

PROJECT SPECS

Owner: Buckingham County Public Schools
Architect: VMDO Architects, Charlottesville, Va.
General Contractor: Blair Construction, Gretna, Va.
Structural Engineers: Fox & Assocs., Richmond, Va.
Interiors: VMDO Architects, Charlottesville, Va.

Date Opened: Aug. 2012
Total Budget: \$18,370,000
Photography: Courtesy AIA, Alan Karchmer

Buckingham County Primary & Upper Elementary Schools at the Carter G. Woodson Education Complex
Dillwyn, Va.

The fight against childhood obesity has a new ally: creative architectural design. According to VMDO Architects, Charlottesville, Va. and their firm's Foodsmart Kids design initiative, schools can be built to get our kids moving and making healthier food choices. And they've designed the LEED Gold Buckingham County Primary & Elementary Schools' K-2 and 3-5 grade school campus to prove it.

From organizing classrooms in a way that requires students to use the school's main staircase multiple times a day to designing the cafeteria line to steer students toward better food choices, the VMDO team worked with specialized pediatricians to employ the right daylighting, bright colors and unique furniture to encourage interactivity, movement and overall health. The cafeteria features a demonstration area with a big counter so students can see their food being prepared, a food lab so they can prepare their own dishes and a garden where students grow their own fruits and vegetables to eat during the school day.

"Training begins early so that later in life when kids walk into McDonalds they're not on autopilot; they know the selections they're responsible for making," said architect Robert Moje, FAIA, LEED AP, VMDO. "Through the school's design we're challenging kids to make their own choices and understand that there are real life implications."

The schools were originally built as neighboring, stand-alone K-8 elementary and high schools; the latter was the local high school for African American students prior to the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in Brown vs. the Board of Education, and sat vacant for 50 years until this project commenced in 2009. Today, the Buckingham County Primary & Elementary Schools' building is a combination of renovation and additions that connects the current K-2 and 3-5 grade schools by way of a second story balcony.

Because the two schools share communal spaces including the kitchen, cafeteria, library and music labs, the district was able to spend more on interior finishes—like the Hoki Stool, which encourages constant, subtle movement when in use. "The ultimate objective is for all kids to have a great, healthy environment to learn in," said Moje.

1 Entry Doors

YKK AP's 200/350/500 institutional grade Entrance Doors provide design freedom via varied rail and stile widths. Door corners are mechanically joined and welded to withstand today's most demanding conditions. Standard hardware options include the Smart Series Push/Pull and touch bar exit devices. www.ykkap.com or **Circle 406**

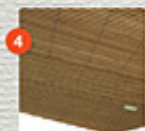
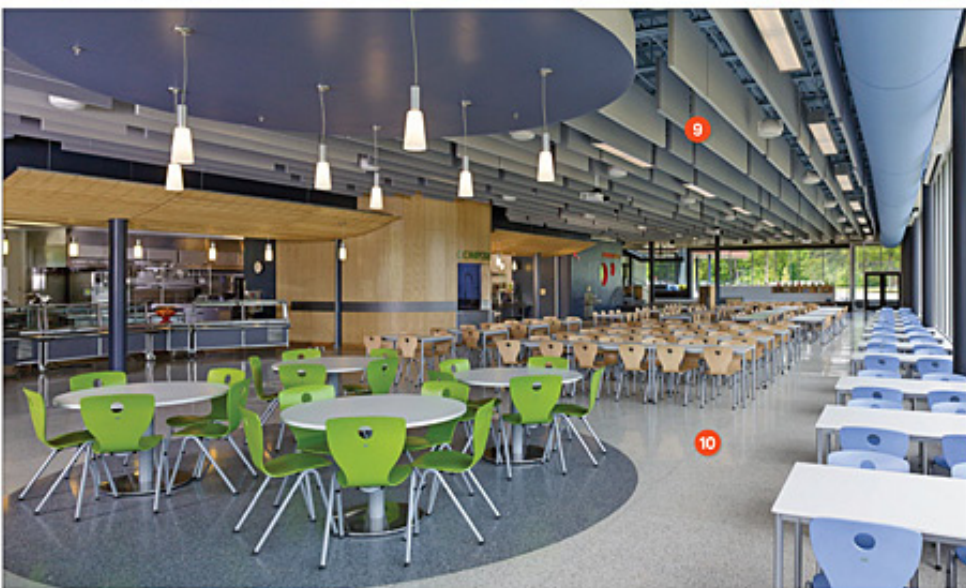
2 Student Stool

