

Public Invited to Open House Sunday, May 28, at Tusculum View Elementary School (Article from the Greeneville Sun, May 26, 1967)

Residents of Greeneville and Greene County will be given an opportunity to see Greeneville's newest elementary school and learn about the school's program, which is arousing interest all over the United States at an Open House Sunday, May 28.

Hours for the Open House will be from 2:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. School personnel will be on hand to conduct tours of the building and to answer questions. A brochure, giving statistics and information will be distributed.

Since the school opened earlier this year, an average of 15 visitors per school day has been to the school. These visitors have represented school districts all over the United States. Both the design of the school, and the school's program (curriculum) are attracting the attention of educators nationwide, and Greeneville has received considerable favorable publicity as the result of the visits, a school spokesman said today.

The Design and Construction of Tusculum View Elementary School

The program, the planning and the production of Tusculum View Elementary School, a new and significant school, is the result of the co-operative efforts of educators, architects, and citizens working together. The instructional staff, administrative leaders and members of the Greeneville Board of Education and the architects joined with the staff of the School Planning Laboratory of the University of Tennessee to work as a team to determine the educational specifications. These specifications, prepared and written by the School Planning Laboratory staff, were created to provide the architect pertinent information regarding the program to be housed in the new school.

Generally, the specifications set forth the requirements for the creation of a physical environment to meet the needs of a program not restricted to traditional grade lines, but one highly individualized with a not-graded approach and a facility providing flexibility and adaptability for programs of the future.

Honeycutt and Boyd, local architectural firm, designed the building to meet the requirements of the educational specifications by carefully planning the arrangement of spaces and by the use of methods and materials of construction to achieve economy and answer the needs of environmental controls of light and sound.

The building consists of a large circular structure encompassing the classrooms, administrative offices and other related academic spaces and a smaller, semi-enclosed, circular structure, 5,670 sq. ft in floor area, for physical education. These two structures are connected by a covered walkway; the circular form of the building represents the most economic perimeter for a given interior area and contributes to the deletion of wasted spaces and corridors. It provides greater utilization of space and greater flexibility.

The classroom spaces are arranged in a circular band around a central core area consisting of the library, administrative spaces and the children's theater. Except for three special classrooms: kindergarten, music and art, and EMR, the classroom spaces are divided into two large areas, equivalent to nine classrooms each, one being the primary area and the other for the intermediate area.

The large areas are divided into smaller classroom spaces by simple arrangement of furniture, chalkboards, wardrobes and storage units, all easily movable to effect quick and complete flexibility.

Visual barriers between spaces are created by this movable equipment while the acoustic barriers or sound control is accomplished by the use of construction materials and finishes.

The library area, located in the center of the structure, is arranged for recreational reading, individual study and research. It is equipped with shelving for approximately five thousand volumes of books, individual study cubicles, tables for group study and librarian's work space.

The children's theater, located on the mezzanine floor above and overlooking the library and administrative areas, is circular in plan and is formed with the stage area in the center and the seating area on three levels rising from the center. This creates a theater-in-the-round. Special lighting equipment includes spot lights, flood lights and border lights controlled by dimmers.

A significant feature in the program of the school is the method of serving food or what is called the satellite kitchen method.

Instead of saddling the budget with an expensive cafeteria and kitchen, a food serving area has been provided and equipped with a portable hot food cafeteria counter, portable tray racks, portable insulated food containers, garbage disposer and a dishwasher for washing trays.

The food is prepared in the kitchen of another school, transported in the insulated containers and then served, fresh and hot. The children eat in their own classroom areas and return the soiled trays and garbage to the dishwashing area.

To meet the trends in the physical education programs of an elementary school, the conventional and expensive gymnasium with its expensive equipment has been replaced by an economical outdoor or limited play shelter. This semi-enclosed space consists of a wood dome roof structure supported by inverted steel A-frame supports. The floor is paved with asphalt paving.

The basic structure of the main circular element consists of masonry bearing walls and structural steel with a roof of steel bar joists placed in radial pattern supporting a poured lightweight concrete deck. The roofing is a built-up asphalt roof with a reflective surface of white marble chips. The dome structure over the central core consists of fire-retardant treated wood structural ribs and wood deck covered with insulation and a white roofing membrane.

All floor areas, except the terrazzo and ceramic tile floors in the corridor, food service area and the toilets, are fully carpeted to affect economy in maintenance, enhance the internal beauty and comfort, and most importantly add to the acoustical control.

Efficient and non-glare lighting is achieved by omitting windows and installing recessed fluorescent lighting in the suspended ceiling grid system. Thermal control throughout the building is accomplished by the use of all electric heating and air-conditioning units. The building is equipped with a complete sound and intercom system and is wired throughout for a closed-circuit television system.

The program and design of the Tusculum View Elementary School has effected an economical school building, the costs being well below the national averages. Bearing this out are the following technical data:

Capacity of Building, 595 pupils

Space per pupil, 71 sq. ft.

Cost of construction, \$505,000.

Cost of Special equipment (Chalkboards, wardrobes, carpet, food serving equipment and library shelving), \$89,836

Total Cost (Building and Special Equipment), \$594,836

Cost per square foot (Building), \$11.96

Cost per square foot (Building and Special Equipment), \$14.08

Cost per pupil, \$1000

The Tusculum View Elementary School encompasses the first six years of public education. It is a non-graded organization with a curriculum based on individual needs of pupils. By non-graded it is meant the neither grades (first, second, third, etc.) nor levels I, II, III, IV) are used in the organization of the curriculum. It also means that neither number or letter grades are used. The key to this type of program is providing a place in the curriculum where each pupil may experience some type of success daily. Therefore, pupils are placed where they can work successfully yet be challenged to their fullest abilities.

The faculty is organized into two teams, a primary team and an intermediate team. Each team is composed of a team leader, team members, student teachers, and parent aids. These teams meet two to four times each week after school to work out their curriculum problems, plan and coordinate work, and discuss future needs. Each team meets separately, but may come together at certain times for a special purpose.

The curriculum is organized in units and skills needed in order to be successful in the junior high program. These skills and units are designed on a continuing basis to be covered in a normal six year school situation consisting of nine months each year. In some cases it may require seven years to complete the skills, depending on the rate at which a pupil is able to work successfully. Pupils who complete the basic skills and designated elementary work in less than six years will spend the remaining time doing enrichment work in concepts and skills already mastered.

Pupil evaluation is made on an individual basis. Each pupil is evaluated according to his own particular achievement or need. This eliminates the need for grades or levels in order to designate pupil work by either number or letter grades. Scheduled parent – teacher conferences are used to inform parent of pupil progress. These conferences take the place of report cards.

The atmosphere for learning is aspect which is high on the list in the development of the Tusculum View program. There must be an environment which allows for the development of an interest in and desire for learning. This must be a relaxed, happy environment free from external pressures. Providing the proper type of atmosphere and environment has been one of the major objectives at Tusculum View. By providing or developing this type of environment many so-called problem pupils and - or discipline problems may be eliminated. It is through this approach that the development of self-reliance, leadership, and self-discipline can best be met.