The newest school building in Acadia Parish has received national recognition in an architectural magazine.

Church Point Elementary School, built in 1995, was recognized in the November 1997 issue of American School and University Architectural Portfolio as outstanding design for an elementary school. This was the only Louisiana school, both elementary or secondary, to be honored.

An award was presented to the Acadia Parish School Board on by Poche Associates Limited, the architectural and engineering firm who designed the school. Also, firm members presented a certificate of recognition from Lieutenant Governor Kathleen B. Blanco.

Superintendent of Education Dr. Mellie James read the certificate and a letter from Lt. Gov. Blanco. "It has been brought to my attention that Church Point Elementary School has been recognized as an award winning facility by the American School and University publication," wrote Lt. Gov. Blanco. "I was honored to be a part of the grand opening of this special school and would like to congratulate you on your efforts to improve the quality of education in Acadia Parish and in Louisiana."

"I will give the credit where the credit I feel is most due is to the principal, the faculty, the staff at Church Point Elementary, the ones that were responsible for the acquisition of this particular facility, their hard work are the ones that need to be recognized," said Church Point area board member Johnnie Lee Smith. "It does me good to be able to see them receive that award I congratulate them again for a job well done."

"We have probably the largest elementary school in the parish," said Charles Daigle. "I am proud of it. The facility will allow us to enhance education in the process of the students. The principal and the teachers at Church Point Elementary are continually trying to upgrade the school and the lives of the children. This building is a result of the people of Church Point wanting this facility for the educational process. I congratulate them on this and also our faculty at Church Point Elementary."

On behalf of the publication, Philippe Prouet with Poche and Associates presented the American School and University award. "We really enjoyed the working relationship we had with the whole community. the school board and staffing who put the project together to make it an outstanding facility that it is," said Prouet. He said the building is a model for other schools to consider when they build their new facility. The firm presented a rendering they did of the school building along with the framed award from American School and University.

"I want to publicly thank the citizens of Church Point for communication to our school and to education, the bond would not have passed," said Church Point Elementary School Principal Sandra Doguet. She said the residents of the community wanted their children to have a good education and through their efforts the new school became a reality.

"We are very fortunate to be working for the citizens of Church Point and I am to commend them," Mrs. Doguet said. "I also want to thank the board members for their support, Mr. (Johnnie Lee) Smith, Mr. (Charles) Daigle and Mrs. (Leonard) Matt was serving on the board at that time—because they helped with their encouragement, their support in getting the bond passed. They were at the public meetings, they were honest and open with the public and
helped with all of the small crises that came up.

"I especially want to thank Mr. Charlie Daigle because I remember when he came in my office one day and sat down to talk and said "I think I have an idea. How about a new school?" Mrs. Doguet said. "And so right then, that's where the idea was conceived. We have a fine facility to show for all of the hard work."

Mrs. Doguet also commended Poche and Associates for their hard work. "For putting up with all of the teachers. His first comment was 'this is going to be designed by educators and not by architects who want to be remembered for their fine design.' He was true to his word. He met with our committee every week and he showed the plans. Every week he went back and redid them because we had something else to say...we actually designed the school so everything in it is teacher-friendly and student-oriented, and it has done terrific justice to the educational system."

The school has a capability of 900 students and has 63,000 square feet. The cost to build the new school was $3,950,000 and sits on 30 acres. The new cafeteria which is shared with students from both the elementary and high school was completed in January 1998.

The magazine article follows: