

SPACE TYPES & REQUIREMENTS



Commons (welcome/dining/gathering)

School Type:



Functional Area Descriptions

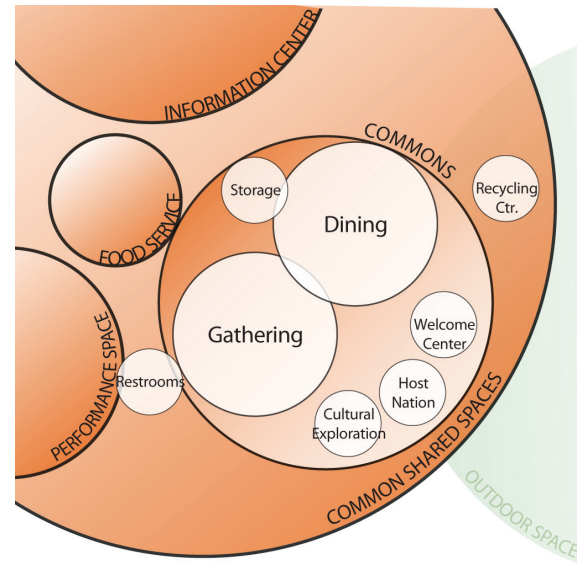
The commons is the central shared space at the heart of the school. Provide a dynamic, flexible space that is easily reconfigurable for dining or informal gatherings. It is desirable for this space to be designed so that the formal presentation space could be opened up to the commons for larger gatherings. Where movable walls are proposed, acoustics must be carefully considered.

As many school functions as possible should engage, or “front,” the commons. The commons can be designed as a central space for dining and gathering with the other functions of the building radiating from this center. A more linear arrangement, sometimes called a “learning street,” provides opportunities for education along a widened spine of the building. Where possible, use clerestories, monitors, or skylights to bring natural light into this central part of the building.

Public Space

The commons is the main public space at the heart of the school. Some activities that may occur in this space are performance, presentations, display of student work, group or individual study, and informal gatherings. The commons should be designed to allow for multiple seating arrangements and an audience.

Adjacency Diagram



Planning Requirements

Area Description	SF	M ²	Notes
Commons			
1 Commons	varies	varies	4,000 + (35% enrollment x 10sf)
2 Tatami Room/Kitchenette	300	28	Japan/Okinawa only

can view informal or ad-hoc presentations. An informal stage area may be provided, but this space is not intended as the primary space for performance. Areas for gathering may be achieved with level changes or elements such as large, tiered stairs designed for sitting (“Spanish steps”). This space should have portable technology and audio enhancement capabilities that can be quickly deployed. Acoustics and lighting should also be a design consideration so all activities scheduled to occur in this space can be properly accommodated.

Dining Area

An area of the commons should be designed to accommodate an efficient configuration for dining. The dining function will only require a portion of the commons space. This space can be part of the commons, or distinct with direct visibility and connectivity to the public space of the commons. When arranged as a dining area, this space should accommodate a minimum of 1/3 of the total student population. The food service area should be located with convenient access to this area for serving. Where the climate is suitable, outdoor dining areas should be provided.

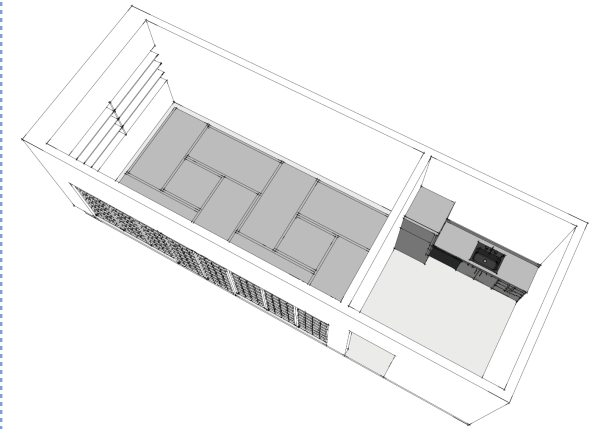
Recycling Center

Provide a recycling center near the dining area to house recycling containers and appropriate bulletin boards and signage describing environmentally responsible practices. The center should be easily accessible from the dining area and have a clear path to the exterior for removal of recyclables. Many schools have implemented a recycling program. Provide alcoves or sorting/storage areas as needed to

accommodate each school’s needs. Space required for this function will generally be in the circulation areas and calculated as part of the net-to-gross conversion.

Welcome Center

A welcome center should be located prominently near the main visitor’s entrance and should provide a friendly and helpful first impression. This space should be visually accessible to, yet distinct from, the administration area where the official check-in/check-out and visitor pass distribution are handled. The welcome center should be designed to accommodate



Host Nation Concept Perspective



▶ Tatami Room: Japanese Garden, Kitakyushu, Japan



▶ Tatami Room: Tazawa Gallery, Kyoto, Japan

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an attendant, as well as provide self-service guidance and information, since staffing may vary between schools or at different times during the day. The furniture should facilitate walk-up and wheelchair approaches, provide a counter, and not interfere with sightlines to the attendant.

Host Nation – Cultural Display Area

In OCONUS locations, a cultural display area may be provided near the welcome center for specialized information pertaining to the local culture and tradition of the host nation.

