**CHALLENGE**
**MOVING BEYOND A 20TH CENTURY EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT**

State College Area High School (State High) has one of the most diverse educational programs in Pennsylvania supporting their 2,700 students. However, in the early 2000’s due to growth over 55 years, they had spread from one facility into two across from a busy vehicular artery road for the community. The two buildings, built in 1957 as a high school and a 1962 middle school, were in dire need for renovation. Systems were failing throughout the schools, and students experienced long walks, sometimes as long as 9 minutes, between classes within each building, and crossing parking lots and Westerly Parkway.

Students often struggled finding a sense of place and identity in 600 foot long double loaded corridors, cramped into undersized classrooms and breakout education occurring in corridors and any space available. In short, the quality of the educational program and student performance were not supported or matched by the buildings, often limiting opportunities.

Renovations had been planned in 2005-2007, however lack of transparency and engagement with the community had resulted in public backlash resulting in the canceling of the project.

**GOALS AND OUTCOMES**
**A FIFTY YEAR SOLUTION AND OUR COMMUNITY**

In 2012, a new school board and administration embraced the challenge of modernizing the schools in an open and transparent environment to engage the community.

An early motto was building “A Fifty Year Solution” and what type of facility should house their educational model and be flexible for the evolution of education in the future. Embracing diversity, the new design that evolved over four years of planning, community discourse and design is housed in two buildings incorporating three primary schools and seven academies. Built within each of the academies are learning communities incorporating varied scales of education, encouraging individual exploration, opportunities for subcultures to grow within the school and fostering identity that break down the scale of the overall school.

Today, State High facilities match their dynamic educational opportunities. An outcome that went beyond the original goals was the affect upon the community. In creating a thoughtful, organized and engaging community framework to discuss the project, State College came together as a closer knit community. Door-to-door canvassing in neighborhoods to discuss the project often led to discussions beyond construction, putting individuals together to discuss education and the future of their children, families and community.
State College Area High School, located on a 32-acre urban campus in downtown State College, exists in the heart of the borough. Design professionals and educational planners, alongside State College Area School District (SCASD), have been planning this project more than ten years and culminated a 74% voter referendum support in May 2014 for the overall schematic design. Throughout the entire design, transparency for the project and process was a central theme that garnered support not only for the project but strengthened communication throughout the educational community within the school district.

The completed LEED Gold design incorporates a flexible 21st century design of academies, including Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEM), Health and Human Services, Arts and Humanities, Visual and Performing Arts, Business and Communications, and A “Democratic” 5-12 grade magnet school. The academies are designed around houses allowing for identity to develop in sectors of the building, breaking down the large overall size of the facility. A “Mentor by the Side” approach to education was discussed throughout the project creating an open atmosphere within the academies.

These academies consist of classrooms wrapping flexible student break out areas of varying sizes. This approach allows State College the flexibility in accommodating individual to large group interactions.

State College Area School District bucked the odds Tuesday and made history. In the primary election, voters overwhelmingly approved a referendum question that asked whether the district could borrow $85 million dollars to finance the construction of a new State College Area High School on the school’s current Westerly Parkway site.

The final count of 11,121 to 3,975 gives the green light for the district to proceed with the project.  

- CENTRE DAILY TIMES, MAY 2014

Before State College’s Referendum, 14 OUT OF 15 REFERENDUMS IN THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA HAD FAILED.

State College had to unite a divided community under new Act 1 Referendum guideline.

Act 1 for Pennsylvania school districts limits tax increases based upon yearly inflation.

School districts must work within these restrictions to renovate or build school facilities. To expand beyond these guidelines requires a public referendum.
VOTE YES! PROJECT REFERENDUM

In the summer of 2012, State College Area School District began two years of discussion with the community, developing the direction for high school education within the community for the next thirty to fifty years. Community meetings, charrettes, coffee shop conversations, district mailers and door-to-door discussions garnered a 74% voter support in May of 2014. As important as the approval was, the open transparent process brought the community together on wide ranging discussions of public education and the future of State College.
Working with State College Area School District, one of the first steps in 2012 was to develop a work plan for the development of State High. A plan was mapped that blended design with community engagement, educational planning and community Referendum in May of 2014. That plan embedded work sessions with staff, board members and the community allowing for a process of Discovery, Visioning and Synthesis that all felt invested in. The plan was also developed to allow reflection at key decision points upon input from stakeholders.

