

School Construction

White Oak Elementary School Morris, Illinois

Winner of the Illinois Indiana Masonry Council's Best of Educational, Silver Award!

This new elementary school serves as the district's single Pre-K through 5 facility and accommodates 1,300 students. It is beautifully designed to:

1. replace and consolidate three antiquated elementary school buildings in a facility that meets both student and community needs in the most economically and educationally feasible manner possible;
2. support and enhance the district's driving philosophy of nurturing the whole human being; and
3. provide space for the district's administrative staff.



The design features three two-story wings, or "houses" within one 189,000 square foot building. Each wing houses two grades, one on each floor. The three first floors separately house the youngest children - early childhood/kindergarten, first grade and second grade. The three second floors provide individual homes for third, fourth, and fifth grades. Group identity is also reinforced by a different color palette for terrazzo floors, lockers, doorframes and walls in each wing.



The library/learning center is designed as an open two-story space to allow access from both upper and lower levels. Reading materials are located near appropriate grade levels. Computer laboratories, special education offices and classroom space are located on each floor near the grade house they serve.

A small gym is designed for the use of lower grades, while a larger one is designed for upper grades, the community and competition play. A 350-person cafeteria features a full-service kitchen and double-sided stage, which can be viewed from the dining area and the larger gym.

The district's administration center was designed as a separate structure from the elementary school, but is linked to the main building via an entry vestibule. The administration center features office space for the superintendent, business manager and staff, a workroom, a kitchen and a boardroom that can seat 100.



Key features to the project included the following considerations:

1. safe and easy use for students and the community;
2. building security;
3. acknowledgement and relation of architectural elements to the scale of the children who use the building; and
4. aesthetics to support education and community



Please contact CEO and Managing Principal [Jan Taniguchi](#), AIA, to learn more about [STR Partners](#).