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Evergreen Valley High School

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**When visitors arrive** at the Evergreen Valley High School in San Jose, California, they tend to be amazed. The campus, rising gently into the foothills, looks nothing like a typical high school.



But what strikes next and remains apparent throughout a visit on campus is what Robert Steinberg, FAIA, firm partner and lead designer on the Evergreen project, refers to as a “sequence of movement,” which is similar to the way stories unfold on film. The layering of school buildings and the northern California landscape is far from static. In fact, it always seems to be moving, revealing something new and different, thus mirroring what education itself should be about.

The school district’s approach to the project included two primary goals: to scale down the 2,000+ student body into four separate academies and to make the campus a place for the entire community to use and enjoy. The Steinberg Group accomplished these goals through its “campus-approach” to the design and by creating an intentional interface between the public and private spaces. The firm also fleshed out its own trademark: architecture that reflects a sense of space, place and history. Colors and curvilinear forms reference the foothills, while rhythm and order pay homage to the orchards that once covered the land. Abstract forms and the use of metal reflect the importance of technology and the future.

In regards to how furniture was used within the space, the district wanted to continue to break the mold. In the teachers’ offices, for instance, if tables and Improv seating were chosen to create flexible, collaborative spaces that bring people together. District planners also felt strongly about having a consistent look to tie everything together—from the principal’s office to the library and science labs. This was accomplished with perfectly matched finishes and the use of various Haworth products that have been designed to function well together.





