

DIANNE FEINSTEIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
*San Francisco, California*



**Design Features**

- Small Sloping Urban Site
- Strong Civic Presence
- 500 Students Grades K-5
- 26 Classrooms
- Community Access to Library and Multi-Purpose Facilities

**Size: 64,400 SF**

**Construction Cost: \$14.8 Million**

**Completion: June 2006**

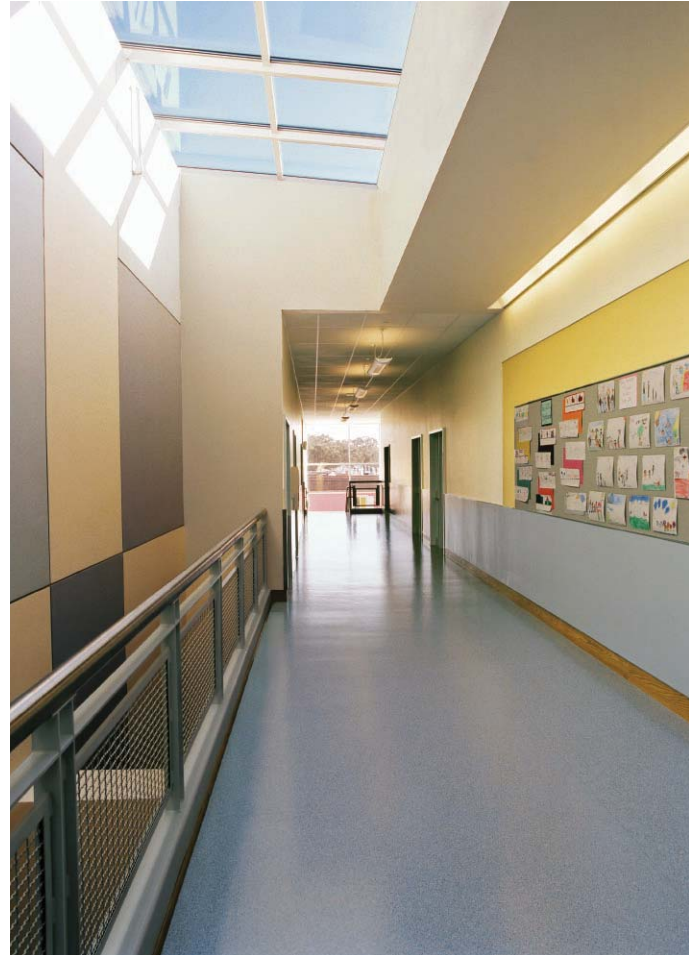
This striking school provides the Parkside neighborhood with its own local elementary school for the first time in over 25 years. The design's massing and style integrate with the surrounding neighborhood, seamlessly weaving the school into the community.

Fog and wind play a major role in Parkside's environment; on the interior, natural light filters to all corners via large classroom windows, clerestory windows, skylights, and open connections between the floors. Bold geometry and bright colors create a child-friendly environment that includes reading nooks with built-in benches. Classrooms are outfitted with custom millwork cabinets, computer counters, and stylish, durable furnishings.

The building is concentrated on the west side of the site, blocking the wind for the extensive outdoor spaces and bringing southern light to the playground. A model for greening play yards, the exterior includes fully accessible stepped seating for outdoor assemblies and age-designated play areas separated by tiered grass rings.

Two spaces—the library and a multi-purpose facility—allow the public after-hours access for meetings and events while the rest of the school is inaccessible. As a place for learning, gathering, and celebrating Dianne Feinstein Elementary School has created a beautiful new center for the community.

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#### Natural Lighting

Maximizing day lighting opportunities is a major design focus through the entire school. The main entry has two-story glass curtain walls, and clerestory windows. The open bridge design in the lobby lets light flow through. A large skylight with open bridges below lets light penetrate from the second floor to the first. The classrooms feature large operable windows, bringing in sunlight and natural ventilation.

#### Community Multi-Purpose Facilities

The large Multi-Purpose room offers flexible seating to accommodate school lunches, assemblies and performances, as well as PE classes. This double-story space has ample natural lighting with its large window walls on the south and east.

A retractable and accessible stage is complete with lighting and curtain riggings to host a variety of performances. There is also a residential style community kitchen, separate from that of the school's food services program. This allows communities to serve and prepare food for fund-raisers, performances, and other community events.





DIANNE FEINSTEIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (CONT.)  
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**Community Library**

The beautiful new library features a custom millwork circulation desk, with built-in nooks for feature publications. The shelves are lined with a multitude of new books, study desks, and soft seating areas. The media center houses over a dozen computers for research or language study.

