

DESIGN CONCEPT

Starlight Center for Independent Living inspires those diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder to reach for the stars. The overall goal of this design is to not only create a comfortable, calming, community-driven space for the sensorial needs of those with autism but to also universally design the space to accommodate the needs of all people. The finishes were carefully selected to ensure the occupant's sensorial processing difficulties or responses are minimized to prevent stress, anxiety, and confusion. Each space is planned to be uncluttered and smaller in size to designate areas for specific activities and to not feel overwhelming. Wayfinding is provided through linear lighting in the ceiling that guides one throughout the space as well as contrast between the walls, floors, and doors to minimize spatial disorientation. The earth-tone color scheme helps create a calming, home-like aura within the space, allowing it feel less institutional. Soft-seating, carpet, and millwork elements also work to achieve this. Varying textures are also seen, which provide tactile and visual interest without being overly stimulating. Flexible furniture and lighting is selected to create various sensory environments. The various elements work together to create a comfortable environment that encourages the drive to learn and embodies home.

UPHOLSTERY



These fabrics have a soft tactile and visually interesting texture. They are bleach cleanable and antimicrobial to ensure a clean, maintainable, and sustainable environment.

REFERENCES

Richard Hirstwood, "Sensory Room Design."
Kim Velsey, "Autism Informed the Entire Design of This Revolutionary Boarding School."

WALLCOVERING



Three different acoustical wall applications with an NRC of 0.5 or above are used throughout the space. They not only reduce sound sensitivities and/or discomfort, but also provide varying visual and tactile interest through pattern, color, and natural wood elements.

FLOORING



The flooring materials create interest through visual and tactile texture. They contrast highly with the bright wall color to reduce spatial disorientation. The soft versus hard texture helps designate specific areas for activities.



RECEPTION

FURNITURE & LIGHTING



The furniture and lighting selections are flexible in their use and capabilities. The furniture was selected from KI's active learning series which means each piece was designed for a classroom where a variety of learners might be present. The chairs can toggle back-and-forth and have upright or lounge capabilities to accommodate various comfortability levels or learning situations. The selected light fixture is an LED fixture with dimmable capabilities, the ability to choose between warm white light and bright white light, and a zero buzz or hum.



RECEPTION



STARLIGHT
CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

BIG SKY, MONTANA
BOARD 1



FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"



MULTIPURPOSE CLASSROOM

PERSPECTIVES

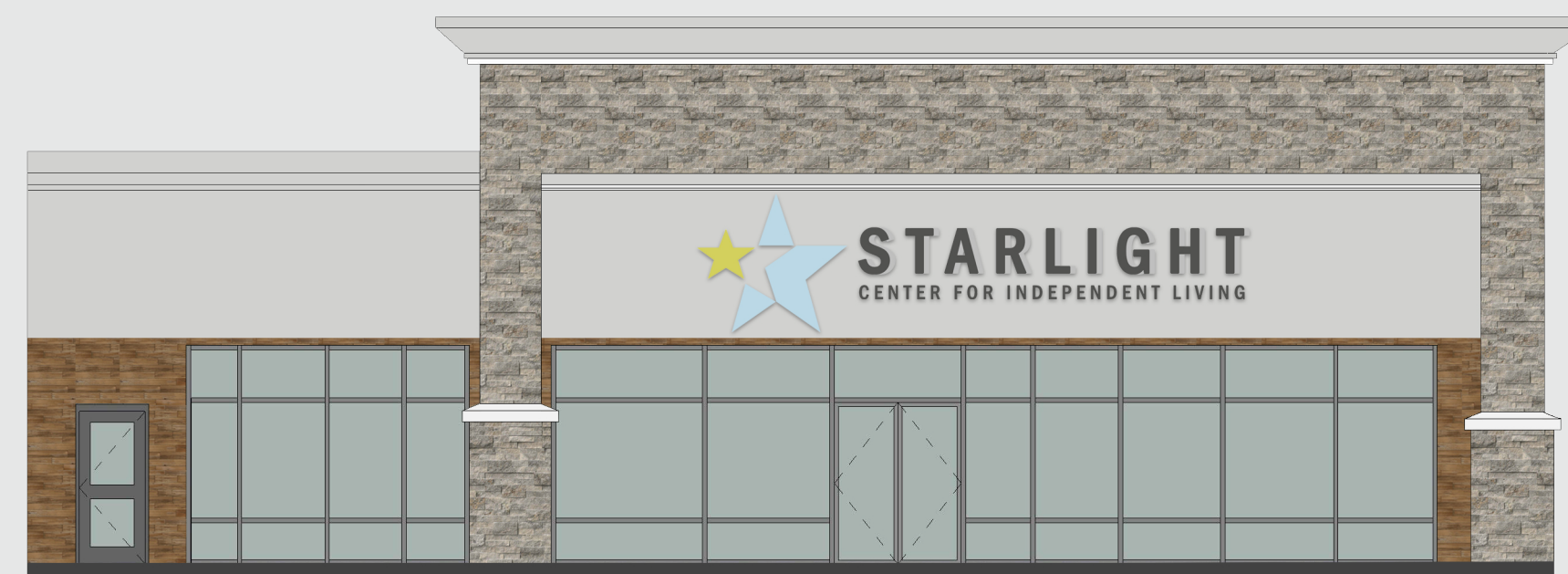
The multipurpose classroom is designed to seat twenty occupants comfortably. It consists of flexible furniture along with electronic white boards and AV systems which create an active learning space.

