

# 2012 Exhibition of School Planning and Architecture

## Takoma Education Campus

Washington, DC

Lee J. Brockway Award - Renovation

Other

Fanning Howey

# Takoma Education Campus



## Rebuilding a Vision

**Community Environment:** In December of 2010, a devastating fire ripped through the halls of Takoma Education Campus, destroying nearly everything in its path. While the structural elements of the building were retained – concrete columns and slabs – interior spaces were ruined; lights melted, tiles fractured, and student desks reduced to piles of ash.

Takoma school officials had a decision to make, and quick! Close the burned out school and abandon the community of Takoma Park, or rebuild it, taking the opportunity to transform it into a 21<sup>st</sup> century learning space that would not only serve the community as a K-8 educational facility, but would also serve as the district's only Catalyst Arts Integration School.

Without hesitation, they chose the latter.





# Committed to the Community

**Community Environment:** Rather than shutting down and turning families away, the district found a provisional home for their students, erecting temporary tented depots in front of the burned out school and busing them via motor coach to an off site location while construction occurred.

The affect that the fire had on the community was quite evident, and understandably they had several questions. Weekly progress meetings were held by the design team and were open to the community so members could freely voice their concerns and frustrations.

Meanwhile, students were treated to virtual walk-throughs of their new school, allowing them to watch it come back to life before their very eyes.





## Designed for Flexibility

**Learning Environment:** Takoma Education Campus was transformed from a dark and dreary 1976 facility into a bright, cheerful 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environment.

Arranged in small academic clusters, the design facilitates a variety of instructional methods and encourages flexibility and a sense of community among students and teachers in a safe, well-supervised environment.

Additionally, the facility houses pre-kindergarten classrooms on the first floor with their own entrance, and special educational facilities are located throughout the building to support inclusion of all students.



Before





Before



## Arts Integration

**Learning Environment:** Beginning in September 2011, Takoma Education Campus is the only P-8 school in the district that is a Catalyst Arts Integration school supporting activities in the following areas:

- Academic Enrichment
  - Trinity Development Coordination (tutoring)
  - OST Academic Power Hour
- Wellness and Fitness
  - Playworks (guided recess and conflict resolution)
  - Basketball, Track, Softball, and Cheerleading
- Arts and Culture
  - Shakespeare Steps Out Program
  - Architects in Schools Program
  - Embassy Adoption Program
  - Washington Animal Rescue Program

**“It reflects our vision, it reflects our mission, and I’m just pleased and thrilled. So are the kids and so are the parents.”**

**~Ms. Taylor, Principal, Takoma Education Campus**



## A New View on Learning

**Physical Environment:** Angular classrooms with new bay windows line the exterior of the school, suggesting that something exciting and unexpected is waiting on the inside. The classrooms are connected by a pathway through a series of joined spaces that are able to be adapted into a number of unique student learning opportunities.

Curtain wall “light columns” were added to all classrooms, flooding light into each room. Additionally, two new “light wells” were introduced into the building to bring natural light into the interior teaching spaces.





## Student-Centered Design

**Physical Environment:** Designed to achieve LEED Gold certification, Takoma Education Campus is a model for student-centered sustainable design. Elements of this design include:

- Sound attenuation
- Indoor air quality
- Thermal comfort

The facility also contains the latest in technology, wired for voice, data, and video throughout the building. The state-of-the-art program design brings information to the desk of each student, and computers are available in every classroom. Additionally, each room is wired for audio enhancement, amplifying the teacher's voice and utilizing classroom acoustics to boost voice clarity.





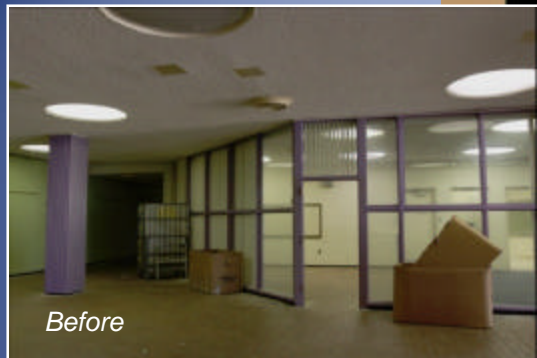
## Fast Tracking the Future

**Planning Process:** The design-build team for Takoma included Fanning Howey as the lead architect with assistance from Bryant Mitchell as the associate architect, and Turner leading construction management for the team.