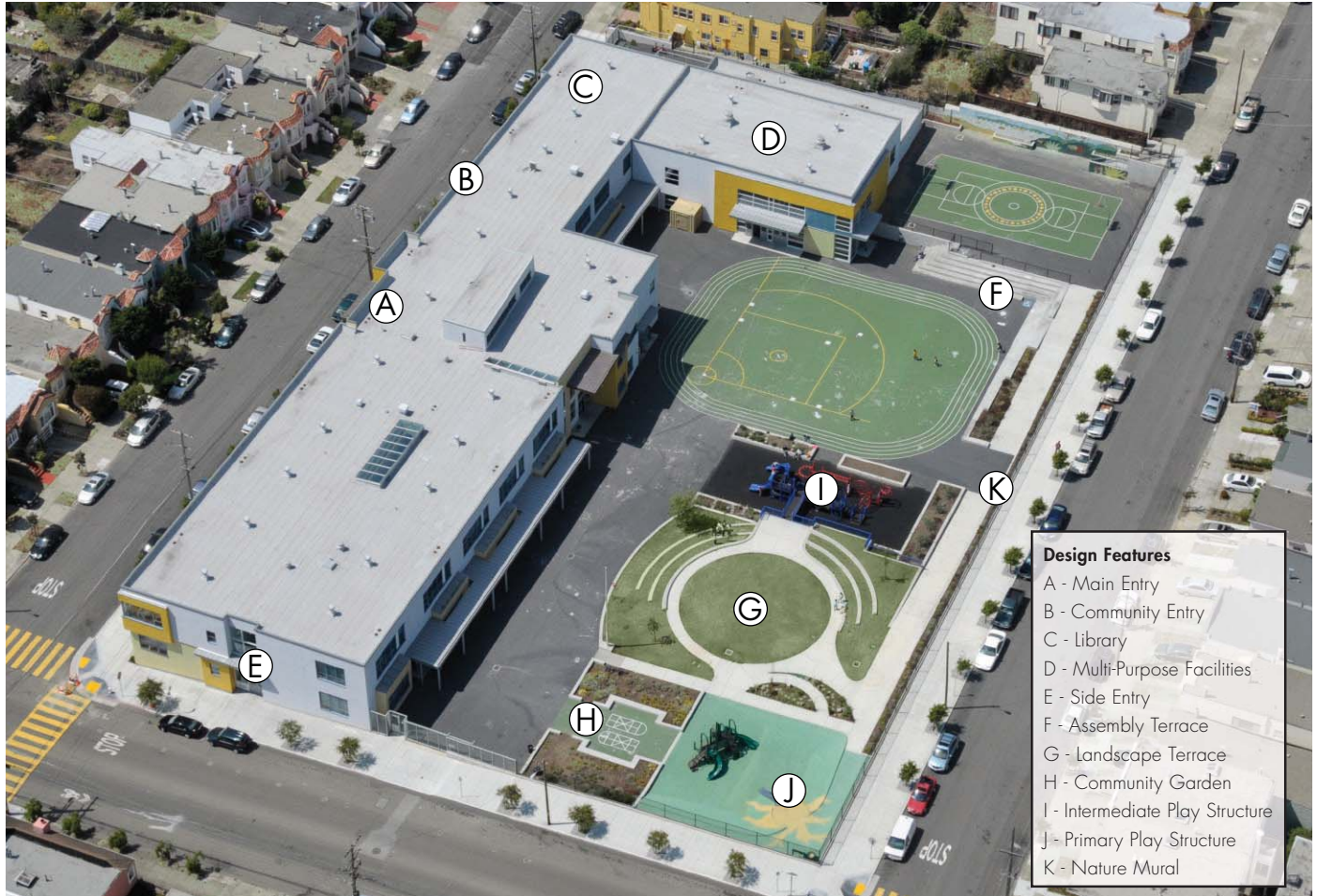
Senator Dianne Feinstein arrived on the first day of school to spend time reading with the young students.

Through the public meetings, the need for community facilities arose. This sparked a separate entrance on the north side of the building, allowing after-hours community access to the library, and large multi-purpose facility. The community access area can be partitioned from the remainder of the facility, providing security to the rest of the school.





DIANNE FEINSTEIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (CONT.)  
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**Outdoor Activities**

The expansive play yard provides a rare opportunity for the urban youth to romp outdoors. The design of this outdoor space incorporates the many steep slopes of the existing site, into its distinctive play zones. Centrally located tiered grass rings separate the kindergarten play structures from that of the older children. A bridge connects the elevated grassy area to the large upper-elementary play structure, which is also surrounded by community planters and young trees. The accessible gardening planters are maintained by a student group of gardeners, and feature drought resistant plants.

The multi-level design and diverse activity spaces offer active play choices which appeal to a multitude of interests. Because the site is undersized, the distinctive spaces also allow more children to play in the yard at the same time. All of these spaces have also been constructed to be fully accessible.

The school's large green play yard serves as a striking example to San Francisco Unified School District's movement of 'greening play yards,' and keeping children active, throughout the district.

