
Majority of D.C. Public School Buildings are New, Modernized or Renovated

Since 2001, the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) has replaced or fully modernized 35 of its facilities including Dunbar and Cardozo high schools due to open this fall -- fully one-third of DCPS active school buildings are new. Additionally, by the end of the summer, DCPS will have initiated substantial phased modernizations on 42 elementary and middle school buildings.

In 2007, DCPS embarked on a three step phased approach on modernizations for elementary schools and middle schools. This approach to facilities improvement aimed first to reach all teaching and learning spaces as fast as possible. Phase 1 classrooms, hallways, and bathrooms get completely new finishes, furniture, lighting and technology as well as electrical upgrades and, frequently new windows, mechanical, heating and cooling systems. No schools have received Phase 2 yet which is expected to upgrade the common spaces such as cafeterias, libraries, gymnasiums and schoolyards. With Phase 3 the idea is to replace systems including wiring, HVAC and plumbing.

However, DGS (Department of General Services which oversees DCPS school buildings) has become increasingly flexible in their interpretation of what constitutes a phased scope of work, providing more complete and complex renovations depending on the age, design and structure of each individual school and its site. Consequently the number of hybrid multi-year Phase 1’s and up-grade projects with additions has been increasing, some with complete phasing planned for consecutive summers.

21st Century School Fund has created a reference list of new and fully modernized schools and phased modernizations up to 2013. Consult the March 2014-19 CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) to determine where school improvements were initially proposed this year.

Previewing New D.C. Public School High School Facilities: Dunbar and Cardozo

In April, Dunbar High School project managers hosted faculty, students, and community members through the soon-to-be-completed new building next to the existing 1970's era Dunbar.

The Dunbar redesign and new construction was strongly advocated by Dunbar alumni. They sought to restore what was the premiere academic high school for African Americans. From its inception in the early 1900s until well into the 20th
Century Dunbar High School was considered the nation's best high school for African Americans. It helped make Washington, D.C., an educational and cultural capital. The original Paul L. Dunbar High School was built in 1916.

Amazingly, the historic 1916 building was demolished in the 1970s and replaced with a modern, open plan school. While the facility was fitted with every possible amenity -- pool, auditorium, gymnasium, science and vocational labs -- the brutalist style architecture never garnered the affection and connection of the community or the school.

Dunbar's new building is designed by architecture team of Ehrenkrantz Eckstut & Kuhn Architects-Engineers (EEK)/Perkins Eastman and Moody-Nolan Architects, both Washington D.C. based firms. The design centers around a soaring atrium connecting common areas (gym, auditorium, pool, and cafeteria) to the academic wing. After the new facility officially opens in August 2013, the 1970s building will be demolished to provide space for a new football field and track.

You can see photos of the construction and a D.C. Department of General Services (DGS) video of a sequence of webcam photos showing the daily progress of construction. The cost for the entire project -- demolition of existing 325,000 sq. ft. building and the new construction of the 260,000 sq. ft. building plus 20,000 sq. ft of underground parking is expected to be $128,190,645; around $493 per gross sq. ft. without the parking. The construction company for this project is Smoot /Gilbane.

Cardozo High School faculty and staff also recently got a glimpse of the inside of their new school. The walk-through capped a year and a half in swing space across the street at the former Meyer Elementary School. Cardozo will open in August 2013 as an Education Campus, serving 6th through 12th grades in a facility that includes a new full size gym, a magnificent auditorium, two enclosed atriums and a college-scale lecture hall. The original 1916 Cardozo was designed by William Ittner, a St. Louis architect; it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The design for the full modernization of this historic school is by the architectural team of Hartman-Cox and Grimm and Parker. Take a peek of the new Cardozo under construction.

With the addition of a high school sized gymnasium, Cardozo is now 374,000 sq. ft. and was budgeted at $125,534,000; around $336 per sq. ft. The construction company for this project is GCS-Sigal Construction.

McKinley High School in D.C. Adds Middle School

McKinley High School, originally built in 1926, and fully modernized in 2004, will finally fill the long-vacant west wing of the massive high school building with a new middle school. The community was invited to hard-hat tours on Saturday, June 29. Partnering with the award-winning McKinley
Tech High School, the new 6th-8th grade institution will focus on math, science and technology. Take a look at some of the amazing school spaces at McKinley MS under construction. McKinley Middle School was budgeted at $14,940,000, for fitting out the 62,000 sq. ft. wing; around $241 per gross sq. ft. Quinn, Evans architects designed the build-out; Broughton Construction is the contractor.

