PLANNING FOR THE NEXT 100 YEARS OF HISTORY

LINDEN HALL PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR GIRLS    CENTER FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE
Linden Hall is the oldest girls’ boarding school in the United States, founded in 1746 by the Moravian Church in Lititz Pennsylvania. Educational principles followed were revolutionary for girls’ education. Innovative curriculum continued through the centuries. The school's motto "non scholae sed vitae discimus" translates to "we learn not for school, but for life". This was adopted in the 1880's illustrating a commitment to lifelong learning.

In the late 20th century the school focused on the arts, which they felt would attract students to the school and was popular with the alumnae who were celebrating the school's 250th anniversary in 1996. The school planned and built additional art rooms and a gymnasium in order to allow the substandard existing gym to be converted into a performing arts center to start the 21st Century. As enrollment remained flat, and cash flow limited, the school embarked on a new strategy with a new headmaster, focusing on math, science and technology, but not forgetting the arts and riding programs which are long term fixtures at the school. At the same time embarked on cosmetic improvements such as landscaping, paint and carpeting, while increasing the number of foreign students at Linden Hall.
With flat enrollment numbers and years of hoping for better times, the academic facilities were well worn and threadbare with the last large scale academic upgrade occurring in the 1950's. While making surface improvements and recruiting students, the Trustees and headmaster embarked on a facility study. They engaged an educational facility planner / architect to help seek input, evaluate and document existing conditions, identify educational deficiencies based on desired programs to establish a master plan that infused technology and integrated sustainable design and operation of facilities. The study process took two years and was presented to the Board of Trustees September 8, 2008.
The Master Plan was written as a living document with the intent of being updated as work progressed and priorities evolved. This study focused on options for three major areas of the campus including: academic spaces, student living environments, and faculty housing. Work was divided into multiple projects listing opinions of costs for each prospective project. This was intended to allow the Trustees to select projects that met current priorities and fit available improvement budgets. It was always assumed as such a basic premise that improvements would take a decade or more to implement as funds were available. The goal being that when all work is completed known or anticipated programs will have been facilitated; security improved; the campus will be handicapped accessible; and the entire campus made of buildings dating from 1748 will have been brought up to current codes and standards.
As fundraising and growth of the student population were the priorities of the administration, planning continued for the academic spaces. Due to the condition of the science labs, they were abandoned and science teachers began sharing art rooms for teaching science. The Trustees agreed to obtain the funding to build new science facilities first in the 1907 section of the building. This initial effort was followed by reconstructing the humanities classrooms on the third floor of the 1804 / 1844 section of the building. These projects allowed the Linden Hall community to see that it was possible to integrate technology, sustainability, history and fun. The architect created a new environment that allowed independent, small group and specialty learning areas specifically designed for their programs. This provided the team even more knowledge as they set out to program and plan the major academic addition known as the Center for Academic Excellence.

Following the completion of the study, the Trustees prioritized the academic area improvements to be made first reasoning that the learning areas impact all students who may chose the school. Student housing followed as a second priority with faculty housing as a distant third. The charge was clear; find a way to provide flexible state of the art learning spaces that could evolve with technology and programs; yet be places an international blend of 6th through 12th grade students would want to be. (In the midst of improvements grades were revised to house 5th through 12th.) As the school’s entire campus is in the borough’s historic district all of these state of the art learning spaces had to be created within a shell of existing buildings dating from 1769 through 1907, or in new construction in a structure with an exterior façade that compliments the history.

The new Science lab features adjustable height tables, proper ventilation, and plenty of storage.
The primary goal of this major project would be to reconnect what was known as Stengel Hall with a building known as the Steinman Performing Arts Center. The addition became known as the Center for Academic Excellence which integrated the 1907/2002 Performing Arts Center with the 1769/1804/1844 Stengel Hall as the main academic building for the school. This connection allows students to stay inside if they wish during the academic day as well provides a single point of entry for visitors.

The core of this building is the learning center which is easily accessible to all students. The center is a blend of private and semi private spaces, large and small, separated by fixed and glass walls. Two thirds of the schools current population can be housed in this space when the folding classroom wall is opened and all spaces are utilized. Book shelves have been provided but are not built in; allowing them to be replaced or at least reduced when and if the use of electronic books overtakes the printed page. The space includes a touch screen smart board and touch table for instruction as well as independent student use, both intended to be upgraded with newer technologies whenever they become available.

