

NATIONAL COVID-19
OUTDOOR LEARNING
INITIATIVE

CREATING
OUTDOOR SPACES

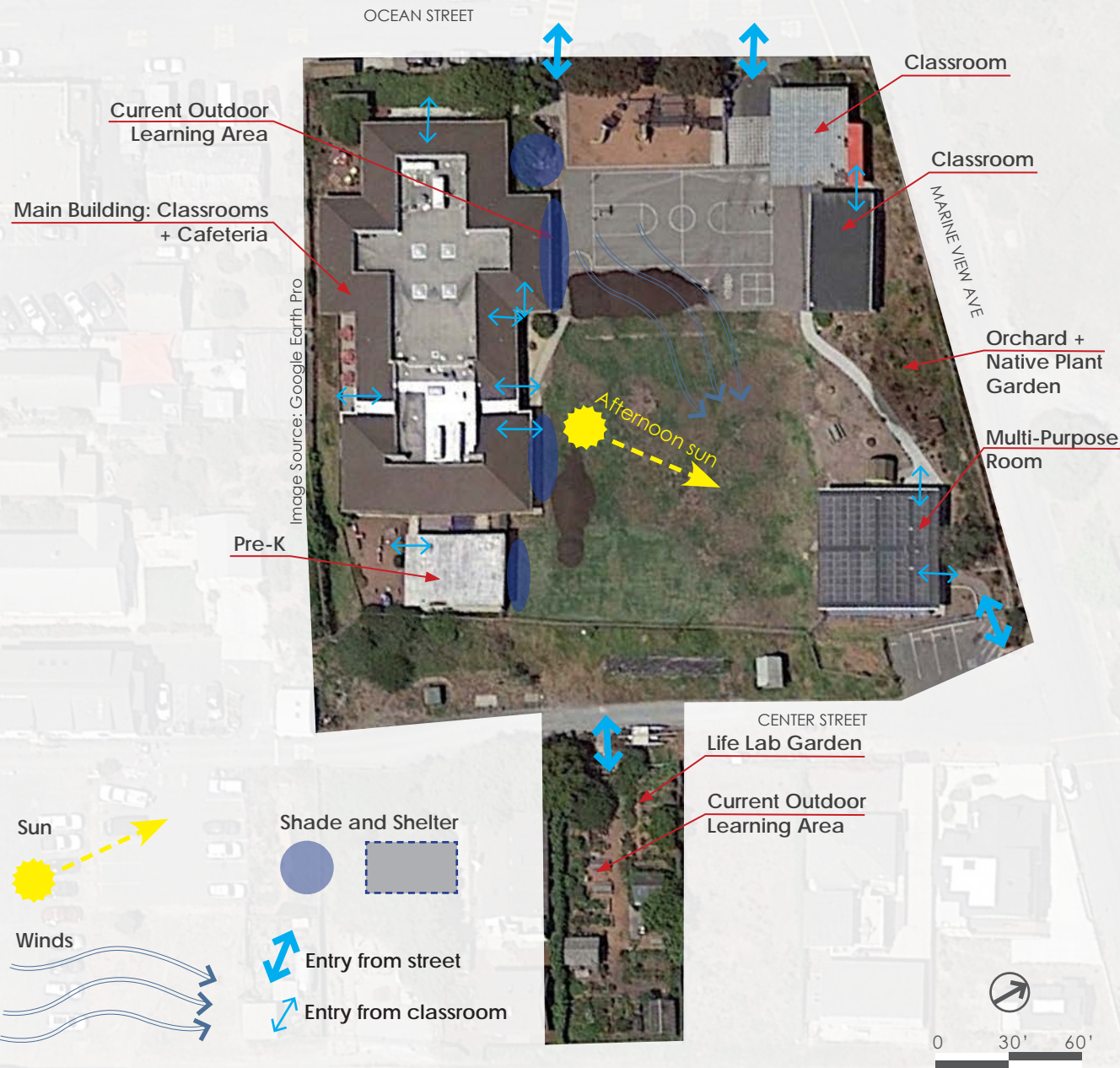
EMERGENCY
SCHOOLYARD
DESIGN VOLUNTEERS



PACIFIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL — DAVENPORT, CALIFORNIA

Pacific Elementary School is located on the historic “Slow Coast” of Northern California that stretches from Santa Cruz to Half Moon Bay. This one-school district serves 150 students from pre-kindergarten through sixth grade, has beautiful views of the ocean and is across the street from a beach that is a frequent field trip destination. The campus features a young fruit orchard, a variety of charming outdoor features, as well as the vibrant LifeLab science and learning garden that is cared for by volunteers. The goal was to create as many outdoor learning spaces as feasible on the main campus and to create a sheltered classroom space within the LifeLab garden. Challenges include cold foggy days and lack of adequate storm water drainage.

Site Analysis Considerations



NOTE: These diagrams are intended to provide visual concepts to assist schools in planning. They are neither intended nor may be used for construction. Green Schoolyards America, Earth Island Institute, the Emergency Schoolyard Design Volunteers, and the partners of the National COVID-19 Outdoor Learning Initiative do not assume responsibility or liability for the technical accuracy of drawings or for any unauthorized use.

