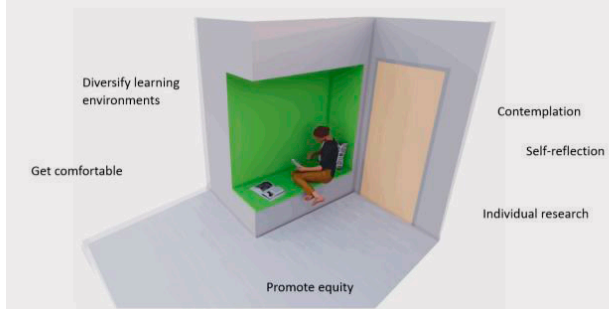
Student Display Space



Teacher Collaborative Planning Space



Huddle Space



Reflective Nook



Outdoor Learning Space

Synopsis

After more than a dozen years at Grimm + Parker Architects (G+P), two school projects completed for the Queen Anne's County Public School system in rural Maryland illustrate a watershed moment in Paul's career. Paul's role on major school projects like the Queen Anne's County High School and Matapeake Elementary School described here in Exhibit 3.2 had evolved into leading G+P's project design. The design challenges of the two projects were very different. Queen Anne's County High School was a comprehensive renovation and expansion of a rather bland mid-century school. Matapeake Elementary School was a new school on a previously undeveloped site. On the other hand, both projects demonstrate a time when Paul's understanding of next generation school design principles and practices had concretized into a holistic approach to 21st century K-12 educational environments.

Approach — Queen Anne's County High School

The term renovation does not fully capture the impact of Paul's transformation of Queen Anne's County High School. Perhaps most fundamentally, the new High School creates a welcoming and uplifting school environment that is night-and-day from the earlier building. Belief in the power of architecture to positively impact the mind, body, and spirit of students is arguably the most fundamental principle in Paul's next generation school design philosophy. Schools can and must be enjoyable and healthy places where design quality rewards and nurtures students every day.

Next generation educational principles go hand-in-hand with sustainable design principles. Queen Anne's County is located on the so-called Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay. Connecting the school's environmental quality to the cherished (as well as threatened) natural environment of Maryland's precious estuary and agriculture resources resonated deeply with the Queen Anne's community, school authorities, and students. Connecting indoor and outdoor, providing outdoor spaces for education, recreation, and relaxation, and employing healthy materials and biophilic design concepts were central elements of the transformation design strategy.



Above: Transformed
Main Entrance
Right: Before



Above: Transformed
Lobby Commons
Right: Before



Declaration of Responsibility

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for the two exhibits listed. That responsibility included – the project was under the design direction of the nominee.

Mr. Steven Parker FAIA, LEED AP, Chairman Emeritus and Founding Partner – Grimm + Parker Architects

3.2

Watershed: Queen Anne's County Public Schools

Queen Anne's County Public Schools

Design/Record Firm

Grimm + Parker Architects

Completion Date

2003

Role of Nominee

Project Design Lead

Population: 1,200 Students

Size: 221,061 gsf

Photography: Ken Wyner

Awards

Honor Award

AIA Potomac Valley

Merit Award

Association of School Business Officials

Certificate of Excellence

Association of School Business Officials

Special Distinction

Association for Learning Environments (A4LE)

Honorable Award

Association for Learning Environments (A4LE)

Honorable Mention

Learning by Design



Approach — Matapeake Elementary School

Designing a new school on a previously undeveloped site provided more opportunities to connect the school with its natural surroundings both architecturally and educationally. A central courtyard serves as both an outdoor classroom and storm water management feature. Daylight into interior spaces as well as views out to the surrounding site are available throughout. A large bioretention area adjacent to the school provides a native wetland demonstration garden.

Yet contrasts between Queen Anne’s County High School and Matapeake Elementary School are far more than a renovation versus a new building. Significantly, they are schools for different age groups. Even though elementary education still emphasizes the development of core learning skills, young children also need help developing a sense of belonging and social acceptance. Even hallways contribute by providing display areas for student work and comfortable nooks for individuals and small groups.

Impact

These two school projects represent a watershed moment in Paul’s evolution as a school designer and emerging thought leader in 21st century school design. The honors bestowed on Matapeake Elementary School deserve emphasis. Matapeake is, to this day, one of only two school projects



Top: Lobby Commons with Nooks and Displays
Below: Outdoor Learning Classroom

to receive AIA Maryland’s Public Project of the Year Award (Paul’s Kent Island High School is the other one). The Best Design Award is the Association for Learning Environments (A4LE) highest design honor. And the Walter Taylor Award conveyed jointly by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), A4LE, and AIA for “the project that best meets a difficult design challenge” is in the top tier of national educational facility design awards.

3.2 Exhibit

Watershed: Queen Anne’s County Public Schools

Design/Record Firm

Grimm + Parker Architects

Completion Date

2004

Role of Nominee

Project Design Lead

Population: 450 Students

Size: 63,000 gsf

Photography: Ken Wyner

Awards

Maryland Public Project of the Year
AIA Maryland

Honor Award
AIA Potomac Valley

Walter Taylor Award
American Association of School Administrators (AASA), Association for Learning Environments (A4LE), American Institute of Architects (AIA)

Certificate of Excellence
Association of School Business Officials

Best Design Award
Association for Learning Environments (A4LE)

Publications

American School & University
“Architectural Portfolio 2007 - Outstanding Design Featured Projects”, 2007

Synopsis

In 1987, New Zealand Educator Neil Fleming published his investigations into effective learning and teaching modes. Fleming's key finding was that different people receive, process, and retain information in different ways. Fleming documented seven learning styles: Visual, Auditory, Reading/Writing, Movement, Logical Analysis, Social (learning from others), and Solitary Focus. For over a century, widely accepted teaching methods and school design failed to acknowledge this diversity in approaches to teaching and learning – leaving many children behind. This snapshot of Paul's design for Moncure Elementary School illustrates how 21st century schools accommodate many approaches to teaching and learning and engage children using multiple pathways.

Approach

Moncure Elementary School is located in Stafford County, Virginia, a community at the far edge of the National Capitol Region experiencing the pressures of an expanding urban region. Serving a largely minority community, Moncure is a school for beginning learners with very diverse social, economic, and educational backgrounds. Moncure is a textbook for demonstrating Paul's architectural solutions addressing two of the most fundamental 21st century design Foundations: Support Diverse Learning and Teaching Modes and Develop the Whole Child.

The backbone of student-centered learning is providing learning opportunities beyond conventional teacher-focused approaches. Many involve hands-on activities that engage students both mentally and physically. Much of experiential learning also engages pupils socially by involving them in group activities. Classroom clusters are supplemented with additional space types. Classrooms open onto a broad hallway containing a shared Collaborative Learning Commons including a media-intensive Resource Center which accommodate hands-on activities in conjunction with core classroom teaching. For more intense hands-on activities, Learning Studios – flexible lab spaces – take the place of all classrooms in each cluster. And a quiet retreat, Huddle Space, is also provided in each cluster.



3.3

Moncure Elementary School

Stafford County Public Schools

Design/Record Firm

Grimm + Parker Architects

Completion Date

2019

Role of Nominee

Design Principal-in-Charge

Population

986 Students

Size

107,000 gsf

Photography

Sam Kittner

Declaration of Responsibility

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for the exhibit listed above. That responsibility included – the project was under the design direction of the nominee.

Mr. David Wolf LEED AP,
Associate Principal – Grimm +
Parker Architects

Left: 21st Century Classroom:
Learning Studio

Learning Studio – Located within classroom clusters, Learning Studios are designed for hands-on project-based activities. Students share worktables with tall legs that accommodate standing or sitting on stools. Learning Studios are acoustically discrete and fitted out with furnishings that are easily reconfigured.

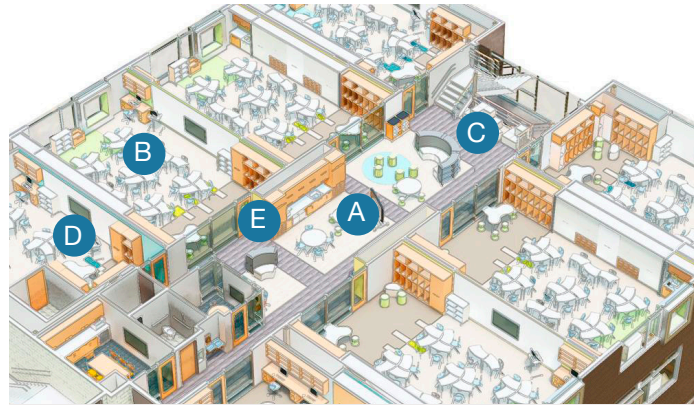
Collaborative Learning Commons and Resource Center – Located immediately adjacent to Learning Studios (classrooms) and separated from them with glazed partitions, the Collaborative Learning Commons is used by all classes throughout the school day. Often, it serves as a breakout space for groups of students. The Commons provides a variety of furnishing to accommodate different types of activities. The Resource Center houses supplies, media, and technology that supports a broad range of learning activities.



Impact

In addition to professional recognition awarded for Moncure Elementary School's design excellence, a survey published by Stafford County Public Schools confirmed that the intent of the next generation school design principles were being realized:

- 90% of teachers report improved collaboration.
- 80% of educators say flexible spaces support differentiated instruction.
- The next generation design led to significant increases in interdisciplinary project-based teaching.



