

# Place-Based Collaborative Learning

Designed to enliven the community's aspirations through leveraging indoor and outdoor learning environments that provide students easy access to nature and encourage exploration of the natural world.



## Site Features

- Outdoor Learning Courtyard:** This secured space provides direct connection between adjacent classrooms and outdoor learning spaces, allows students to explore, and encourages risk taking in a safe space.
- Connecting Pathways:** The design arranges the school around a linear courtyard with branching pathways for pedestrians and bikes, bringing students and teachers inside and outside as they move around the campus.
- Community Garden:** Provides farm-to-school programs and food to the greater community.
- Play Areas:** Located along Grant Street to encourage community use.
- Bioretention Areas:** An entry feature doubles as stormwater management and as an entry piece. A smaller bioretention area within the courtyard for direct access from classes and utilized as a learning tool.
- ADA Features:** To better accommodate the substantial grade difference, a ramping circulation provides seating at various landings as the pathway meanders.

# Accessing Nature

“No child left inside” was the guiding philosophy for the design team in delivering the Salish Coast Elementary School for the Port Townsend School District.

Our goals were to create meaningful, place-based collaborative learning; recognize engagement with the broader community; and celebrate the community's intimate relationship with their natural setting.

Stakeholders highlighted the importance of walkability between the campus and community, which resulted in extra emphasis on pedestrian and bike connections. The site design incorporated paved play, stormwater features, a community sports field, and two community gardens — all fit within tight budget constraints while satisfying program and educational goals.

The City of Port Townsend required the addition of an offsite parking lot and a regional bike lane. These elements came together to create a cohesive design supporting diversity of learning, age-appropriate play, neighborhood cohesion, and connections to nature.

Pedestrian/Bike Corridor



Learning Courtyard



Pathway Connections

## Key Team Members:

**Landscape Architect:** Osborn Consulting  
**Architect:** Integrus Architecture  
**Contractor:** Absher Construction  
**Client:** Port Townsend School District

**About:** Opened 2018, preK-5th grade, 600 students

## Awards:

AIA Education Facility Design Awards, Award of Merit  
 Association for Learning Environments (A4LE)  
 “People’s Choice” Polished Apple Award

# Salish Coast Elementary School, Port Townsend, WA