The flexible use room serves a dual purpose of an exercise studio as well as a craft room. The space is divided to create two smaller areas within the room for the separate activities. The acoustical pin up panels can be used to showcase artwork as well as reduce noise in the craft area and not be distracting to those using the exercise space.

The outdoor space is easily accessible from the flexible use room and sensory room. It serves as a meditation area or outdoor teaching space.



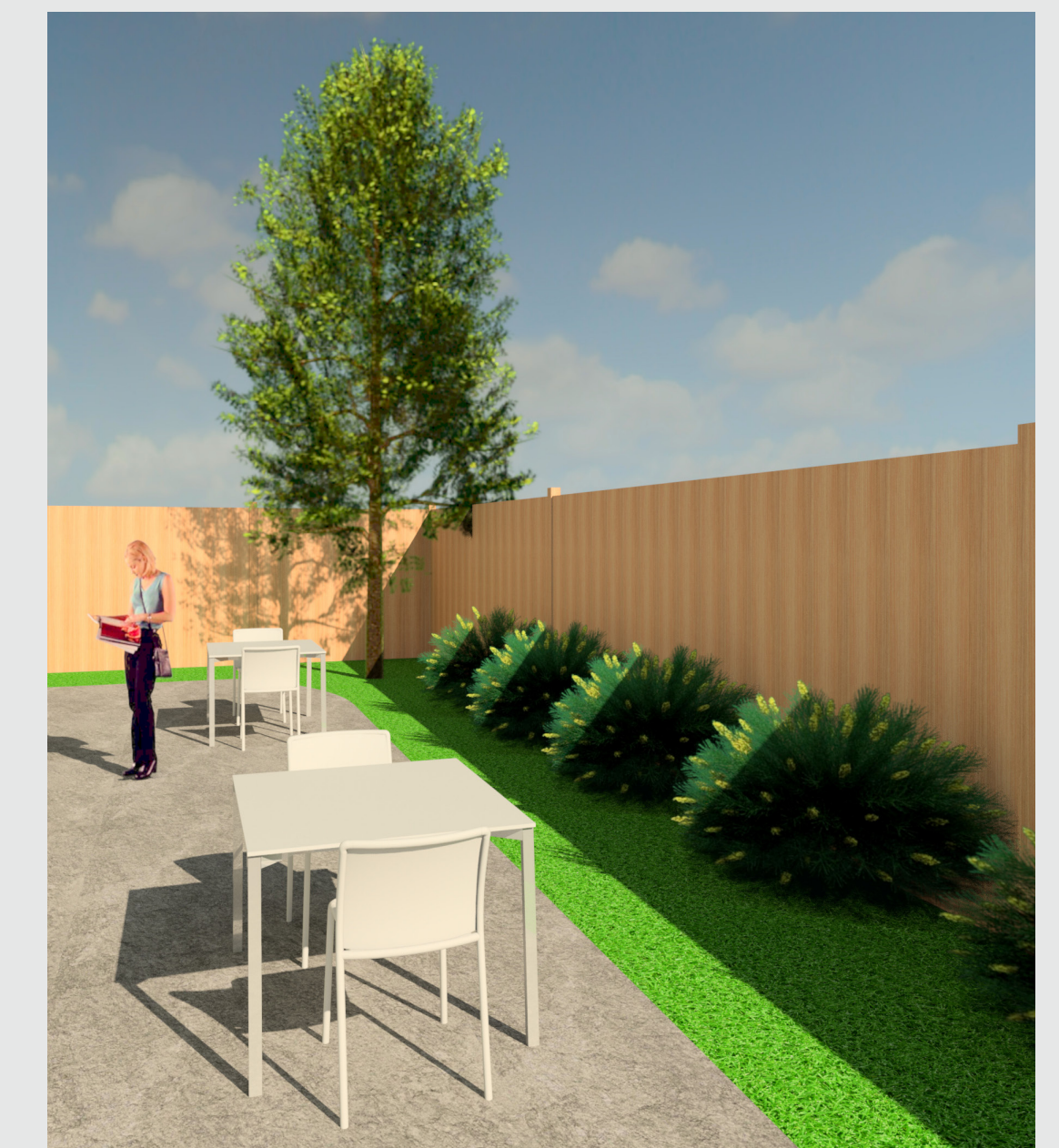
FLEXIBLE USE ROOM



BUILDING ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



ACOUSTICAL PIN UP PANELS



OUTDOOR SPACE



BUILDING SECTION
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



STARLIGHT
CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

BIG SKY, MONTANA
BOARD 2