Axon (Learning Studio Cluster Wing) Key

- A – Collaborative Learning Commons
- B – Learning Studio
- C – Huddle Space
- D – Teacher Collaborative Planning
- E – Learning Commons Resource Center

Clockwise from Top Left: Collaborative Learning Commons, Learning Studio Cluster Wing, Learning Commons Resource Center

3.3 Exhibit Moncure Elementary School

Awards

LEED Silver Certified
U.S. Green Building Council

Citation Design Award
AIA Maryland

Grand Prize Award
Learning by Design

Gold Design Award
Association for Learning
Environments, VA and
SE Chapters

Honorable Mention
Virginia School Boards
Association

Publications

Learning by Design
“Award Winning Project”, 2020





Learning Studio



Small Group Learning Pod ["Cave"]

Synopsis

Like Matapeake and Moncure Elementary Schools, Discovery STEM Academy is designed for children beginning their school experience. (STEM is an acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) And like Moncure, Discovery serves a largely minority population, in this case located in a struggling urban neighborhood in Newport News, Virginia, once the home of a flourishing shipbuilding industry. But as the name reveals, the Discovery STEM Academy has taken a very different approach to elementary education, one that is focused on science and technology and also inspiringly holistic.

Approach

The Academy's exceptionally strong pedagogical framework provided fertile soil for Paul's next generation school design concepts. Discovery illustrates two of Paul's Foundations with great clarity and integrity: Celebrate Community and Culture as well as a vigorous approach to Develop the Whole Child. Discovery's community culture is

expressed through these Foundations at every scale, from the schools overall spatial organization to details in the design of every nook and granny.

The Academy's commitment to developing the whole child is evident in the building's arrangement into four space type clusters: Discovery, Fitness, Nutrition, and Leadership. The character of each cluster is developed further in the architecture of key, character-defining, rooms and illustrated spectacularly by a program of supergraphics. The school's STEM philosophy is also evident in the architecture. All classrooms are designed and furnished as Learning Studios. This allows less space to be allocated to shared Learning and Resource Commons. Instead, more space is dedicated to relaxed and unstructured interaction and reflection that balances with the intense demands of hands-on, project-based, experiential learning. Even in its densely developed urban setting, outdoor spaces also serve an educational role as well as giving children time in the sunshine.

3.4

Discovery STEM Academy

Newport News Public Schools

Design/Record Firm

Grimm + Parker Architects

Completion Date

2016

Role of Nominee

Design Principal-in-Charge

Population

850 Students

Size

98,237 gsf

Photography

Sam Kittner

Declaration of Responsibility

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for the exhibit listed above. That responsibility included – the project was under the design direction of the nominee.

Mr. David Whale AIA, LEED AP,
Partner / CEO
Grimm + Parker Architects

Nooks and Pods – Both within circulation areas (Reflective Nooks) and in dedicated quiet rooms (Small Group Learning Pods), individuals and small groups are given time and space for reading, interacting, and thinking.

Outdoor Learning Classrooms – Designed outdoor learning and social spaces to connect students with nature and encourage physical activity throughout the day. Outdoor Learning Classrooms and discovery paths integrate physical exploration into students’ daily routines and academic instruction.

Impact

In addition to the peer recognition Discovery STEM Academy received, including Learning by Design’s highest award – the Grand Prize, Paul and Discovery were featured in a documentary film by VS America on the role of furnishing in creating flexible spaces (See Section 2.3). Post-occupancy surveys published by Newport News Public Schools showed the dramatic impact the new school had on the school system’s most troubling challenge, one common to many urban school systems: chronic student behavioral problems.

- 11% reduction in chronic absentee rate.
- 75% reduction in suspensions.
- 80% reduction in student discipline with bullying and fighting.
- Increase in state test scores – benchmark highest ever.

Quote:

“Paul Klee gave us exactly what we needed! An amazing school and campus with spaces of our dreams that breathe life into learning. Within the first two years, our Chronic Absentee rate reduced 11%. Student discipline also improved dramatically. Suspensions reduced 75%. The number of students exceeding state testing benchmarks was the highest ever.”

Ms. Christine Pilger
Principal, Discovery STEM Academy
Newport News Public Schools



Top: Outdoor Learning Classroom. Bottom: Dining with Student Choice

3.4 Exhibit Discovery STEM Academy

Awards

Citation Design Award
AIA Maryland

Citation Design Award
AIA Potomac Valley

Grand Prize Award
Learning by Design

Silver Design Award
Virginia School
Boards Association

Best Design Award
Association for Learning
Environments, VA Chapter

Publications

Learning by Design
“Grand Prize Winner”, Fall 2017

School Construction News
“Safety Trends in STEM”, 2017

Daily Press
“New Discovery STEM”, 2016

VS America
“Case Study – Discovery STEM
Academy”, 2016



3.5

Westmoreland High School

Westmoreland County Public Schools

Design/Record Firm
Grimm + Parker Architects

Completion Date
2022

Role of Nominee
Design Partner-in-Charge

Population
800 Students

Size
148,650 gsf

Photography
Halkin Mason

Declaration of Responsibility

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for the exhibit listed above. That responsibility included – the project was under the design direction of the nominee.

