



Alliance for Progress Charter School

Design for an engaging learning environment

Alliance for Progress Charter School (AFPCS), a community-based charter school located in North Philadelphia, PA strives to ensure the achievement and success of every student through a technologically rich and individualized learning environment. To improve the learning experience for K-5 students, Alliance acquired a site to build a new standalone school, consolidating programs from multiple buildings into one. The design vision was to create a classic style school with durable materials and aesthetics appropriate for an elementary school with highly functional space, flexibility and future growth.

NORR was engaged to design the new 4-story, 45,500 SF school which will house 450 students. The design inspiration reflects the context of the neighborhood featuring a playful masonry checkerboard pattern on the exterior two-floors with metal patterning above. On the interior, student spaces are connected to administrative spaces based on the specialized attention in the broader context of the school. The design incorporates 18 grade-level classrooms for special education, life skills, art, music and science. A Learning Resource Center Suite contains three small classrooms for up to six students each with a Counselor Office. A 2,300 square-foot, 150-seat cafeteria will also function as a multipurpose space for physical education classes. It features an auditorium with a movable stage.

The state-of-the-art facility provides an expanded reach of academic programs for K-5 students and supports AFPCS's mission to empower children to develop knowledge, skills and technological competence that will make them lifetime learners and achievers.

CLIENT	Alliance for Progress Charter School
PORTFOLIO	Education
CATEGORY	K - 12
SIZE	45,500 SF (4,227 SM)
LOCATION	Philadelphia, PA, US
DATE	August 2020
SERVICES	Architecture Interior Design MEP Engineering Structural Engineering

Education

It's an exciting time in education. Changing pedagogies, advancing technologies and evolving student expectations are influencing educational facility design. The places in which students interact, engage and learn must be hands-on, flexible and technologically advanced. From primary schools to higher education institutions, we carefully craft connections between students, faculty and staff to positively influence learning outcomes.

Good Design Enhances Learning

From early instruction to higher education, we consider the progression of the student experience; we know that good design enhances learning outcomes. Creating a stimulating environment can directly influence the development and pace of learning for students of any age. Students learn in many different ways, and we understand the importance of crafting a facility that is inclusive – a place where all students, faculty and staff can feel warm, welcome and equal.

Navigating Complexity

NORR recognizes that the spaces we create and the environments we shape have a profound impact on the people who use them. Our mission is to deliver distinctive, high-functioning, sustainable and cost effective design solutions that are unique to each client. We fulfill these goals and aspirations by engaging our

clients in a dynamic, inclusive and creative partnership with the design team throughout the planning and design process. Our design teams work collaboratively with all stakeholders to implement solutions that are effective, economical and environmentally responsible.

We implement systems and strategies guided by sustainability, durability, budget and common sense. We select building materials and systems that will perform over a significant life span while maintaining their intended appearance and efficiency. Our goal is to create an environment that meets and exceeds the client's functional, visual and fiscal requirements, while conveying the essence of the school's identity, values and culture.

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