The third floor includes the previously renovated humanities classrooms, as well as the schools archives, new classrooms, including a classroom which can be divided into three spaces and an outdoor classroom on the porch.
As planned all administrators are in one place on the first floor of the building rather than all over campus, allowing for easier planning and informal management meetings. This floor also contains faculty work spaces, a nurse’s suite and board room which can be utilized as a classroom when not in use. This is also the main entry to the building and includes a welcoming lobby which is attached to the Performing Art Center’s gallery.

The lowest level includes a new lecture hall and testing room. It is heavily used to bring students together and for faculty meetings. This floor also connects to the lower level of the Performing Art Center’s classrooms, art rooms and science labs.

There is another academic phase to be undertaken if the school continues to follow the master plan. This work has the option to create new space in the lower level of the 1844 wing of Stengel Hall, as well as provide additional science facilities including the option for a greenhouse. This "future phase" also has the option to create faculty rooms to be the "home base" for teachers allowing classes to be scheduled in the most appropriate room available. This academic work is in addition to work in other areas of the campus involving student living environments and faculty housing that remain to be considered.
Evita M. Allen Center for Academic Excellence (CAE)

14,000 sq. ft. new/ 22,000 sq. ft. renovated
Completed: August 2012
Budget: $6,000,000

The addition was constructed to not exceed the north and south footprints of the 20th Century additions being demolished, but extended to the Performing Arts Center to reconnect these structures as they were prior to the 2002 addition. This time however, the buildings were connected on two floors in lieu of over a bridge. On the Main Street side the project included new walls, landscaping, walkways and gardens leading to a pergola. Patios were created on the south side facing the gardens and dormitories.

The Initial Phase included:
- An Academic Library / Learning Commons
- Reception Area
- Learning Spaces
- Life Safety / Accessibility
- Energy & Comfort

Future Phases:
- Renovate Steinman Performing Arts Center and expand science department with optional greenhouse.
- Convert space in the lower level of Stengel Hall into the Upper School Day Lounge and enlarge areaway into a patio.
- Replace windows & stucco on the north and south elevations of Stengel Hall.
- Provide a new heating and cooling system for the Chapel.
- Re-point the stonework on the Chapel.
Linden Hall is a private college preparatory school serving foreign and domestic, day and boarding students. The school provides a multicultural environment with parents and students sharing different expectations and goals for attending the school. Alumnae have a special bond to the school and many maintain a connection with volunteer activities and donations. The Board of Trustees is made up to 27 members representing the Moravian Church, parents, alumnae, and community members.

Operation and improvement funding must come from tuition dollars; donations from a varied array of stakeholders; or an occasional grant from a foundation or organization. Convincing this diverse collection of individuals to support the need for improvements, while at the same time encouraging them to provide the financial support is the biggest challenge. Parents must be convinced that the disruption will be outweighed by the improvements made to the facilities. Alumnae must be assured that it will still be "their beloved school". Community and church members of the Board of Trustees must be certain that changes are needed and that it is fiscally responsible to make them. At the same time, all eyes of the community will be on any changes to this historically significant place.

The administration had to be ready to defend the need for change to improve the school. Even with all of the positive energy that was building, many board members were afraid to commit to a major project that may put the school at financial risk.
The current headmaster was charged with making physical and academic improvements to the school. The Board of Trustees realized the importance of bringing resources onto the board for financing, planning, management, fundraising and understanding the parents’ perspective.

The headmaster was the driving force for this project, relentless in expressing the need and dire consequences for the educational process if improvements were not made. Abandoning the existing science labs due to their deplorable condition before the facility planning was complete was a prime example of commitment to a new educational philosophy and was easily understood by all stakeholders. He was the face of change and spoke passionately about the need in meetings with parents, alumnae, faculty & staff, board members, the community, to anyone who would listen. His goal is a school that sells itself due to the academics and environment that does everything to enhance learning.

Trustees, while a strong group, were not shy about bringing members onto the Board that could enhance the vision with their expertise. They created a building committee that included the educational facility planner/architect and headmaster that met regularly to review progress of the master plan as well as taking on affordable small projects that enhanced the evolving facility plan.

As educational and physical improvements were being made, enrollment was increasing and fundraising intensified, making funding for larger and larger projects a reality.
As part of the formal planning process, questionnaires were created and made available online for parents, students, board members, faculty and staff. In addition, the planner was regularly on campus and conducted small group interviews with stakeholders while documenting the physical and educational environment. Having a young designer who enjoyed talking with the students on campus provided more insight than all of the questionnaires collected.

The entire campus is in the historical district, thus all projects must be reviewed by the historic review committee. Zoning approval is also required prior to getting a building permit. We viewed this as an opportunity rather than obligation. We provided more information than was required and opened up dialogue on the small initial projects prior to the Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) and incorporated comments on the current project as well as future work. We felt we had greater support from the community following these meetings on campus and in the Borough Hall.

A Signage Project, the Science Project and Humanities Projects not only provided the opportunity to improve the campus; it provided a major communication tool with the students. Planners were able to get input on specific needs of faculty and students as well as the headmaster and Trustees prior to each project. Because of the science and humanities work, stakeholders were also able to evaluate and understand which features were most beneficial on a small scale, before embarking on the CAE project. The administrators and planners knew we were on the right track when the entire wide eyed student body was given the tour of their new science facilities following the ribbon cutting. Tours before Christmas break, by staff and students of the Science and CAE project were used to maintain stakeholder support, providing both a learning tool for students and serving to maintain support by users and parents as the projects progressed.
One of the more interesting aspects of this project was that as the master planning was progressing so was the evolution of the educational program. The school was looking to move from a rigid low tech, lecture format, one size fits all to a more open and relevant program. The goal was to create an educational format that stressed excellence, and allowed individual learning and collaboration relevant for today's college bound student. Learning programs would integrate technology in spaces and furniture that would enhance an evolving curriculum. In essence they developed the goal of providing the best all-girl learning experience in the nation.

Linden Hall established the 4C’s Promise which is a commitment to help each girl attain excellence in Curriculum, Character, Culture and Conditioning. The promise produces a learning experience that allows each student to discover her best and reach new heights through leadership opportunities.
The major construction work that has taken place based on the facility study planning has focused on the educational areas. Referring to the Schools 4C's Promise, improvements are directed at the first three C's: Curriculum, Culture & Character. The stables, riding area and gymnasium which facilitate most of the "Conditioning" had been improved prior to the facility planning. A major emphasis during Educational Planning was to also provide space for their Concentrated Studies Program, focusing on spaces for science, humanities, and mathematics that could be adaptable and flexible for the number of students and individual learning plans and learning styles.

As the school is creating curriculum and AP courses for as few as one student, spaces had to be created that were not available before. While we identified space in the existing facility had enough classrooms, on average classrooms were sized to hold between 10 - 20 students in a generic environment. This meant there was wasted space with classes under ten and overcrowding when there were more than twenty students.

The school is proud of the fact that their average class size is 12 students. In evaluations of existing and planned classes, at least fifty percent of classes would have less than 10 students. Of the balance of spaces needed to accommodate more than 10 students, only two per period were needed for more than 20. Learning spaces were desired to be configured into a variety of sizes to meet curricular requirements.

All new and renovated spaces were furnished with a variety of desks, including rolling desks with attached tablets and in a variety of shapes to allow reconfiguration at will.
Science: Two flexible classrooms with demonstration tables, a shared lab room, informal learning corridor and faculty prep room. This space was set up to serve all curriculums from 6th through 12th grades. 5th grade was added to the school after this space was built and serves those curricular needs as well.

Learning Spaces: 22 new learning spaces were created that range in capacity of four students to 65, with the majority accommodating 10 - 25 students. One larger classroom can be divided with folding walls into 3 learning spaces, and a learning space for 21 can be separated from the learning center with a glass wall. The Board Room was designed to be used as a learning space when needed. In fair weather there is an outdoor classroom for eight on the porch or informal learning in two pairs of rocking chairs.
Learning Center: This space is designed to be able to hold one third of the school’s population at one time with all spaces utilized. Within the center some learning spaces are enclosed in glass, others with furniture to allow for active collaboration or independent learning. In this new interpretation of a library students have the opportunity to come and work independently or as a class or group. A juice bar is included in the space for refreshments to be provided to active learners. Everything in the space is movable including book cases, tables, seating and glass walls to allow flexibility in how it is used today as well as larger modifications in future years. The space is also intended for study period during or after the school day. This floor level was designed to include college counseling, spaces for administrators that directly serve the students, conference space, server visible to the students and a wired computer lab for programming classes.