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<tr>
<th>STATE COLLEGE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT</th>
<th>PROJECT SCHEDULE</th>
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<td>District Wide Facility Master Planning</td>
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<td>Budget Development</td>
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<td>Referendum Vote</td>
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**SCHEDULE LEGEND + GOALS**

- **Existing Facility and Site Analysis / DWFMP**
  - Develop understanding of current use of space
  - Identify program deficiencies / redundancies
  - Identify all options / On-site / New site
  - Identify Pros / Cons

- **Budget Development**
  - Discuss scope of improvements
  - Evaluate building, site and Operational Costs
  - Preliminary Costs / Final Board Approved Budget

- **Design**
  - Preliminary Designs implementing Educational Program
  - Identifies Building / Site Efficiency & Organization
  - Establishes Preferred Option for Schematic Design

- **Sustainability**
  - Goal Setting / Opportunity Investigation
  - Life Cycle Analysis of Systems
  - Workshops & Conceptual Design
  - Sustainability as a Teaching Tool

- **Land Development**
  - Define Buildable Areas
  - Impact of Zoning / Setbacks / Traffic
  - Establish scope of Municipal Improvements

- **Regulatory Agency**
  - Centre Regional Planning input
  - Identify All Municipal Requirements
  - Develop Understanding of Schedule/Cost

- **Community Survey/Workshops**
  - Establish Community Engagement & Goals
  - Facilitate Referendum Logistics
  - Transparent / Comprehensive

- **Educational Programming**
  - Strategy Session
  - Establish Guiding Principles of SCASD
  - Define physical parameters to support Vision
  - Synthesis of Input / Collaboration on Design

- **Board Meetings**
  - Establish Process for Information Exchange
  - Schedule / Budget
  - Decision / Approvals
PROCESS AT LARGE

To help guide the District’s design team to develop one or more concepts further into specific options, the Board solicited input using a variety of approaches. These included:

1. The Board asked its Citizen Advisory Committees (CACs) for Athletics, Facilities, Finance, Technology, and Safety and the design team to submit potential evaluation criteria.
2. The Board’s Subcommittee on Culture, Climate and Learning (CCL) collated the suggestions and asked stakeholder groups, including PTO and booster presidents and CAC members, to prioritize the criteria.
3. The feedback was refined into a list of criteria, weighted to reflect community values and concerns, to help the Board evaluate concepts and options.

QUICK FACTS | COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSETS
- Citizen Advisory Committees (CACs)
- Community Engagement Action Team (CEAT)
- Dedicated School District Development Team
- Friends of State High (FOSH) | Private Citizens Advocacy Team

TIMELINE
- 12 months of Operation Development
- 6 months of Community Education
- 6 Open Community Public Forums
- 200+ Documented Outreach Meetings
  There were MANY, MANY more meetings by FOSH

OUTREACH METHODS
- Social Media
- Informational Videos from District & Students
- Weekly Blog Posts from Director of Facilities
- Door Hangers
- Website Dedicated to the Project
- Mailers
- A Digital Dropbox for Individuals Comments
- Televized Board Meetings
- Door to Door Canvassing of Neighborhoods
- Student Ambassadors Program Tours for Community of Existing School
- 6,751 Opinion Surveys Mailed
- 1,867 Completed Surveys
PROJECT DECISION MAKING + DOWN-SELECTION

Developing a form for the high school that was appropriate to the site and the educational function was the responsibility of the design team. With an infinite number of designs that could be created for the Westerly Parkway site or any other, the Board of School Directors goal was to select one option that was educationally appropriate, affordable, equitable, and suitable to the site.

To help board members analyze the six different concepts, they charged the CCL (Culture Climate and Learning Subcommittee of the Board) to create an Evaluation Matrix using criteria established and later weighted by the CEAT (Community Engagement Action Team) and CACs (Citizen Advisory Committees). Board members were charged with weighting the criteria categories using a 100 pt scale. This process assisted the Board in narrowing the concepts.