Host Nation – Tatami Room/Kitchenette – Japan/Okinawa only

In Japan and Okinawa, a tatami room and kitchenette shall be provided. Providing the tatami space in conjunction with the commons allows the opportunity to showcase the culture of the host nation country and also gives convenient access to the commons for other cultural appreciation activities. Other instructional elements of the host nation program will be taught within the neighborhoods. The following spaces should be provided:

Tatami Room: The tatami room should be on a raised 12 inch (300 mm) platform. It should be equipped with tatami mats. Access to the room should be through sliding shoji doors. Provide shelving at both sides of the room.

Kitchenette: Include a refrigerator, microwave oven, double sink, and dishwasher for adult use for preparing light host nation foods.

Storage

A storage space should be provided for chairs, tables, portable stage or risers, and audio/visual equipment that will be used in the commons. Size the storage based on anticipated space needed to provide flexible configuration of the commons space. The storage area should be just large enough for storage of items specifically used in the commons. The recommended size for this area is between 200-600 sf and the area will be deducted from the overall area of the commons to encourage efficient design of this space.



► *Multipurpose Gathering Space: Greenman Elementary School, Balloggphoto.com*
Cordogan Clark & Associates, Inc. with Architecture for Education, Inc., Aurora, IL

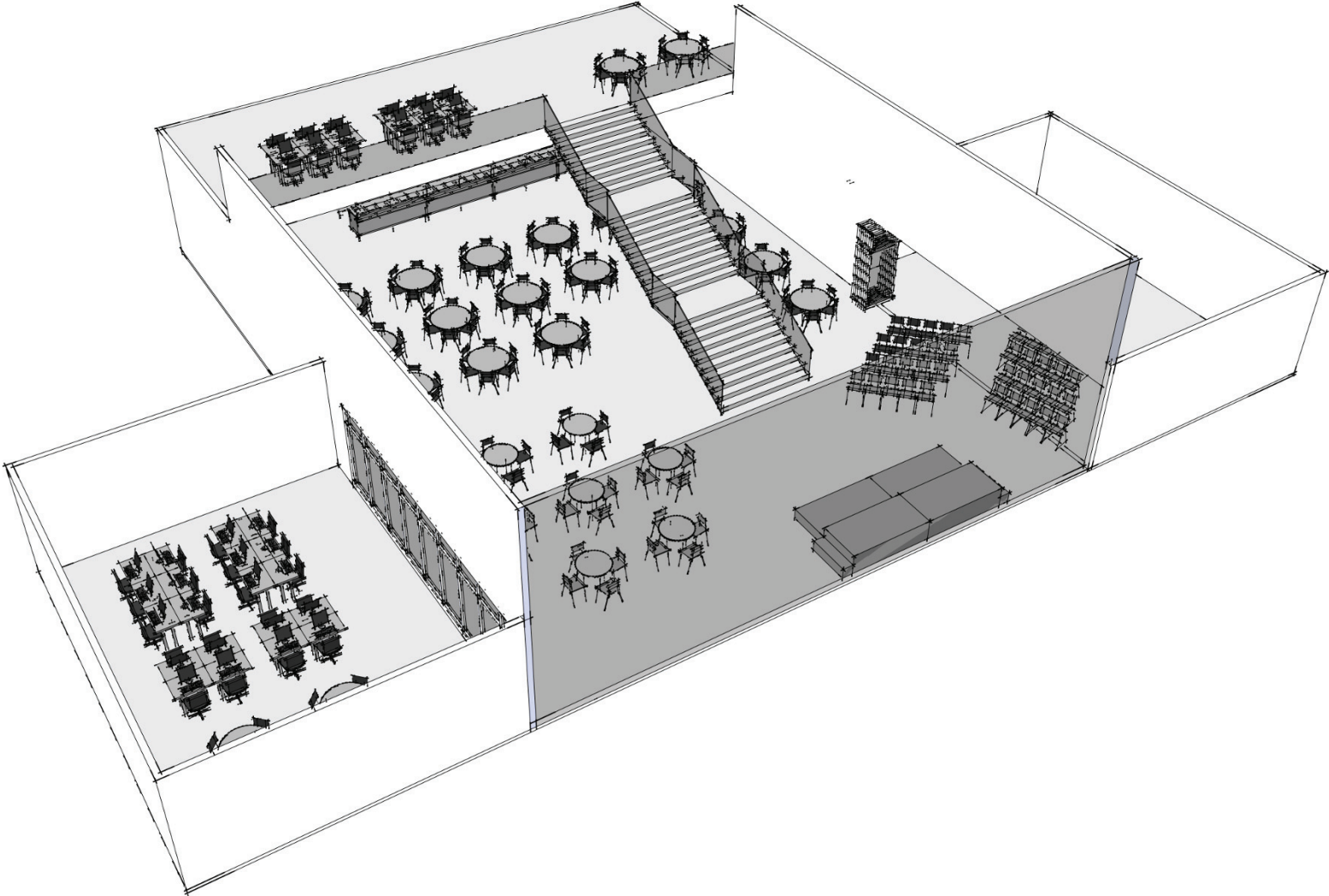


► *Gathering Space: Marysville Getchell High School, Marysville, Washington*



► *Dining Area / Meeting Space: Marysville Getchell High School, Marysville, Washington*

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Commons Concept Perspective

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