Ms. Catherine Rice
Superintendent, Westmoreland County Public Schools

Synopsis

In 2015, Westmoreland County Public Schools embarked on a national search for the most innovative design team for a new high school. They hired Grimm + Parker Architects. They also hired Paul Klee. Located along the banks of the Potomac River on Virginia's so-called Northern Neck, Westmoreland County was once the heart of tobacco country. Still mostly rural and agricultural with a population under 20,000, at first blush Westmoreland County may not seem like the type of community seeking to build a model next generation high school, yet it did.

Approach

By high school standards, Westmoreland High School is rather modest, with a student population around 800. The limits of size and budget put pressure on the design team to make every decision count and every space contribute to learning as well as social development. As teens, students have greater awareness of the surrounding world and are engaged in developing critical thinking. At the same time, they begin to test-drive their adult identity in the context of social networks and demand more autonomy.

At Westmoreland, engaging students in the design process, accommodating diverse learning styles, developing the whole child, creating a school environment both secure and nurturing, and providing versatility synthesized into a single challenge. The design strategy hinged on making every space serve educational purposes while also encouraging peer-to-peer interaction. Every architectural gesture and program element of Westmoreland High School contributes to both objectives.

Learning Stair – The central entrance and circulation lobby of Westmoreland High School also serve as an amphitheater for both planned and spontaneous activities.

Huddle Spaces, Small Group Learning Pods, and Versatile Learning Spaces – Throughout the school there is variety of settings for small groups to congregate. Some are furnished simply with tables and chairs, others have supplies, media, and connectivity. The school connects social interaction to learning across a range of space types.

Top Left: Learning Stairs

Impact

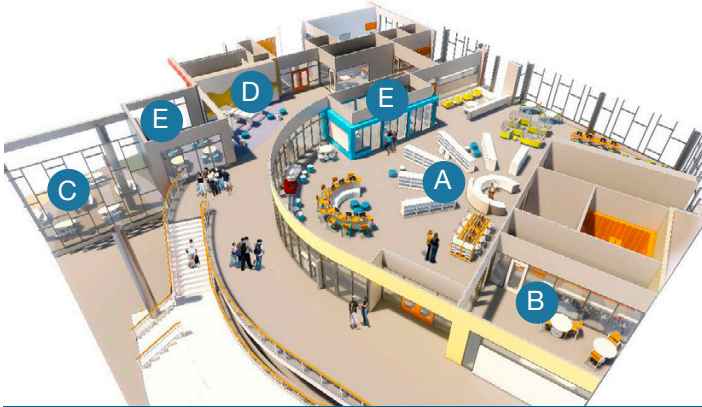
In addition to awards and publications acknowledging the design excellence of Westmoreland High School, after its first year of operation, Westmoreland County Public Schools reported the following impacts on student performance:

- 30% reduction in chronic absentee rate.
- 20% increase in student engagement.
- 50% reduction in dropout rates.
- 40% reduction in discipline incidents.

Quote:

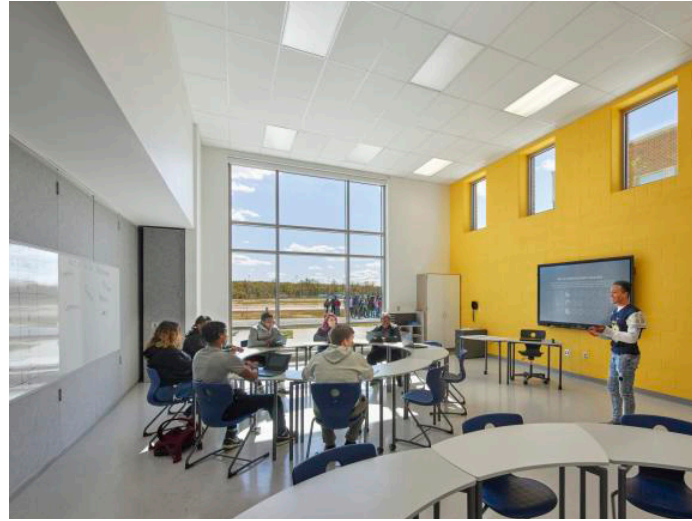
“Mr. Paul Klee’s school design was focused on next generation learning concepts and flexible learning spaces. When students visited the completed school during our open house, the consistent comment was: ‘I can’t wait for school to start.’ That just might be the highest form of recognition any architect can receive.”

Mr. J. Ralph Fallin
Chairman, Westmoreland County School Board
Westmoreland County Public Schools



Axon (Learning Commons) Key

- A – Learning Commons
- B – Learning Studio
- C – Huddle Space
- D – Versatile Learning Space
- E – Small Group Learning Pods (“Caves”)



3.5 Exhibit Westmoreland High School

Awards

Citation Design Award
Learning by Design

People’s Choice Award
Virginia School Boards
Association

Publications

Learning by Design
“Project-Based Learning”
2025

Learning by Design
“Award Winning Project”
Fall 2023

News on the Neck
“Westmoreland Hosts Annual
State of the Schools for 2023”,
2023

Left from Top: Learning Studio, Small
Group Learning Pod, Huddle Space,
Learning Commons



3.6

Louisa County High School

Louisa County Public Schools

Synopsis

The previous Discovery STEM Academy is a somewhat rare example of an elementary school structured on STEM subjects. To the contrary, many high schools today are fully cognizant of their role in preparing students for future employment, particularly for careers that reflect 21st century workforce trends. In addition to STEM pedagogy, increasingly high schools also provide job training courses, under the rubric Career and Technical Education (CTE). The final two built projects exhibit present high schools that offer STEM and CTE programs.

