

## Central Middle School No. 3

Los Angeles, California



Located near historic Wilshire Boulevard, this middle school is a key component in the most unique and truest mixed-use transit-oriented development in the city.

The 120,000 square foot school is the corner anchor of the Wilshire Vermont Station master plan that includes 449 residential units and 30,000 square feet of retail that is designed around the Los Angeles subway Metro Redline station. The project represents a new paradigm in Los Angeles for filling the voids in the urban fabric that for so long compromised the character of the city and for creatively balancing density with public space.

The school will accommodate 1,300 students in a three-story building with 34 classrooms and labs in addition to a library, multipurpose room, gymnasium, locker rooms, dining facility, food service, administration offices and support spaces. The project also has one level of below-grade staff parking.

The school is an L-shaped building positioned to define the corner and hold the street edges, while enclosing the large playground that borders the pedestrian plaza leading to the new subway portal. The dominant leg of the "L" is a long, three-story volume containing the main entrance, classrooms, and library and administration offices. The multipurpose room, dining facility, food service, gymnasium and locker rooms are all located in the other, shorter leg of the "L". Because of the limited site size, the roof of this entire volume is used for outdoor play areas and accommodates four basketball courts. The height differential between the high gymnasium volume and the other spaces is reconciled by a large set of bleachers facing the courts. A steel superstructure sheathed in horizontal wire mesh creates a safety and hazard barrier for the roof-top play areas. This same mesh system is used as horizontal sunscreens for the classrooms and offices in the three-story volume. Designed by Christopher Coe while Managing Director and Director of Design of Arquitectonica Los Angeles.



