



## Summit Middle School

In recent years the growth of Johnston Community School District began to overburden the district's existing middle school and high school facilities. After careful study by a community task force, a decision was made to add a new middle school building for students in grades 6 and 7. The Board of Education turned to Frevert-Ramsey-Kobes and presented the challenge of designing a building that could become a state-of-the-art, once-in-a-lifetime learning opportunity for the students that would inhabit it.

The new 164,300 square foot Summit Middle School responds to this challenge in dramatic fashion, creating a learning environment that physically embodies the core educational values of teamwork, collaboration, and sharing. Every element in the design is shaped to respond to the specific learning needs of 6th and 7th grade students. In addition, the building takes traditional stereotypes about school design and tosses them out the window. Where traditional school buildings might be dark and enclosed, Summit Middle School is flooded with natural light. Where traditional school buildings might be crowded and cramped, Summit Middle School soars.

The middle school is built around the concept of community, with classrooms clustered into five distinct learning units. These learning communities are then arrayed around a central circular media center, which is capped by a domed skylight that reaches towards the sky, representing perhaps in a figurative sense the lofty aspirations and potential of the students that pass by underneath. Circulation routes pass through and around the media center to weave the building together.

The school presents a plethora of high-tech learning opportunities for its students, bringing together spaces for industrial science, family and consumer science, music, art, and more. The building is also designed to be expandable, allowing room for an additional learning community to be added on the second level. Overall, the school is a powerful example of how experienced architects and an exemplary school district community can work together to enhance student learning by designing an environment that sets the highest standard and that at every turn fosters a sense of collaboration and teamwork.



Location:	Johnston, Iowa
Owner:	Johnston Community Schools
Reference:	Mr. Tim Kline, Director of Facilities 515/278-5982
Gross Area:	164,300 SF
Cost per SF:	\$104.10
Construction Cost:	\$17,160,000
Occupancy:	2004

