

GALAXY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Boynton Beach, FL



Key Features

- Targeting LEED Platinum
- Campus Master Plan
- Visioning / Programming
- Facility & Feasibility Analyses
- Integration to Urban Neighborhood
- Joint-Use Facilities
- Enhancement of Natural Resources
- Project based Learning
- SDPBC/DOE Standards

Size

- 109,000 SF (New Construction)
- 751 student stations
- Core areas (service/dining, media, administration) for future build-out to 1,044 student stations

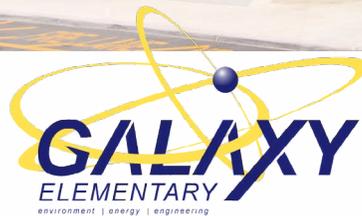
Cost

- Appx. \$24 M

ZYSCOVICH
ARCHITECTS



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT
PALM BEACH COUNTY



Galaxy Elementary School has invented a new direction for K-5 instruction in Palm Beach County, the nation's 11th largest school district. The school replaces a 53 year-old elementary school that was originally to be decommissioned, but upon hearing the neighborhood's strong plea, and receiving a low-interest Federal Stimulus loan, the idea for a unique new school was born. This will be the District's first CHOICE (magnet) elementary school specifically designed to provide "E3" learning. The school curriculum will focus on **Energy, Environment and Engineering**, bringing exciting science and math programs to life. To complement the curriculum, the school is aiming to be the first LEED Platinum-certified new public school campus in Florida. Our design effort has created a new combination of program spaces. Synergy Spaces are classrooms with sliding glass doors opening onto expanded circulation areas for project-based learning, the concept at the heart of Galaxy's teaching method. The Wonderment Center is the exciting



double-height core of the school designed like a mini-science museum, complete with interactive exhibits to augment the new curriculum. DaVinci Studios are 4 science labs directly attached to the Wonderment Center, focusing on the curriculum themes of energy, environment, engineering and also computers. The Art Lab is moving the curriculum from STEM to STEAM. These new learning spaces can be adapted to other elementary schools in the District and beyond. In addition to the School, the project involves the replacement of an adjacent city park facility to a new location on-site. Two small existing classroom buildings will be reused as flexible ancillary classrooms and program support. At the north end of the property is a 4 acre natural habitat that, through a partnership with the City of Boynton Beach, will become part of the science curriculum.

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Galaxy School's Community Benefits

Galaxy Elementary School will be a civic resource for the stable but economically disadvantaged neighborhood of Boynton Beach in which it is located. The residents are very excited about this unique new school for their children, and have shared their needs and ideas in pre-design meetings with School District staff and design team. The completion of the School and the City's recreational park is considered an important part of the Galaxy neighborhood's economic revitalization. A Gopher Tortoise Preserve with nature trails is in the planning stages, with the School District and City seeking grant resources and volunteers to help with the environmental restoration. Galaxy Elementary opened in the fall of 2013, the area's public and private schools have scheduled tours of the green campus and enjoy the hands-on educational displays.

On the economic front, Galaxy Elementary School will support the growing business community of Boynton Beach. As an energy and green demonstration project, the campus with its sustainable features and innovations is expected to attract many visitors every week. The City has prioritized becoming a magnet for sustainable development and green buildings – the Galaxy project at the gateway entrance to Boynton Beach from I-95 will reinforce that objective.



The Wonderment Center

One of the most exciting features of the new Galaxy School Campus is the highly anticipated Wonderment Center. This campus focal point is a two-story educational space with two skills labs on each floor, and an outdoor science patio and green roof. The Wonderment Center will feature interpretive, interactive, multi-age exhibits, on the walls, floors, and suspended overhead. The Wonderment Center incorporates the 2 main school entrances, and the central courtyard. It wraps around the dining/multipurpose room which can become a large presentation space before and after lunchtime. A special fundraising effort, coordinated by the architects and the Educational Foundation of Palm Beach County, raised over \$1.2M to fund the Wonderment Center and other LEED Platinum features that were not included in the original budget.



OTHER SUSTAINABLE FEATURES USED AS TEACHING TOOLS

- East-West orientation of classroom wings
- Sun shades above windows, south elevations
- (2) 20 KW Solar Photovoltaic (PV) arrays
- Solar Hot Water system for kitchen
- Commercial kitchen equip. - mostly natural gas
- Seeking funding for helical wind turbines
- Energy/water use @ interactive touchscreen
- Low flow plumbing fixtures
- Reclaimed water for general irrigation
- Hydroponic garden uses rainwater harvesting
- Bio-swales for storm water retention
- Sidewalks extended to improve bicycle access
- Optimal use of daylighting in teaching spaces
- High-efficiency lighting fixtures and controls
- 75% of construction waste diverted from landfill
- White reflective roofs and Green Roof
- Non-toxic interior materials
- Cabinetry uses sustainably harvested wood

PROJECT FUNDRAISING

The Quantum Foundation awarded this project a \$750,000 grant to support the Wonderment Center with several deliverables, including measurement of improvement in academic achievement, particularly in math and science. If you, your company or agency is interested in making a tax-deductible donation to Galaxy Elementary to help us do even more for "The Greenest School in the Galaxy". Please contact Thorn Grafton, AIA, LEED AP Director of Sustainable Initiatives at Zyscovich Architects, 305-372-5222 or Mary Kay Murray, Executive Director, Education Foundation of Palm Beach County, 561-357-7659.