The evaluation criteria included six categories: Site, Location, Cost, Constructibility, Sustainability and Environment. With those criteria in mind, six design options were created and input into a survey to:

• assist the Board in narrowing the concepts;
• identify which preliminary concepts are most/least supported by the community;
• help the Board understand how much the community is willing and able to invest in the high school project;
• educate the community about the state of the high school project;
• provide the Board with evidence to narrow down the potential design concepts.

The options included everything from one school to two, new construction versus additions and renovations, new school at a new location, and even investigation of a 600 foot long bridge connecting the two existing schools across Westerly Parkway in State College. The transparent selection process with the community led to the transition from the year long option development into the six month community education, leading up to the 74% successful May 20, 2014 Referendum Vote and the start of project design and execution.

TOP FOUR DESIGN OPTIONS SELECTED BY COMMUNITY FOR DISTRICT REVIEW + EVALUATION

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Option</th>
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| B1     | Two New Schools | Additions + Renovations | On Existing Westerly Parkway Site  
Additions and renovations to existing North and South High Schools; Partial demolition of each school to allow for efficient additions and building organization; One school house grades 9-10 and the other school grades 11-12; Option to connect between two schools over Westerley Parkway. |
| D1     | One New School | New Construction | On Existing Westerly Parkway Site  
Build one new school at the Westerly Parkway Site; Total/partial demolition of existing North and South High School Buildings |
| D2     | One New Schools | Additions + Renovations | On Existing Westerly Parkway Site  
Additions and renovations to existing South High School; Partial demolition of existing buildings. |
| E1     | One New Schools | On New Site Location  
Build new school on a new site; New site shall accommodate all sports fields; Building provides distinct and separate areas for grades 9-10 and grades 11-12. |
MARCH 2004 - MAY 2007
DIVIDED COMMUNITY
A project was authorized and developed for the school district by another firm. Board selects a plan that consolidates all grades in the north building by renovating (40%) and adding new construction (60%). There were mixed feelings within the community regarding the project. Plans were completed and released for bidding. The bids were approximately $17 million over budget and the board votes to abandon the project. The community was divided.

JULY - OCTOBER 2012
HIRE ARCHITECT + EDUCATIONAL PLANNER
The school district hires architect and educational planner to reopen discussions regarding district organization, project exploration and community consultation. A District Wide Facilities Master Plan was evaluated and revised, including the evaluation of the district’s educational model and district organization. Community involvement and transparency was a clear directive from day one.

JANUARY 2013
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTION TEAM
A committee, called the Friends of State High (FOSH), was formed and dedicated to community involvement and engagement throughout the entire process. FOSH went door to door to ensure community involvement.

JANUARY - JUNE 2013
COMMUNITY FORUMS + SURVEYS
Several community involvement events were conducted, including forums, charettes, coffee shop meetings, district mailers and surveys. Information was sent to 6,751 households in the school district.
JANUARY - JUNE 2013
UNDERSTAND EXISTING CONDITIONS
A physical survey was conducted of the existing High School South & North Buildings, key functional challenges quantified, and key physical characteristics noted. Students offered additional insights on the spaces they felt were successful and wanted to see more of as options were developed.

2012 - 2013
21ST CENTURY EDUCATIONAL MODEL
FOR NEXT 50 YEARS
An educational specification was created through a year’s worth of community, teacher, administrative, and student workshops. Established the big ideas and guiding principles, then translated goals into ideas and strategies.

OCTOBER 2013 - FEBRUARY 2014
CONCEPT PROCESS + DECISION-MAKING
Once building options were developed, a survey was sent to the entire community to “rate how strongly you [the community] support or oppose each concept.” 1,857 residents weighed in. Only reviewing the community supported concepts, the school district used a scoring system to analyse each remaining option. This process allowed the board’s final decision to include subjective and objective information from multiple sources.

MAY 20, 2014
COMMUNITY VOTES YES!
In an election, voters overwhelmingly approved a referendum question that asked whether the district could borrow $85 million to finance the construction of a new high school. The final count of 74% voted YES (11,121 votes total) gave the district the greenlight to proceed with a project. Before State College’s referendum, 14 of 15 referendums in the state of Pennsylvania failed. The other referendum to pass occurred in 2006-2008 by approximately 53%.
JUNE 2014 - OCTOBER 2015
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT + COMMUNITY APPROVAL
The selected option and educational specification is developed into a set of contract documents, while maintaining regular community, teacher and staff input.

JANUARY 2016 - AUGUST 2019
PHASED CONSTRUCTION
The project required a multi-phase construction, all while maintaining occupancy for three and a half school years. Completed in August 2019, State College Area School District has taken full advantage of their new facility to expand their educational opportunities.
Students offered insights while touring community members through existing facility, showing what they liked and their concerns about their school. They also shared thoughts to stakeholders and design professionals through surveys, charrettes, drawings, plans and presentations. There were 542 students who offered individual insights, and 370 students participated further throughout the entire design process.

RECURRING THEMES THROUGH DISCOVERY PROCESS

1. Relevance
2. Flexibility/Adaptability
3. Relationships / Caring
4. Innovation
5. Choice (of Programs)
6. Access to the best Tools
7. Collaboration
8. Natural Lighting
9. Connections to Outdoors
10. Environmental
11. Welcoming
12. Real World Learning
13. Community Partners / Off-site Learning
14. Programs & Activities to Engage All
15. Security
16. Comfort / Air Quality

ADDITIONAL STUDENT QUOTES

“I look forward to innovation, creativity, and outward thinking. However, our school is lacking in that extremely.”

“I appreciate the effort being put into making our learning environment a better setting for us to function in and for giving us the opportunity to be a part of what is going to happen with the new school.”

“More space with a new flare. Community needs to be emphasized. Focus on all facets art, science, music, etc.”

“I am glad that students are being consulted for input and ideas.”
Students have named this commons area "The Hub"
EDUCATIONAL VISION THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT

The value of a SCASD education goes beyond high test scores and extraordinary acceptance rates at post-secondary institutions. A SCASD education is about engaging the whole student — fostering relationships, promoting growth, and encouraging exploration in order to develop skills for life. This includes experiences within our broad array of curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular programs.

The district’s instructional focus, or road map, is based on the four pillars, its prime objectives:

- Culture of Trust, Relationships + Collaboration
- Responsive Teaching + Learning
- High Expectations for All
- Welcoming, Safe + Inclusive Climate for Learning + Work

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

During planning and design, strategies were discussed to build upon SCASD’s principles of education to create a successful school design based around relationships and communication that impacted the qualities, organization and size of space. These included:

- Promote an individual student’s sense of identity within the total school enrollment (emphasis on personalization).
- Be flexible - a physical environment that can change or adjust to meet changing educational needs and objectives.
- Promote faculty collaboration within academies while emphasizing interdisciplinary teaching and teaming across silos.
- Allow for maximum collaboration of teachers and staff.
- Promote parent participation/involvement in the educational process.
- Be open for community usage after hours and welcoming for controlled use.
- Incorporate safety and security in the facility, but in a manner that does not compromise an open environment for learning and as a center for the community.
- Promote environmental and social responsibility.
- Partner with business, civic and higher education facilities for opportunities beyond the physical school building, how can the learning environment replicate future work experiences students will experience in their futures.
- Allow/provide students access to technology throughout the day and in a multitude of learning venues.
- Respond and plan to future expansion that may one day be needed.
- Reflect the value and importance of learning - through appearance, aesthetics, materials and architectural style.
- Be architecturally interesting, visually exciting and enjoyable.
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE NO. 1
RELATIONSHIPS ARE A CORNERSTONE OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Belief Statement | We believe that meaningful relationships, effective communication and collaboration among and between students, their families, and staff create high achievement, satisfaction, and productivity. Positive teacher-student relationships draw students into the process of learning and promote their desire to learn. Each student should be connected to responsible, approachable, and caring adult advocates. Student anonymity has no place in the high school.

Student Comment
“I would like more one to one where I can get to know my teachers better. Being friends with my teachers will help me be more comfortable in sharing my ideas.”

PRINCIPLE NO. 2
RELEVANCE MOTIVATES STUDENTS TO PURSUE UNDERSTANDING

Belief Statement | We believe that relevance is a key motivator, connecting students to understanding and knowledge. Curricular strategies that integrate theoretical, conceptual and practical knowledge from various fields of study provide authentic, real-world relevance.