Pacific Elementary School Davenport, CA

School Characteristics

Students

- Serving 150 students in grades Pre-K to 6th
- Pre-K on campus, all others distance learning with small cohorts of students who come in the mornings once a week
- Goal is to increase the frequency that students can come to campus by creating more outdoor classrooms to accommodate students

School Grounds

- Rural location, approximately 2 acres, beautiful views of ocean to the west and rolling hills to the east
- Minimal levels of noise from street
- Open space is heavily utilized by students (Recess, PE, Lunch)
- 1 main building and 4 portable classrooms
- Some outdoor storage available; space to add if needed
- Drainage on site varies - some areas near the main building get very soggy during the wet season
- Across the street from main campus is the Life Lab Garden, which could be used for instructional space

Climate

- Fall - weather is typically cool, crisp, mostly dry; Winter - occasional rain and cold mornings with fog; Spring - mild and sunny; Summer - mild with occasional hot days.

Pacific Elementary School Davenport, CA

Site Photographs



Photographs

1. Field is used for PE and play; areas next to buildings get afternoon shade
2. Existing picnic tables are used for outdoor learning and lunch service; main building provides afternoon shade
3. Planting area could be repurposed for classroom
4. Playground and hardtop used for PE and play, tables used for lunch
5. View of playground and field from multi-purpose room
6. Area behind multi-purpose room can accommodate outdoor learning, it is fenced and has views of ocean
7. Life Lab hands-on learning area (see page 6 for an enlargement of this area)

Photos: Lilia Pharaezyn & Anna Harrison

Potential Outdoor Classrooms

Using Existing Tree Canopy and Shade for Mild Weather



Image Source: Google Earth Pro

- (8) 6' diameter circle for 1 student
- (2) Existing active gardening/experiential learning areas
- natural screen or divider (straw bales, willow, potted plants or other)
- (2) 22' dia. circle potential outdoor seating areas for 8-10 students each
- (6) 20' x 20' areas for 8 students
- ↕ entry from street
- ↗ entry from classroom
- (6) storage cart or box

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Pacific Elementary School

Davenport, CA

Scenario #1: Low Cost

Climate Considerations

- Local climate varies seasonally
- Classes will require protection from sun and rain and appropriate clothing to keep everyone warm and dry

Climate Adaptation Strategies

- Use outdoor classrooms as “Plan A” when the weather is nice; go inside or online when it is raining or too cold
- Place seating in areas where existing tree canopies or buildings provide morning or afternoon shade

Use and Augment Existing Infrastructure

- Use areas adjacent to buildings and add low cost seating (mats, stumps, benches, and/or existing desks/tables)
- Add storage sheds for class materials
- Preserve space for gardening and nature play

Scenario #1: Outdoor Capacity

- Max: 76 students in 8 seating areas
- Capacity: 58% of enrolled students (not including Pre-K)

Potential Outdoor Classrooms

Providing Light Shelter for Sun or Rain



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Pacific Elementary School

Deavenport, CA

Scenario #2: Moderate Cost

Climate Considerations

Build on Scenario #1

- Install shelters to protect from rain and sun. Ideal shelters could be adjustable in height to allow winter sun.
- Add outdoor heaters and/or provide rain gear so students will be dry and warm when weather is wet and cold

Climate Adaptation Strategies

- Use outdoor classrooms as "Plan A" when the weather is nice or in mild rain; go inside or online when it is too cold or harsh

Use and Augment Existing Infrastructure

- Add low cost seating (mats, stumps, benches, and/or existing desks/tables)
- Install shelters to protect from rain and sun
- Add storage sheds for class materials
- Preserve and activate space for gardening and nature play

Scenario #2: Outdoor Capacity

- Max: 76 students in 8 covered seating areas
- Capacity: 58% of enrolled students (not including Pre-K)

Potential Outdoor Classrooms

Providing Infrastructure to Support School Programs



Image Source: Google Earth Pro

- (14) 6' diameter circle for 1 student (with shade sail)
- (2) platform/stage, built to school's specifications with shade canopy
- (2) Existing active gardening/experiential learning areas
- natural screen or divider (straw bales, willow, potted plants or other)
- (7) 20' x 20' shade canopy for 8 students
- (7) storage cart or box
- Option to remove or relocate shed and contents
- (4) planted organic "hugel" berms to provide habitat/garden
- entry from street
- entry from classroom
- new pathway connection (add opening/gate to fence)

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Pacific Elementary School Davenport, CA

Scenario #3: Green Infrastructure Investment

Climate Considerations

Build on Scenario #2

- Add low, planted hills (hugels) on top of grass to provide habitat garden and create rain swales
- Provide potted trees for green views and to divide outdoor class areas, to be replanted in ground later

Climate Adaptation Strategies

- Use outdoor classrooms as "Plan A" when the weather is nice or in mild rain; go inside or online when it is too cold or harsh

Use and Augment Existing Infrastructure

- Preserve and activate space for gardening and nature play
- Leave room and flexibility for long-term outdoor classroom vision ideas

Scenario #3: Outdoor Capacity

- Max: 90 students in 11 covered seating areas
- Capacity: 69% of enrolled students (not including Pre-K)

Potential Outdoor Classrooms

Providing Infrastructure to Support School Programs

Pacific Elementary School
Davenport, CA

Enlargement: Life Lab Garden



1

15' x 30' shade canopy for 10 students



2



3



Image Source: Google Earth Pro

Photographs

1. These 2 tables are currently used for outdoor learning. Expand this area by replacing the raised bed with more seating.
2. This existing storage space could be adapted to house more cabinets and storage space for classroom materials. Need to make walls/siding water-resistant. The deck surrounding this shed could be used for student seating. Adapt façade of shed to hand chalkboard/whiteboard.
3. Potting shed could also house additional storage for class materials; movable seating could be added if potting stations moved to the side

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