

Head Start Facilities Design Competition

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This project was in response to the Head Start Facilities open competition for a new facility in rural New Jersey. The program consists of three programmatically distinct divisions: classrooms, staff and parent support, and community services. Each block of program is housed in an individual *object* within the overall volume of the institution.

A LANDSCAPE OF CHILDREN

The central function of this institution is pre-school education and daycare. Five classrooms are surrounded by differing *landscapes*: one external defined by large hedge walls and a field of sunflowers, the other internal defined by a mountain-like ramp, a forest of columns and a sky-like ceiling. Contained within the internal landscape is the kitchen where children learn to prepare nourishing meals which are then taken away as picnics to either of the landscapes or the classrooms.

STAFF AND PARENTS

Floating between the interior landscape and the ceiling, this object contains faculty work/observation room, parents classroom, parents observation lounge, and medical offices. Expected to operate during daycare hours these support functions are positioned in ascension along the ramp; presenting a dense facade to the south and an open facade to the class-rooms.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Consisting of a large community room, social services and the shared medical offices, these functions are expected to operate during and after daycare hours. Serving the exterior community rather than the school the entrance to community services is a large skylit stair which is terminated by a view across the adjacent landscape. On the exterior the volume of Community Services is revealed as an object rather than being masked by trees as are the adjacent staff and classrooms.