Student Comment
“I think that we would be so much happier in school if we were doing what we love. We need to do something with our high school in order for us and our peers to make a difference. I want to love school, not hate it.”

PRINCIPLE NO. 3
DIVERSE STUDENT INTERESTS AND ABILITIES MUST BE CELEBRATED

Belief Statement | We believe that the educational environment should support the skills, interests, and abilities of all students. In addition to core and elective programs, activities, clubs, athletics, and the like offer multiple venues to develop and celebrate student individuality and creativity. The school should be a creative and enterprising expression celebrating the power of all styles of learning.

Student Comment
“Subjects like mathematics are often taught in a very uniform way and neglect to accommodate alternate learning styles. Rather than separating subjects by level you could separate them by learning styles such as visual, kinesthetic, etc.”

PRINCIPLE NO. 4
PROVEN PRACTICES ARE EMBRACED, AND BOTH RIGOR AND INNOVATION ARE EXPECTED

Belief Statement | We believe that exploring and sharing proven and innovative practices for teaching and learning allow for growth and continuous improvement. All aspects of our educational system will empower rigorous and adaptable, innovative, and future-oriented practices so that current and future graduating students will have the skills to thrive in a changing, multi-dimensional, global, and technological society.

Student Comment
“Learn from us so we can learn from you.”
PRINCIPLE NO. 5  
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP PROMOTES GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

Belief Statement | We believe in empowering children to view the world critically, to think and act independently, cooperatively and responsibly. We believe that a sustainable environment promotes global citizenship and awareness, and connects students to their world.

Student Comment  

PRINCIPLE NO. 6  
HUMAN, PHYSICAL AND FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOSTERS COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Belief Statement | We believe that resources should be used effectively and efficiently to ensure the community a measurable return on its investment, and to cultivate and maintain a culture of accountability, trust and mutual support.

Student Comment  
“Regardless of how much planning is completed, the project in question will never come to fruition without the support of the electorate.”

PRINCIPLE NO. 7  
A SAFE, HEALTHY AND NURTURING ENVIRONMENT MEETS HOLISTIC NEEDS OF LEARNERS

Belief Statement | We believe that student learning increases when the school climate is safe, healthy, supportive, and trusting. Such an environment promotes innovation, inquiry, and productive risk taking, indirectly reinforcing achievement because both students and educators want to work under such conditions - without the distractions caused by fear, judgment, poor air quality, temperature swings, and inadequate lighting.

Student Comment  
“I think that if spaces in the school were more open, and more importantly had more windows, it would improve the overall mood of the students.”

PRINCIPLE NO. 8  
LEARNING EXTENDS PAST THE BELL SCHEDULE AND BEYOND THE SCHOOL CAMPUS

Belief Statement | We believe that school and community share in the responsibility for achieving student success. Relationships with outside organizations, institutions, individuals, and the great outdoors support and strengthen educational programs. We believe in students as both teachers and mentors, and we have high expectations for a culture of collaboration.

Student Comment  
“I feel as though many of the things I am learning are purely for a test, or a grade rather than application to the real world.”
PRINCIPLE NO. 9
TECHNOLOGY IS A POWERFUL TOOL FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING
Belief Statement: We believe that technology is one of many tools for teaching and learning. The use of technology is driven by the task and the student, and should not be seen as a replacement for all other tools. As a tool, technology can enable a community where learning is available for everyone, at any time, and in any place.

Student Comments:
“I love technology and the basis of society is turning toward technology. This is why the foundation of our school should focus on technology and encourage it.”
“I think reading and writing will always be important to students (at least some of us). Please don’t replace everything with cold technology.”

PRINCIPLE NO. 10
CHOICE IS A FOUNDATION OF STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING
Belief Statement: Student-centered learning allows for each student’s skills, interests and abilities to be aligned with their individualized strategy for academic success. Providing students with choices increases student interest, engagement, and learning while helping to build 21st century skills such as critical thinking, self-regulation and adaptability.

Student Comments:
“Let people sign up for their classes and stop with all the placement.”
“This school takes the creativity out of you, with a lack of diverse options. There is too much restriction with artistic flow.”
“We should be able to feel comfortable and happy that we go to this school.”

Teacher comment:
“It seems like we need to reverse things: our clubs and sports should be our curriculum and our subjects should support them. BUT... How can our interests lead us when we are SO ingrained in the “traditional” system? As teachers, we do all kinds of “new” ways to teach like differentiation and group work... And classroom management techniques, but we are still trying to teach all the same traditional concepts. Will we be allowed to break the mold?”

PRINCIPLE NO. 11
THE SCHOOL IS A HUB OF COMMUNITY ACTIVITY
Belief Statement: We believe family and community engagement is a vital part of a truly successful school. The high school should be a source of community pride, open to wider use, and a mutually-beneficial bridge to the local community.

Student Comments:
“I think that a new school would be beneficial for not only the education, but also for the image of State High. We have a great educational system but the facilities are not adequate.”
COMMUNITY BREAKOUT DISCUSSION (STATE HIGH INFORMATION FAIR)

EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT
STATE COLLEGE AREA HIGH SCHOOL | PAGE NO. 17

04

MAIN HIGHLIGHTS:
SEPARATION OF ASSEMBLY AND ACADEMIC SPACES
MAIN COMMONS IS CENTRALLY LOCATED AS AN ORGANIZING ELEMENT BETWEEN THE ASSEMBLY AND ACADEMIC SPACES
HIGHER ROOF PROFILE AT ASSEMBLY SPACES TO PROMOTE GATHERING OF STUDENTS
CLEARLY IDENTIFIABLE MAIN ENTRANCE WITH DIRECT ACCESS TO MAIN COMMONS
ALL ACADEMIC SPACES SHALL HAVE NATURAL DAYLIGHT AND VIEWS TO THE EXTERIOR
SEPARATE ACCESS TO EACH LEARNING COMMUNITY FROM THE MAIN CORRIDOR
CLEARLY DEFINED BUILDING CIRCULATION

ADMINISTRATION OFFICES ADJACENT BOTH MAIN ENTRANCES TO MONITOR VISITOR ACCESS

AVERAGE WALKING SPEED: 3.1 MILES/HOUR OR 16,368 FEET/60 MINUTES

- 400 FEET = 1.7 MINUTES TRAVEL TIME
- 500 FEET = 2.1 MINUTES TRAVEL TIME
- 84 FEET = 0.30 MINUTE TRAVEL TIME
- 342 FEET = 1.25 MINUTES TRAVEL TIME
- 356 FEET = 1.30 MINUTES TRAVEL TIME
- 605 FEET = 2.5 MINUTES TRAVEL TIME

COMMUNITY BREAKOUT DISCUSSION (STATE HIGH INFORMATION FAIR)
ALIGNMENT OF EDUCATION + BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The organizational model for State High and the Delta Program School was developed early in planning with the educational planners, architects, school and community. The building would be developed around learning academies and break away from 600 foot long double loaded corridors in the existing schools. The new learning communities were to foster a sense of identity blending traditional classrooms with immediate access to variations in collaborative program space and support.

Each academy is comprised of two to three learning communities becoming the building blocks for both buildings. This concept of collaborative communities grew out of the school district’s Delta Program School that has served the school district for 50 years fostering relationships to strengthen education. Learning Communities include:

- 9th Grade Experience
- Arts + Humanities
- Business + Communications
- Health + Human Services
- Science
- S.T.E.M. (Comprehensive Career + Technical Center)
- Specialty Programs

Shared elements include physical education, media center, learning enrichment, world languages, performing arts and food services.

Marilah Rackley @MrsRackleyCCMS - 29 Nov 2018
Special thanks to Mr. Johnson & his school staff for their hospitality & tour of their amazing new facility! A great example of embracing 21st century learning & creating an environment where students want to learn! Thanks for the awesome opportunity!
The two existing State College High Schools were sprawling double loaded corridors based on mid 20th century school design including many non-day-lit classrooms. Early discussions were that many of the corridors were more than a football field in length and that there was little sense of individual identity within the buildings. An ability to breakdown the new facility into academies creating the ability for students to have a stronger sense of identity and interaction with teachers was a guiding principal throughout design.

The existing State College High School resides in two buildings constructed in 1957 and 1962. Originally the high school existed in the 1957 North Building. However, as the school district grew over the years the high school expanded into the 1962 South Building as well. This created a school campus in which students were moving across a busy parkway and two parking lots, a difficult prospect for education, most notably during inclement weather.
A STUDY COMPARING THE FOOTPRINT OF THE SOUTH BUILDING WITH PENN STATE'S BEAVER STADIUM - THE 3RD LARGEST STADIUM IN THE WORLD.

To eliminate the constant travel between building, the majority of 9th through 12th education is moved to the new three story south building and the north building is converted into a 5th through 12th grade magnet school along with extracurricular after school hours athletic facilities. The site was reorganized to allow for separate bus, visitor, student, staff, bike and pedestrian traffic at both buildings and pedestrian plazas and outdoor gathering areas for formal and informal instruction, encouraging after hour use of the facility.

PHASE 1
September 2016 – January 2018 | Phase 1 moved within the existing building as a combination of renovation and new construction creating the library, cafeteria and kitchen complex, business and communications academy, bridge connector and large group instructions supporting the Phase 1 (3) story academies. Outdoor amphitheaters are constructed supporting outdoor instruction and independent learning that has a rich history within the State College Community.

PHASE 2
September 2016 – January 2018 | Phase 2 moved within the existing building as a combination of renovation and new construction creating the library, cafeteria and kitchen complex, business and communications academy, bridge connector and large group instructions supporting the Phase 1 (3) story academies. Outdoor amphitheaters are constructed supporting outdoor instruction and independent learning that has a rich history within the State College Community.

PHASE 3
January 2018 – May 2019 | Phase 3 completed demolition of the south building and construction of the public/community program of State High including Gymnasiums, Performing Arts Wing, Auditorium, Student Success Hub, Roar Store, (2) story main connector to Phase 1 academies, and final south entrance supporting bus drop-off and after hours community use. Phase 3 begins demolition of The North Building to allow for the Phase 4 Athletic Facility and “Democratic” 5th-12th grade

PHASE 4
June 2018 – May 2019 | Phase 4 completed the south campus and moves to the North Campus removing 2/3 of the existing building. Competition Gymnasiums and Natatorium which were constructed during the 1990’s will be retained for school district use and after hour community activities. The second half of Phase 4 is a (2) story, 50,000 square foot addition “Democratic” 5th-12th grade magnet school named “The Delta School”. This open environment of learning often discussed as project-based learning in recent years was the precedent for the academy structure integration throughout Phase 1 – Phase 3 South Building.
WAYFINDING

In a facility of 680,000 square feet with 2,700 students, wayfinding was an early discussion. While not always found in school construction, the graphic signage in State High is critical to orient oneself in the facility, be able to read the function of a program space from a distance or understand the organization of the building both vertically and horizontally as one moves throughout the facility. Today, students can move throughout the school with these cues as they move between more intimate learning communities embedded in academies and open public gathering hubs in the school, leading to shared facilities such as the auditorium, large group instructions or gymnasiums shared with the community not as familiar with the school.
SUSTAINABILITY

North and South Buildings are both LEED Gold Certified. Sustainability was a central theme for the project, not only strengthening the long term investment for the community as 40-50 year facilities, but more importantly using the facility itself as a teaching tool for sustainable learning for the students. Both buildings were also awarded Alternative Clean Energy Program Grants by Pennsylvania to achieve LEED Gold Certification, bringing $4 million dollars to assist the local tax base, enriching the sustainable educational components of State High.
The overarching organization of the school, developed with high school staff, district leadership, and community involvement, includes multiple distinct Academies of Teaching and Learning supported by shared programs and facilities. Expanding on the rich culture of choice evident in the current high school, each Learning Academy includes a range of facilities for teams of interdisciplinary teachers to collaborate as initially developed in the programming diagram above that translates into the final four-story facility knitted into the sloped urban campus.