Because it was a fast tracked design-build project, the planning team was greatly involved throughout all phases, leading Takoma's School Improvement Team (SIT) meetings, comprised of 20 individuals from the school, district, and neighborhood advisory committee. The SIT provided input on a wide variety of issues ranging from safety and security to grade-level separation to color selection.

Skype sessions were conducted with students to build excitement for their return to the campus. Additionally, there was an on-site presence from the planning team at the school weekly.





*Before*



### **Project Timeline:**

December 2010 – Fire

February 2011 – Request for  
Proposals

April 2011 – Fanning  
Howey/Turner Team  
Selected

May 2011 – Schematic  
Drawings Completed

December 2011 –  
Construction Completed /  
Students Return to Takoma

## **Better than Before**

**Planning Process:** Originally, the Takoma Education Campus was built as an open school concept – with no walls separating classrooms and dismal lighting. The new design called for individual rooms and small flexible learning spaces that would cause less distraction in the students' learning environment.

A challenge was posed in building classrooms that would receive sufficient amounts of natural light. To solve this design issue, light wells were added to the design to ensure that natural light would brighten the school, thus drastically altering the learning environment that students were accustomed to.



# Exhibition of School Planning and Architecture Project Data

Submitting Firm :	Fanning Howey
Project Role	Architect
Project Contact	Ed Schmidt
Title	Project Executive
Address	210 North Lee Street, Suite 208
City, State or Province, Country	Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone	703.519.9822

Joint Partner Firm:	Bryant Mitchell
Project Role	Associate Architect
Project Contact	Melvin Mitchell
Title	Principal
Address	7826 Eastern Avenue, NW, Suite 409
City, State or Province, Country	Washington, DC 20012
Phone	202.545.1601

Other Firm:	
Project Role	
Project Contact	
Title	
Address	
City, State or Province, Country	
Phone	

Construction Firm:	Turner Construction
Project Role	Contractor
Project Contact	Pamela Murray Johnson
Title	Project Executive
Address	3865 Wilson Boulevard ,Suite 300
City, State or Province, Country	Arlington, VA
Phone	703-732-8514

# Exhibition of School Planning and Architecture

## Project Details

<b>Project Name</b>	Takoma Education Campus
<b>City</b>	Washington
<b>State</b>	DC
<b>District Name</b>	District of Columbia Public Schools
<b>Supt/President</b>	Kayla Henderson, Chancellor
<b>Occupancy Date</b>	December 2011
<b>Grades Housed</b>	PK-8
<b>Capacity(Students)</b>	450
<b>Site Size (acres)</b>	5.4
<b>Gross Area (sq. ft.)</b>	119,000
<b>Per Occupant(pupil)</b>	264
<b>gross/net please indicate</b>	
<b>Design and Build?</b>	Yes, Design-Build
<b>If yes, Total Cost:</b>	\$19,650,000
<b>Includes:</b>	Building, Site, FF&E Costs
<b>If no,</b>	
<b>Site Development:</b>	
<b>Building Construction:</b>	
<b>Fixed Equipment:</b>	
<b>Other:</b>	
<b>Total:</b>	\$19,650,000



# Supporting Images



# Supporting Images





# Supporting Images

"I'm really looking forward to being able say to people, inside and outside, this is a great place. It's got a great principal, it's got a welcoming attitude, and it's a state-of-the-art building. You have no reason to go anywhere else. Stay here with us."

~ Sarah Green, Advisory  
Neighborhood Commissioner



# Supporting Images





# Supplemental Files

Check out our tribute to Takoma Education Campus on [YouTube](#).