Approach

Schools designed for STEM and CTE education stretch the limits of what it means to support diverse learning and teaching modes. Of course, they include the usual secondary school programming. (classrooms, science labs, library/media center, gymnasium, cafeteria, auditorium, art labs, music rooms, etc.) And they also include dozens of spaces designed specifically for teaching advanced courses in science and technology (technology labs, makers spaces, etc.). Teaching cutting-edge programs also requires keeping pace with ever-accelerating advancements. The next generation school design Foundation – Design for Economy and Evolution – is pushed to the limit with the increased sophistication and diversity of learning and teaching modes.

When Paul began the programming and design process for Louisa County High School, the school administration believed that incorporating CTE programming was the beginning and end of next generation school considerations. Paul embarked on a long and sometimes challenged engagement process to show the relevance of all the Foundations of 21st century K-12 school design

and the practicality of spending precious dollars to incorporate next generation spaces. As the landscape of workforce development rapidly evolves, it is essential that Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs stay at the forefront of innovation by aligning learning environments with the demands of 21st century careers. Integrating next generation learning spaces into the CTE program represents a strategic, future-focused response to this need – one that transforms traditional “vocational” classrooms into dynamic, technology-rich, collaborative hubs that mirror real-world workplaces.

Design/Record Firm
Grimm + Parker Architects

Completion Date
2015

Role of Nominee
Design Principal-in-Charge

Population
1,750 Students

Size
272,834 gsf

Photography
Ken Wyner

Declaration of Responsibility
I have personal knowledge of the nominee’s responsibility for the exhibit listed above. That responsibility included – the project was under the design direction of the nominee.
Mr. Jim Boyd AIA, LEED AP, Partner - Grimm + Parker Architects

Left from Top: Exterior, CTE Science Lab, CTE Horticulture Lab

The vision begins with redefining physical and digital learning environments to be more flexible, interactive, and industry-aligned. Next generation spaces are not merely upgraded classrooms — they are immersive ecosystems designed to foster creativity, collaboration, and hands-on engagement. These spaces are equipped with modern technology such as interactive whiteboards, virtual and augmented reality tools, industry-grade equipment, and mobile furnishings that can adapt to different instructional modes — from individual focus to group collaboration to project-based learning.

Impact

In recent years, education in the United States has undergone a pivotal transformation. Across localities—from major cities to rural communities—and at the national level, there is a clear shift: STEM and CTE are no longer niche offerings but central pillars of modern education strategy. Federal and state policymakers are deploying substantial resources to expand CTE and STEM education. In 2024, forty states enacted one-hundred fifty-two CTE-related policies, the highest in years, targeting funding, industry collaboration, dual credits, and credential articulation. Simultaneously, nearly half of those policies emphasized industry partnerships and work-based learning. By 2022, thirty-seven states enacted one-hundred twenty-three CTE-related laws, reflecting bipartisan belief in CTE’s efficacy. State governments are actively aligning programs to emerging fields—clean energy, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, IT—to both meet growing labor needs and modernize education.

Quote:

“Mr. Paul Klee spent countless hours meeting with school board members, board of supervisor members, administration, teachers, and students to determine the best design for Louisa County and the programs offered. I am very pleased with the detail and concern shown throughout the project.”

Mr. J. Douglas Straley
Superintendent
Louisa County Public Schools



3.6 Exhibit

Louisa County High School

Awards

People’s Choice Award
Virginia School Boards Association

Best New High School
Virginia Educational Facility Planners

Project of Outstanding Distinction/ Best Design Award
Association for Learning Environments

Best New High School Design Award
Association for Learning Environments



Top: Performing Arts Lab
Left: Welcoming Entry, Outdoor Dining, Fitness Lab



Synopsis

Located in Harrisonburg, Virginia, at the foot of the Shenandoah Mountains, Rocktown High School incorporates conventional college-prep academics as well as both STEM and CTE programs. It looks and feels like a community college building with facilities that reflect 21st century expectations for secondary education. Harrisonburg is also a town-gown city, home to James Madison University which accounts for nearly half of Harrisonburg's population.

Approach

Community interest and engagement in education directly influenced the programming and design process for Rocktown High School. In addition, Rocktown serves a very diverse catchment area with residents from over 40 countries. Paul led the community outreach and engagement process, conducting a long series of multilingual workshops with school authorities, faculty, parents, neighbors, and students. Paul took the additional step of conducting charettes with students for the design of labs and learning commons.