21ST CENTURY LEARNING ACADEMIES

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SOUTH BUILDING ORGANIZATION

1. STEM LEARNING ACADEMY
2. LIBRARY, LEARNING ENRICHMENT & TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY
3. SPECIAL EDUCATION-SPECIALTY PROGRAMS ACADEMY
4. ARTS & HUMANITIES ACADEMY
5. LARGE GROUP INSTRUCTION
6. CULINARY LEARNING LAB - HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES ACADEMY
7. STUDENT DINING COMMONS & FOOD COURT
8. BLACK BOX THEATER - VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS ACADEMY
9. 850 SEAT THEATER - VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS ACADEMY
10. MAIN GYM - PHYS ED, HEALTH & ATHLETICS ACADEMY
11. FITNESS CENTER (3RD FLOOR) - PHYS ED, HEALTH & ATHLETICS ACADEMY
12. STUDENT SUCCESS HUB & MAIN COMMONS
13. SCHOOL "ROAR" STORE - BUSINESS & COMMUNICATIONS ACADEMY
14. CAREER CENTER - ADMIN & STUDENT SERVICES
HEALTH PROFESSIONS CLASSROOM

ART CLASSROOM

CONSTRUCTION APPLIED LAB

"THE HUB" STUDENT COMMONS

AGRICULTURE APPLIED LAB

STUDENTS USING 3D PRINTER IN COLLABORATION LAB
NORTH BUILDING | DELTA PROGRAM SCHOOL
STUDENTS, SCHOOL + FAMILIES LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

With the State College Area High School consolidated under one roof across the street, the North Building was transformed into a satellite school for State High. The district’s delta program - a democratic school of choice available to grades 5th through 12th. The middle school program (grades 5 - 8) is located on the second floor and the high school program (9 - 12) is located on the ground level. Due to the program’s strong focus on shared leadership model amongst parents, students, and faculty, the entire building is organized in a circular fashion, wrapping around a large group instruction area where the entire school can come together for their weekly all-school meetings. In addition, the facility houses a district athletic facility with a competition gym and natatorium.
GOALS ACHieved
A COLLABORATIVE FLEXIBLE ENVIRONMENT FOR LEARNING

With construction complete and the students occupying the schools and academies, State High educational model is able to expand into its environment. Classrooms are directly adjacent to breakout educational space with glazing between program allowing fluid movement for varied activities throughout the school day. These opportunities for quick reconfigurations mimic future real world work environments where critical thinking tasks are often changing. The adjacencies maximize educational time during the day that often did not exist in the old buildings.

COMMUNITY GOALS & UNINTENDED OPPORTUNITIES

A critical goal of the community was to reaffirm their commitment to education and at the same time keep that commitment at the core of their urban fabric. With State High renovated in the urban core of the borough, access to pedestrian, bicycle and public transportation has been maintained strengthening students opportunities beyond the school campus itself.

School parades with the backdrop of State High, community fields and pool directly adjacent to the school can share facilities and parking between school and community enhancing the campus as a community center at all hours and day of the week, year around.

Possibly the strongest unintended result with the renovation and reaffirmation to secondary education in State College is the sense of pride in the community. Before construction and the community engagement, State High had divided the community. Today the building’s Open House is a sign of what a school can do. More than 5,000 people attended the opening of the school. Students, parents, alumni, community members coming together with pride. Conversations have moved beyond a building, bringing a community together.
RESULTS | WHAT THEY ARE SHARING WITH THE COMMUNITY THAT SUPPORTS THEM

Elliot Sheehan @elliotssheehan25 • 8 Jan 2019
Happy 1-year birthday to the @StateCollegeHS building! I am so thankful to be able to learn in an amazing environment.

Forever grateful for the community, the workers, and all else who gifted us this amazing school.

State College SD @StateCollegeSD • 4 Oct 2019
Come see what our Culinary Arts students are learning at Community Table on Saturday, Oct. 5 from 5-9 p.m. at Cramer Farm. More:

Culinary Arts students are using their hands-on learning to cater the...
Chef Zach Lorber is showing his students how to make pasta. He runs through a quick demonstration: mix a little flour in a pile of flour, add the eggs... provisionsmag.com

Kristen Dewitt @kid12 • 12 Oct 2019
So proud to be a part of @StateCollegeSD! State High is officially open and it’s amazing! #StateHighDedication

Nabil M. Mark @NabilMMark • 10 Jan 2018
As a professional photographer, I can’t help but appreciate all the beautiful natural light throughout the new State High building.

State College SD @StateCollegeSD • 7 Apr 2018
Unbelievable community turnout for our State High Open House. We are very proud of the new building and grateful for the support. Thank you everyone! – at State College Area High School - North Bldg.