

FutureSchools

Design that lets the tech shine in



As visitors approach Century Elementary School in Nixa, Missouri, they see distinctly that the building belongs to its K-4 students. The exterior's proportionately placed brickwork and low modular windows create a sense of scale for children. Beyond this child-friendly facade, the school was designed to fully integrate technology. Inside three data rooms, voice, video, and data-communication systems—including a Nortel PBX phone system and Cisco switches—link to each classroom, where technology enhances learning. In Julie Fessenden's fourth-grade class, for example, students are creating PowerPoint presentations, writing and illustrating books in Word, and videotaping mock newscasts.



In the library-media center, students have access to four search stations equipped with Apple computers. Next door to the center, situated to cultivate a collaborative feel, is the computer lab. It contains 28 units for students, a SMART Board, and an Optoma LCD projector, overseen by a full-time computer instructor.



In classrooms, carefully selected colors and finishes provide visual and textural contrasts to engage young students. Electrical outlets in the ceiling and the availability of data ports to support a computer, projector, and SMART Board allow teachers flexibility in arranging their classrooms.



Sunlight pours through the skylight rotunda, the heart of the facility. This hub provides secure but direct access to the library, administrative center, multipurpose space, art studio, and classroom wings. Bright primary colors and patterned floors introduce a youthful learning environment.

Century Elementary School Nixa, Missouri

Opened: August 2001

Size: 53,200 square feet built to accommodate about 350 students but can expand for a student body of 550

Cost: \$4.6 million

What it is: An elementary school for early childhood through fourth-grade students

Architect: Sapp Design Associates Architects, PC

Photos: Rockafellow Photography