LEMAIRE MIDDLE SCHOOL
GYMNASIUM & SPORTS COMPLEX

NVB17097
The Lemaire Middle School Gymnasium and Sports Complex is one of four projects that completely shifted the Lander County School District’s physical organization in the small town of Battle Mountain, Nevada (pop. t/- 2,500). The school was initially an elementary school and was converted into a Middle School with a simple interior remodel and additions necessary to make it function properly.

Computer rooms, food service, a library, lockers, and science rooms were created through repurposing rooms and shifting curriculum priorities. An additional layer of function was added to the program, which was the creation of a sports “stadium” for competitive football, soccer, and track and field, most particularly, for the existing Battle Mountain High School. To support this program element, field house spaces were added, this include locker rooms for home and visiting teams, officials dressing room, concessions, restrooms, and ticketing. The last layer of programming for the fields to be open to the City of Battle Mountain for community sports programs, juggling, walking, and general fitness activities.

The main architectural addition to the school is the new gymnasium and library. Designed as the main transitional connection between the existing school and the sports stadium, the addition acts as the bonding agent between sports, education, and community. Designed mainly as support for the middle school physical education programs. It will also become a magnet for community basketball, volleyball, and wrestling programs, as well as being part of the other gyms in town that host various regional basketball and volleyball tournaments that occur throughout rural Nevada.

The design challenge was to create an “iconic” image for the school district that prompts both school and community pride, all for the construction budget of less than $200 per square foot. Compounding the challenge was the rural location of Battle Mountain and its limited work force with limited skills and a scarcity of material resources, and an even greater lack of incentive to draw the necessary manpower to complete the work.

The answer to the challenge of both budget and resources was to design the gymnasium using a pre-engineered metal building system that is both economical and can be manufactured elsewhere and transported to the site for erection. Two interlocking structural systems were created, one for the large gym space, and the other one for supporting locker rooms, field house elements, ticketing and concessions. The library is the main programmatic space that connects the existing school to the gym and has an exterior entrance of the main parking lot for community access.

The metal panel exterior skin is a combination of yellow and green horizontal striping that echoes the district’s colors for all the schools in the city. As seen from the highway, the building acts as one of the first images one sees as one enters town for the first time. The Lemaire Middle School along with the sports stadium, a new elementary school, relocated administrative offices, and the remodeling of the existing middle school into a new fifth and sixth grade facility, puts the Lander County School District system at the top of the county’s highest level. Along with a new Courthouse/Administrative Facility and a new community Recreation Center, they are well on their way to redefining Battle Mountain as a healthy and vibrant setting to live and raise children in.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

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The design team took a passive approach to sustainability for the Lemarie Middle School Gymnasium and Sports Complex. The main premise of the design was to reduce the on-site labor force to the most minimal level possible in order to reduce labor resources to what might be normal in a rural, remote area of Northern Nevada.

To achieve this, the building system selected was a pre-engineered metal building where the main structural system was designed and fabricated in Reno, then shipped to the site for assembly. The structure was erected in ten days.

The structure was also designed as two interlocking buildings, one lower than the other. This allowed the creation of a strip of translucent panels be located on the south wall of the taller gymnasium to bring natural light to the gym above the lower support building that houses the lockers, field house functions, and ticketing/concessions.

The quantity of different materials was kept to a minimum, so that as few trades as possible would have to travel long distances to services the project. Metal panels for both walls and roof, concrete masonry and glass are the three main exterior building materials. Interior space materials were also kept to a minimum, polished concrete floors in lieu of gypsum board were some of the design decisions made to limit the amount of resources required to build the project.

One of the most important decisions made during the design process was to build the Sports Stadium field and track of synthetic materials. The football/soccer field is made of artificial turf that has a sublayer of “grindings” made of recycled tires. Though its initial cost proved slightly higher than the natural grass, the saving water over will be beneficial to this high desert community that is starved for water.

Though LEED certification was not formally applied for, the LEED scorecard was utilized to drive major design decisions that affected energy efficiency and best-green choices for materials and waste programs.
The aforementioned artificial turf made with a sublayer of “grindings” made of recycled tires is pictured in the aerial photo of the field above.

The strip of translucent panels located on the south wall of the taller gymnasium to bring natural light pictured above.

The eye-catching green and yellow metal panels on the facade of the building shown above. Creating a statement for the city and its schools as visitors come into the building, as well as pass on the freeway nearby.
ELEVATIONS

NVB17097
EAST VIEW OF GYM

NVB17097