One of the most noteworthy aspects of Rocktown High School is how beautifully and effectively it combines the core liberal arts program of secondary education with the program demands for STEM and CTE education. At Rocktown High School, the design of arts and music learning environments reflects a bold commitment to creativity, inclusivity, and modern pedagogy. Far from traditional, static classrooms, the school's core arts spaces are intentionally designed to empower students through flexibility, connection, and interdisciplinary learning.



Above: Large Group Learning Space – Flex Hall with Retractable Seating, Learning Commons

3.7

Rocktown High School

Harrisonburg City Public Schools

Design/Record Firm

Grimm + Parker Architects

Completion Date

2024

Role of Nominee

Design Partner-in-Charge

Population

1,200 Students

Size

258,253 gsf

Photography

Tom Holdsworth

Declaration of Responsibility

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for the exhibit listed above. That responsibility included – the project was under the design direction of the nominee.

Mr. Steve Mundt AIA, LEED AP, Partner - Grimm + Parker Architects

Large Group Learning Spaces – The architectural quality of the large group assembly areas in Rocktown High School is truly stunning. Several Large Group Learning Spaces include:

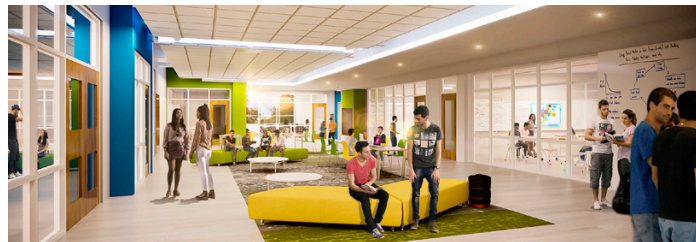
The Commons & Main Staircase – A grand, open central gathering space anchored by dining that’s reinforced with a feature staircase—the sides function as traditional stairs, while the middle tier serves as amphitheater-style seating for presentations, casual lessons, or impromptu gatherings.

Learning Commons (Library + Cyber Café) – A two-story media center with study rooms and a “cyber café” offering flexible seating and sink stations—ideal for independent learning, small-group collaboration, and digital projects.

Flex Hall (Multipurpose Performance Space) – A versatile substitute for a traditional auditorium. Equipped with retractable auditorium-style seating (that folds away), audiovisual systems, and screen—supporting theater, assemblies, guest speakers, and other large-group activities.

Corridors with Collaborative Work Zones – Hallways act as active learning zones, not just passageways. They include workstations, sinks, storage, and flexible furniture for peer-to-peer interaction, individual study, or informal project work.

STEM/CTE Hub – Located in the left wing, this area includes a dance studio, art studios, media/TV production studio, music rooms, and a multi-use workshop with a roll-up garage door for larger-scale, hands-on projects.



Left: STEM/CTE Hub (Visualization), Outdoor Learning Classroom (Visualization), Right: Large Group Learning Space

Teacher Collaborative Planning and Development Spaces – It is easy to get lost in the many aspects of the learning-side, the student-side of next generation school principles and practices. In fact, the next generation learning can only occur where next generation teaching is supported. Just as the diversity of individuals and the importance of collective work impact student learning, they equally affect the ability of teachers to teach. As incongruous as it may first sound, the key spatial transition that supports collaborative and innovative teaching is to liberate teachers from their classrooms, to give teachers spaces and resources to, literally, think outside the box, inspire each other, and create interdisciplinary learning opportunities.

Impact

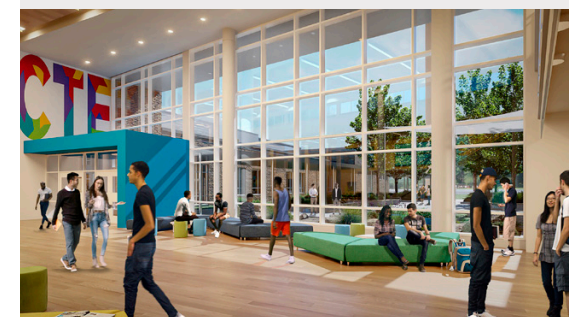
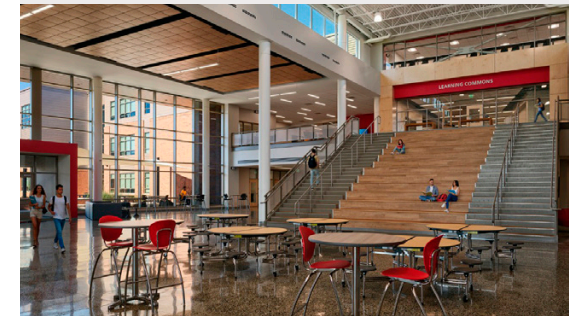
At the end of the first term, the Rocktown High School administration reported the following student outcomes:

- The 2025 graduation rate exceeded the state average by 10%.
- The 2025 rate of college enrollment among graduates increased by 15% over 2024.
- Dual enrollment in STEM and CTE programs increased.