The **Hokki stool** from **VS America** is made of durable, scratch-resistant, friction-welded polypropylene and filled with soft plastic foam for comfort. The chair facilitates free mobility under controlled conditions thanks to the rounded, padded base, which facilitates a full range of movement while sitting. This ergonomic chair features a wave-shaped seat edge that makes it easy to carry. www.vs.de/en or **Circle 405**

3 Interior Ambient Lighting

The **Artemide Mouette** Suspension luminaire features an extruded aluminum structure and is held up with steel suspension wires. Available in dimmable and non-dimmable versions, the luminaire is UL listed. www.artemide.us or **Circle 404**



**Wood Ceiling Panel**

Chosen for its warm look, the **Rulon Panel Grille** was specified in White Ash with a clear finish for the Buckingham County schools' library, main lobby and elsewhere. Because Rulon allows the architect to choose the number of blades per foot, blade thicknesses and widths, VMDO Architects was able to create a stylized visual of the building infrastructure for students to "promote teachable moments."

www.rulonco.com or **Circle 403**

**Athletic Flooring**

Offering a blend of durability and performance, **Mondo's Advance** indoor sports floor can meet all the demands of multi-purpose use featuring three layers, including a solid 2mm rubber wear layer that requires no finishes or coatings.

Engineered to exceed coefficient of friction standards for athletic performance, the flooring's load disbursement layer provides reinforcement against bleachers, tables and chairs. Class 1 fire code rating and slip resistant, the flooring is ADA compliant.

www.mondoindoorsportusa.com or **Circle 402**

**Interior Skylights**

Solatube 750 DS-C daylighting system for closed ceiling applications delivers consistent light output through the day, effectively capturing low-angle sunrays in the morning, late afternoons and winter months, but rejects high-angle rays at midday to prevent glare, overlighting and overheating. Perfect for spaces with open ceilings where a consistent light level is required.

www.solatube.com or **Circle 401**

**Lounge Chairs**

The **Kloud Collection** chair from **Nienkamper** found in the Buckingham County school library is made from a laminated wood base with rubber webbing under the fixed cushion. The foam body is supported with a tubular steel frame and the seat and back are polyurethane foam covered. It can be upholstered in leather or fabric, and has a swivel base for enhanced movement and flexibility.

www.nienkamper.com or **Circle 400**

**Rollershades**

Shadecloth rollershades allow students to see out the window even when the shades are down. **MechoSystems'** shade cloths are GreenGuard certified and come in a wide range of densities, from zero to 13% open (Buckingham County Schools chose 5% weave), and protect a building's interior furnishings and occupants from harmful UV rays, heat-gain and solar transmission.

www.mechoshade.com or **Circle 399**

**Acoustical Baffles**

Specified to provide acoustic control in the school's cafeteria, **Decoustics'** Baffles are made using two 1-in.-thick medium density fiberglass cores assembled to create an overall 2-in. thickness that is then upholstered in the fabric of your choice (in this case, upholstered by Guilford of Maine). www.decoustics.com or **Circle 398**

**Terrazzo Floor**

Used throughout the building, Epoxy Terrazzo in custom mixes with special accents (see cafeteria) "adds value to the entire school environment," said VMDO Architects. Specified because of its ease of maintenance and long life expectancy, terrazzo flooring at Buckingham Schools was designed and installed by **David Allen Co.**

www.davidallen.com or **Circle 397**