Testing Room: In addition to in house testing, Linden Hall is a regional SAT testing center and requested a space to house both. This room was created as a terraced large group room with dividers on fixed tables for testing. Dividers can be removed for faculty meetings, visiting scholars or other large group activities.
Informal Learning Areas: Throughout the academic areas, breakout areas in common spaces and small conference rooms are provided for informal learning, collaboration and relaxation for students, faculty, alumnae, and staff.
The basic premise of the Educational Planning Study was to provide spaces that could facilitate flexibility in learning and teaching styles with a concept to provide a variety of spaces and furnishings that permit traditional teaching as well as enhance collaboration. Linden Hall embraced hand held devices five years ago, thus every space is served by wireless networking.

Teachers are able to schedule spaces appropriate to the learning / teaching to be accomplished for each class. At the same time spaces have been furnished with movable, ergonomic furniture. Much of what was selected was provided to the school as samples and several items were even tested in classrooms by students.

When the CAE opened the teachers were assigned to rooms, but swap spaces when needed. The next phase of the project is intended to provide faculty office spaces and to assign learning rooms based on curriculum and need. Abandoning classroom ownership now was not deemed a priority, but is intended to be explored in the future. Curriculum needs were met when the CAE was occupied in the Fall of 2012.
Linden Hall is a unique environment. First and foremost this school has to provide a learning environment that accommodates the needs of today's female students in a college preparatory program. The school must not only meet the needs of local students, but also boarding students representing 19 states and 16 nations.

This school is integral to the fabric of a historic town. It is steps away from a building that served as a hospital for George Washington’s troops and just across the street from the oldest pretzel bakery in America. Facilities are utilized for community meetings and town hall gatherings led by local politicians. Most everyone in town keeps an eye on the school and the girls who are part of the fabric of downtown Lititz.

Thus the exterior of the CAE had to be welcoming to the community and respectful of Church Square which it shares with its founders, the Moravian Church. The Church still owns the school’s grounds and a representative sits on the Board of Trustees. At the same time the entire campus lies in the historic district where every project must pass muster with the local historical committee.

A new green roof enhances the top of the Welcome Center, setting a sustainable tone for the entire project.
The planner of this building made a conscious effort to take into account students who learn visually, need noise or music, prefer verbal discourse, have to move, are logical, and those who need to work in groups or alone.

Visual learners will appreciate the wireless technology everywhere, hand held devices, smart tables or smart boards, in all learning spaces.

Auditory or linguistic learners can disrupt other learners who need quiet, for that reason acoustics of learning spaces took center stage. Acoustics were integral to the design including acoustical deck, panels and separation walls in areas where aural or verbal learners may work.

Physical (Active) students have furniture that moves much more readily than the 1950's desks that were replaced. All educational spaces are carpeted for students that need to flop on the floor, and educational "bean bag" chairs are provided in some of the rooms. Traditional seating and spaces are available for the student who prefers a more conventional learning style.
The 47 acre campus is like a park in the middle of town. Amenities include: athletic fields, tennis courts, gym building, dormitories, the oldest indoor pool in the County, as well as stables, indoor riding rink and outdoor riding rink.

The interior of the renovation acknowledges the history of the spaces, especially the 1769 section of the building. The environment of the renovated areas had to respect the values of the alumnae who visit and continue to support the school. The physical environment, while respecting the history, is intended to be the students’ learning space. The white walls are intended to be a blank canvas for them to paint on, both literally and figuratively. Bright fabrics and fun surprises are provided to enliven the space.

Colors and finishes were carefully selected. The schools colors were incorporated into the facility as were the burgundy, green and linen white walls that were traditional in the space. Gypsum white was added to ceilings to make them brighter and to work better at reflecting light. Blue and yellow accent paints are colonial colors used in a modern way. The interior features inside of the building were intended to inspire learning, comfort and a space the girls of today would want to call home.

The exterior of the building was created using the language and elements already present on campus and in the neighboring Church Square. As some sections of the building were to be torn down, some of those features were to be replicated on the new addition. The new welcome center created new entrances for Main Street as well as campus allowing for a visible, single control point in the main lobby. The project also for the first time made the entire academic building handicapped accessible, along with the attached 1885 chapel. Walls and a pergola were built to make a welcoming entrance from Main Street.
There are great features to this facility that inspire and motivate. Many feel that private schools have unlimited resources, that is not the case with all schools, while some institutions have great endowments, others do not. Linden Hall made the change of curriculum and facility on an extremely tight budget. Work had to be phased and there is still work to do. However, one of the largest inspirations is that one must step back and see what existed before this planning process started. The new Center for Academic Excellence is clean and bright, meeting current codes and standards, including fresh air, lighting and life safety. Temperature and humidity will be consistent; steam heat, open windows and window air conditioners are things of the recent past.

The Learning Center as the heart of the school acts as a community center, library and collaboration center during the school day and for study hours in the evening. It is rare not to see students working together in the booths, using the technology table or the smart board to bring up a web book or other online resource. Looking out the window students see greenery on the green roof which was created to give a pleasant view as well as avoid creating a storm water retention basin on Main Street.

Places of active learning and quiet reflection have been provided to evolve, inspire and motivate all who use the new Center for Academic Excellence at Linden Hall.
Evaluating the achievements of the work needs to be done by reviewing the goals of the Facilities Study completed in 2008. Work to date has focused on the educational / learning spaces established as a priority by the Linden Hall Trustees, administration and community. The following two pages list the achievements made to academic buildings as of Fall 2012. These achievements have been made possible by the Science Project, Humanities Project and Center for Academic Excellence. Improvements to dormitories and the dining hall have been mapped out for future projects.

Excerpt from 2008 Master Plan Summary:

“We have been reviewing and evaluating the campus, facilities and programs since January 2007. While we have found some wonderful surprises, the evaluation indicates that facilities are in great need of improvement.

The school is making strides to compete in the 21st century educational market place and realizes that they are competing for students with other private and public schools who prepare students for higher education.”
Achieved In All Academic Spaces by Fall 2012

- Academic Spaces are sized and equipped for 21st Century educational programs and planned population. The variety of space sizes met the needs of the revised curriculum by Fall of 2012 and were designed to evolve with future changes. (Performing Arts and classroom spaces completed in 2002 will be upgraded with a future project.)
- Provided alternative education delivery.
  - Harkness Method.
  - Technology.
  - Small class sizes.
  - Independent learning plans.
- Provided improvements to the appearance of the campus.
- New work blends with the history of Linden Hall. The feel of campus to the outsider is a traditional northeast academic institution.
- Improved safety and comfort. (Safety and comfort upgrades have been ongoing since the start of the Master Planning.)
Achieved In All Academic Spaces by Fall 2012

☑ Technology:  (Living spaces continue to receive upgrades.)
  o Continue to build on Fiber backbone.
  o Improve wireless availability.
☑ Comply with current codes & standards.
☑ Repair or Replace Roofs.  (To be completed as future projects in other areas.)
☑ Enhance Structure
☑ Energy:
  o Heating systems replaced.
  o Central Air Conditioning installed.
  o Energy efficient lighting installed.  (Much of the lighting in other spaces has been retrofitted or is scheduled to be replaced)
☑ Replace single pane windows.  (Replaced in most academic spaces except north & south facades of the historic section of Stengel Hall. This will be done as a future project.)
☑ Sprinklers upgraded to current standards.  (By code need to be provided in dormitory spaces when renovated.)
☑ Provided accessibility to all Academic spaces as part of the renovations.  (Future projects are documented that can make the dormitories and dining hall fully accessible to those with disabilities.)
Linden Hall remains unique. Educational facilities are now available to accommodate the curriculum and many different teaching and learning styles that were restricted in the past. SAT scores continue to rise, and the student boarding and day population has grown at a rate that far exceeded all expectations.

Funding remains a challenge, and continues to limit the improvements. Grants are more difficult to come by and tuition must remain affordable for students. The most ambitious project thus far, the Center for Academic Excellence, was designed as three phases. As of Fall 2012, two of the three phases were completed. The third phase involves improvements to existing spaces in Stengel Hall, the Chapel as well as the Performing Arts Center. The Facility Planning study created a road map to complete the third and final phase as future projects.

Many achievements have been made in the improvement of Linden Hall School for Girls since the inception of the planning study to prepare the school for its next 100 years. The history has been maintained, while creating learning spaces specifically designed for the current curriculum. With the student population and testing scores at an all time high, and facility improvements made that far exceeded many expectations in the community, the planning process and projects completed this far are more than achieving the goals established by school.

While it was intended that it would take 10 - 20 years to achieve all of the goals set forth in the master plan, much progress has been made in five short years. The decision to create a learning environment that supports the curriculum and learning styles of today’s students as the first priority, has paid off in student achievement, increasing student recruitment and retention as well as renewed support of alumnae and the community of Lititz.
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