3.7 Exhibit Rocktown High School

At the time of this submission, Rocktown High School is preparing for its second school year. Photographs were shot over the summer but have not yet been approved for use for awards submissions.



Top to bottom: Learning Stairs, Dining Commons, Informal Gathering Space

3.8

Next Generation School Design Curriculum for A4LE Academy



Provider

Association for Learning Environments (A4LE) Academy

Description

Curriculum for A4LE Academy Learning Environment Planning Advanced Certificate
<https://a4le.instructure.com/login/canvas> (Email Address - NextGenA4LE@gmail.com Password – PaulKlee1!)

Completion Date

2025

Role of Nominee

Curriculum Author / Expert Faculty Member

Declaration of Responsibility

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for the exhibit listed above. That responsibility included – creating, leading, and teaching the curriculum by the nominee.

Ms. Kate Broderick, Director of Knowledge Management & Credentialing - Association for Learning Environments (A4LE)

Synopsis

Established in 1921, the sole mission of the Association for Learning Environments (A4LE) “is improving the places where children learn.” A4LE is an international organization dedicated to promoting the exchange of ideas between educators and designers. With its singular focus on school design, A4LE plays an important role in developing and promulgating knowledge about educational trends and the design of facilities to support them. A4LE publishes *Learning by Design* known among school design architects for its school design awards. A4LE also contributes to raising school design standards through its many online and in-person conferences and most notably through the Advanced Certificate Program it offers through the A4LE Academy.

After stepping away from Grimm + Parker Architects (G+P), Paul Klee developed a course on 21st century K-12 school design principles and practices for A4LE Academy's Learning Environment Planning Advanced Certificate Program. Titled *Next Generation Learning Spaces for the 21st Century*, Paul's curriculum is designed for both educators and architects.



Approach

Paul's course is offered in seven lessons, or "modules", each consisting of background readings and other resources, self-directed online instruction, online testing on each module, and a key component of the A4LE Academy is direct, expert-led instruction and mentoring. Here's how this is typically structured:

Mentorship and Peer Coaching: Participants are paired with Paul who provides guidance on real-world projects.

Capstone Project Mentoring: The Advanced Academy includes a capstone project, where learners apply course concepts to a real-life educational facility planning challenge.

Workshops and Immersive Experiences: Some in-person components (often at A4LE events) include hands-on workshops, where learners interact directly with Paul, collaborate with peers, and receive immediate feedback and mentoring.

The curriculum covers the evolution of education for today's era of ever-accelerating technological innovation, a growing knowledge-based workforce, and the challenges in preparing "future-ready" learners confronting an uncertain future. Paul's genius is in translating these daunting challenges into a tangible and actionable design vocabulary.

Summary of Seven Modules:

Module 1: Foundations of Next Generation Learning – Understanding the needs, behaviors, and expectations of today's learners.

Module 2: Innovative Learning Spaces – Shifting from traditional teacher-focused classrooms to individualized, learner-centered environments.

Module 3: Personalized and Adaptive Learning – Encouraging self-directed learning and providing students more control over their learning pathways.

Module 4: Innovative Teaching Methodologies – Engaging students with inquiry-driven, real-world challenges.

Module 5: Collaborative Learning and Global Connections – Using collaborative platforms, peer learning, and group projects to enhance learning outcomes.

Module 6: Assessment and Feedback for the 21st Century – Providing continuous, real-time feedback and assessment.

Module 7: Creating Future-Ready, Sustainable, and Healthy Learning Environments – Teaching critical thinking, problem-solving, and digital literacy.

Impact

Although its commitment to providing and promoting purposeful high-quality continuing professional education is unquestioned, for many years AIA has debated its role in professional certifications. AIA has embraced some certifications, notably the Disaster Assistance Program that gives architects standing where laws often deny it, but AIA has steered clear of building-type certifications. A4LE's Academy addresses this void for architects interested in furthering their professional development in school design. Importantly, A4LE also designs their certification programs to engage educators, in effect training clients to appreciate the work of architects and the power of design to yield desired educational outcomes. Comparison to other courses offered by the A4LE Academy provides perspective on the exceptional scope and depth of Paul's course. Paul's A4LE curriculum illustrates clearly and compellingly, through both theoretical framework and proven practices, the power of design to raise prospects of children and young adults.

Quote

"Paul's creation of the Next Generation Learning Spaces for the 21st-Century course for the A4LE Academy equips professionals with tools to design responsive, future-ready learning environments....This work not only elevates the standard of practice—it actively redefines it."

Ms. Kate Broderick
Director of Knowledge Management & Credentialing
Association for Learning Environments

3.8 Exhibit

Next Generation School Design Curriculum for A4LE Academy




3.9

Next Generation School Design Articles for NGLC Website

New Designs for School

Reflective and Individual Nooks: Small Spaces for Deep Thinking



Paul Klee AIA, NCARB, ALEP, LEED AP
Architect in Maryland

August 7, 2025

Topics

Personalized Learning Social-Emotional Learning Facilities & Classroom Design


New Designs for School

We Are All Designing the Future of Public Education.



