



Starlight Learning Center

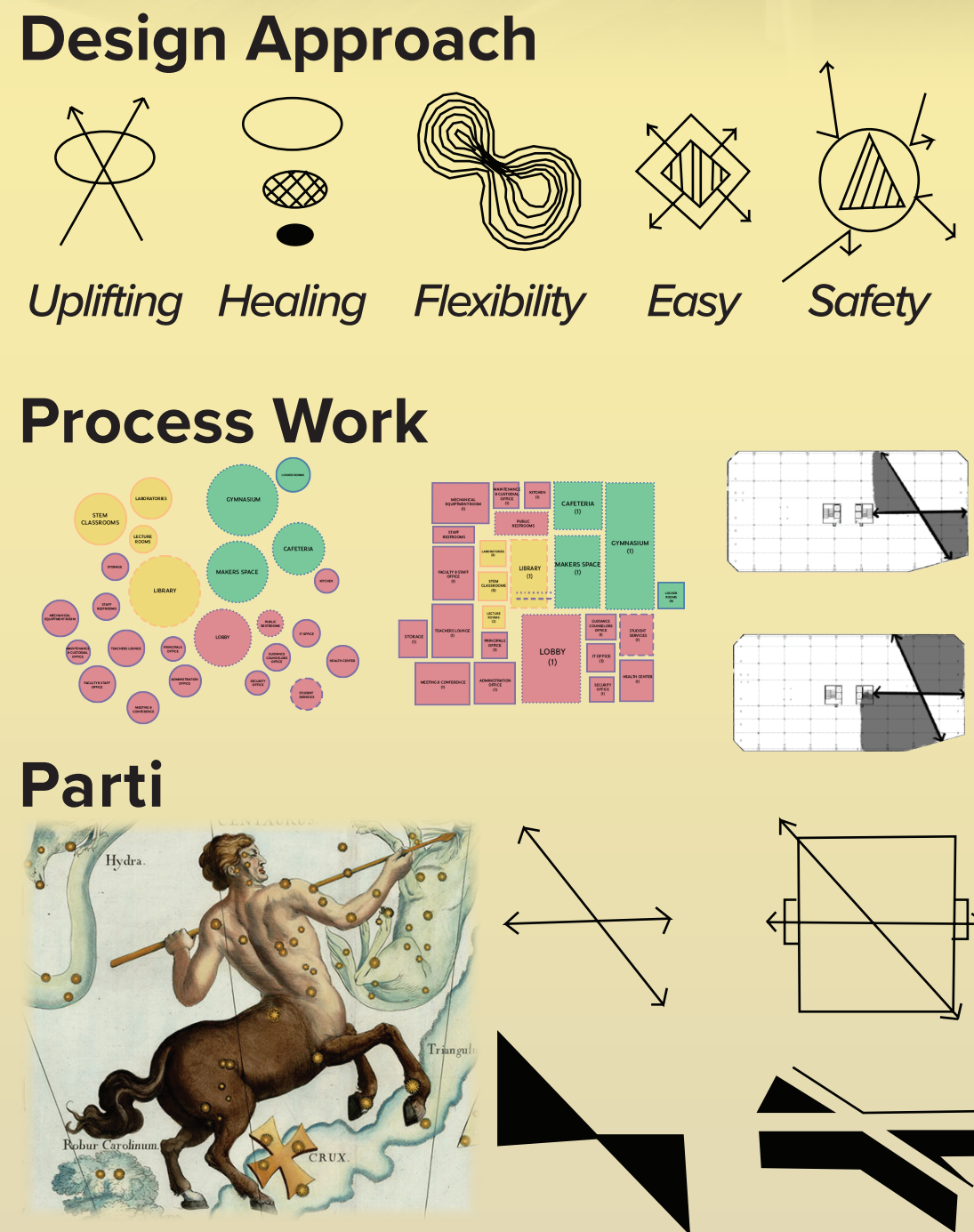
Starlight Learning Center is a promising laboratory school in Arcadia for foster youth ages 14–18. The design intention is to support their academic and emotional growth. It empowers students who value education but face societal barriers to high school completion and future success.

Demographics

Highest Number of Youth in Foster Care in the Nation	Foster Care Education Gap
There are currently more than 38,000 children in foster care in Los Angeles County (Foster Care & Adoption)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">70% of youth in foster care want to go to college but...Only 3% of youth in foster care who age out will earn a college degree

Concept Statement

Inspired by the Chiron Centaurus constellation, the interior architecture of the school transforms celestial mythology into an uplifting, empowering experience for students. The constellation's form guides spatial organization, while the duality of Chiron—half-human, half-horse—informs contrasting materials and varied learning environments. Rooted in its mythic origin, the design becomes a living story of resilience and growth, encouraging students to pursue knowledge, creativity, and brighter futures.



Site Description

Arcadia, California was selected as the first site, it is a diverse residential area near Los Angeles, that has the project's target market and known for its excellent public schools. With nearby attractions like the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Arcadia County Park, the community offers enriching experiences. This project aligns with the site's demographics and cultural context, addressing educational challenges and the needs of youth in care.

Design Problem Statement

The design of the grade 9–12 laboratory school must address spatial efficiency, foster a positive experience for students in foster care, and ensure safety in a shared-use building with commercial tenants. Its 60-foot height and curved roof present human scale and architectural challenges.

Design Solution

Starlight Learning Center is designed to a welcoming human scale. It inspires and serves as a place where students feel at ease and empowered to learn. Strategic lighting and suspended ceilings defines zones within the space, while gracefully managing the building's structural variations. Clear, secure circulation paths offer peace of mind for students and staff, seamlessly balancing openness with safety in a vibrant, shared-use environment.