Secretary Duncan and Others Honor 2013 Green Ribbon Schools

On June 3rd, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and other top Federal Administrators congratulated the U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools and District Sustainability Awardees at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. Sixty-four schools were recognized “for their exemplary efforts to reduce environmental impact and costs, promote better health, and ensure effective environmental education, including STEM, green careers and civics. In addition, 14 districts were honored for the first-ever District Sustainability Award.” After each school received their award, Secretary Duncan said, “Together, healthy, safe and modern facilities combined with wellness practices like outdoors physical activity, nutritious food and hands-on environmental learning form a strong foundation for a quality education. These schools and districts exhibit best practices to reduce costs and increase achievement, health and equity, for all schools, not just aspiring green schools.”

Department of Education Conducts School Facilities Listening Tour

In early June, the Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, announced that the Department of Education will be conducting a school facilities listening tour. The goal of the 'Education Built to Last' Facilities Best Practices Tour is to spotlight "practices that states, districts and schools use to improve the overall wellness, productivity, and achievement of occupants through health, safety, and educational improvements in school facilities." Secretary Duncan goes on to say, "Because where students learn matters as much as the who and how; the Department will be visiting these honorees to highlight what schools and districts can do now to ensure that their learning facilities promote achievement, health, equity and cost savings."

The Need to Modernize and Repair Our Nation’s PK-12 School Buildings

At least $270 billion is needed to fix our nation's schools to comply with laws according to two recently released reports. The U.S. Green Building Council's 2013 State of Our Schools Report further explains that the $270 billion increases to $542 billion in order to modernize our nation's school buildings to meet today's education standards. One of the recommendations from the report is to "mandate a Government Accountability Office facility condition survey to take place every 10 years, with the next one beginning immediately." The last GAO report was 18 years ago in 1995. The American Society of Civil Engineers 2013 Report Card for America's Infrastructure - Schools states, "public school enrollment is projected to gradually increase through 2019, yet state and local school construction funding continues to decline." "Encourage school facility reviews on a state level and provide input to develop a national database of conditions and available funding," are among the recommendations of the report.

Council of Educational Facility Planners 2013 School of the Future Design Competition

Three middle schools - one from Canada, one from the United Kingdom, and one from the United States - met to compete in the final 2013 School of the Future design competition in front of an international jury. The 21st Century School Fund was honored to be one of the jurists and enjoyed listening to each teams' environmentally conscious and innovative school campus design presentation. Hosted by the Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFP), this competition challenges middle school students to engage communities in a plans for a school campus of the future that provides for a healthy, environmentally responsible and quality learning environment.
This year's top honors went to Eastview Middle School from Red Deer, Alberta, Canada. The students from Eastview incorporated their community and its public spaces into the design of their school of the future. The team's school uses a downtown urban setting and focuses on creating community partnerships. Their design emphasized that "learning is not limited by four walls." They grouped students by learning styles and utilized "Gamification" for inspiring alternative learning skills. The team's school building design incorporated geothermal heating and cooling, solar energy, and provided public access to a community garden on the school's green roof. Their school campus serves as a learning tool and is a public amenity for the community.

**The National Council on School Facilities Launches Website**

After forming the National Council on School Facilities in December of 2012, the Council achieved one of its top priorities by launching their organizational website this past April. The National Council supports states to ensure the delivery of safe, healthy, and educationally appropriate PK-12 school facilities and its membership consists of directors and senior state school facilities officials from all 50 states and jurisdictions. The Council looks forward to providing information to its members and audience through its new website about the Council and its work and also providing access to information on state education facilities policies, state public capital financing systems, and models of best practice in PK-12 education facilities. In addition, the website will provide ways for members to collaborate, helping to eliminate duplication of state efforts, and saving public resources.

**11th Annual National Healthy Schools Day**

National Healthy Schools Day builds awareness of the role that our nation’s school environments have on the health and academic success on our nation's students. School environments positively or negatively impact 55 million children and 7 million adults every day at school. Attendance, concentration and student/teacher performance can be negatively affected by unhealthy school environments. On this day, Healthy Schools Network coordinated more than 50 activities to improve schools' indoor air quality around the country.

In recognition of the importance of healthy school environments, the Environmental Protection Agency created their Voluntary Guidelines for States: Development and Implementation of a School Environmental Health Program.

**School Facilities News from Around the Country**

- Chicago School Closures Punctuate Challenge for Urban Districts
- Councilman pushes for more access to D.C. school fields
- EXCLUSIVE: 90% of schools have at least one building code violation: city
- Some schools building tornado-proof safe rooms
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