New Designs for School

Learner-Centered Spaces for Innovation and Sustainability



Paul Klee AIA, NCARB, ALEP, LEED AP
Architect in Maryland

April 1, 2025

Topics

Personalized Learning Project-based Learning Tools for Next Gen Learning Facilities & Classroom Design

New Designs for School

Provider

Next Generation Learning Challenges Website (NGLC)

Description

New Designs for School 21st Century Learning Environments Articles
<https://www.nextgenlearning.org/series/next-gen-learning-spaces>

(Select Search NGLC — Paul Klee at Left Margin of Website).

Completion Date

2025-2026

Role of Nominee

Contributing Author

Declaration of Responsibility

I have personal knowledge of the nominee's responsibility for the exhibit listed above. That responsibility included – creating, leading, and teaching with articles by the nominee.

Ms. Kristen Vogt, Senior Program Officer - Next Generation Learning Challenges Website

Synopsis

In parallel with his promotion of next generation school design aimed primarily at architects through A4LE, Paul has also dedicated himself to sharing his architectural vision and knowledge directly with educators, demonstrating how architects and architecture can play a crucial role in achieving desired educational outcomes. Paul took on the challenge of educating educators on the principles and practices of 21st century K-12 school design by contributing his expertise to Next Generation Learning Challenges Website (NGLC), a not-for-profit organization that engages educators and community stakeholders on the importance of next generation learning in public education. NGLC's impact promoting equity in public education is truly staggering. Since its inception in 2011, NGLC has issued more than \$100 million in challenge grants to public school systems, specifically targeting minority

and/or underrepresented communities struggling to overcome resource inequities.

A crucial part of its programs to improve public education, NGLC highlights the importance of school facilities through their New Designs for School initiative. In this program, NGLC asks: "What does next generation learning look like in practice?" NGLC's appreciation for the connection between school design and learning opportunities captures the mission that drove Paul's architectural career.

Paul stated: "We've all had the experience of truly purposeful, authentic learning and know how valuable it is. Educators are taking the best of what we know about learning, student support, effective instruction, and interpersonal skill-building to completely reimagine schools so that students experience that kind of purposeful learning all day, every day."

Approach

Working closely with NGLC’s website content developers, Paul proposed a series of seventeen articles that describe in great depth his understanding of next generation K-12 school design and advance the practice of architecture. (At the time of this submission, the first nine have been published by NGLC.) The articles do more than reiterate the Foundations and Learning Space Types Paul developed for 21st century K-12 school design. Targeting his audience of educators and stakeholders, Paul also provides detailed explanations of how “learning, student support, effective instruction, and interpersonal skill-building” are furthered by the incorporation of next generation space types and architectural solutions.

Paul’s articles on the 21st century learning framework for the Next Generation Learning Challenges Website include:

1. **A Focus on Wellness for a Healthier School Environment**
2. **Teacher Collaborative Planning and Development Spaces**
3. **Authentic and Experiential Learning Spaces**
4. **Research and Information Gathering Spaces**
5. **Differentiated Instruction Spaces**
6. **Small Group Learning Pods (“Caves”)**
7. **Large Group Learning Spaces**
8. **Communal Learning Spaces**
9. **Interdisciplinary Learning Spaces: Bridging Knowledge Across Subjects**
10. **Reflective and Individual Nooks: Small Spaces for Deep Thinking**
11. **Take Learning Outside: Connecting Education with Nature**
12. **Peer Learning Pods: Where Peer-to-Peer Learning Thrives**
13. **Versatile Learning Spaces to Support Every Student**
14. **Informal Huddle Learning Spaces Increase Peer-to-Peer Learning and Reduce Stress**

15. The Collaborative Learning Commons: Physical Space and Educational Philosophy

16. Learner-Centered Spaces for Innovation and Sustainability

17. Next Generation Learning Spaces to Improve Learning in Schools

Impact

Tailored for an educator audience, Paul’s articles discuss how to work with architects along with detailing design strategies to support schools’ 21st century imperatives. These articles are the highly accessible guides to improving learning environments and steering architecture firms, practitioners, and educators toward successful efforts to improve learning environments for students in the 21st century. They will serve as a foundation for future compilations and updates.

Quote

“Already, with just nine of the planned articles published to date, the series is making a difference for NGLC’s audience of innovative school/district leaders and teachers.... Paul is producing a comprehensive resource school communities can use to ensure that the physical spaces in their school buildings proactively promote the skills students need to thrive and contribute to an ever-changing world.”

Dr. Kristen Vogt
Senior Program Officer
Next Generation Learning Challenges

3.9 Exhibit

Next Generation School Design Articles for NGLC Website



Teacher Collaborative Planning and Development Space



Versatile Learning Space



Informal Huddle Learning Space