



Project Name

Penn Alexander School

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



Co-Applicants

Dr. Amy Gutmann
President, University of Pennsylvania

Dr. William Hite
Superintendent, School District of Philadelphia



Penn
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA



December 9, 2014

Rudy Bruner Foundation
130 Prospect Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Rudy Bruner Award Selection Committee:

It is with great pride that we jointly submit this application for the Penn Alexander School for the 2015 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence. The partnership our organizations embarked upon with the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers to build a successful public school through a community planning process is a place-making effort that has transformed a neighborhood and is a model that others are striving to emulate in Philadelphia, New York, Baltimore and elsewhere.

We strongly believe, as did our predecessors, that public/private collaborations, of which the Penn Alexander School is an excellent exemplar, can result in social and economic benefits for the students and families most directly impacted as well as to the broader community. Educational excellence in an urban setting is an aspiration that is being fully realized at the Penn Alexander School. The rigorous academic program based on cutting-edge research, its extraordinary leadership team, world-class teachers, and deeply engaged home and school association are a few of the elements that have allowed the children in the school to realize their fullest potential. Situated on a beautiful site that includes green spaces and reclaimed sites, the Penn Alexander School continues to be a place where collaboration and community mark the work of the individuals and institutions who contribute to its success.

We greatly appreciate the opportunity to have the Penn Alexander School considered for the 2015 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy Gutmann".

Amy Gutmann
President
University of Pennsylvania

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William R. Hite, Jr.".

William R. Hite, Jr.
Superintendent
School District of Philadelphia

PROJECT DATA

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------|-------|-----------|
| Project Name | Penn Alexander | Location | City | Philadelphia | State | PA |
| Owner | School District of Philadelphia | | | | | |
| Project Use(s) | K-8 public school & greenspace | Project website: | http://www.aosarchitects.com/portfolio-type/project.aspx?cid=18&id=97 | | | |
| Project Size | 85,000 sq ft on a 5 acre site | Total Development Cost | \$24,300,000 | | | |
| Annual Operating Budget (if appropriate) | \$2,900,000 | | | | | |
| Date Initiated | 1998 | Percent Completed by December 1, 2014 | 100% | | | |
| Project Completion Date (if appropriate) | September 2002 | | Project Website (if appropriate) | see above | | |

Attach, if you wish, a list of relevant project dates

Application submitted by:

| | | | | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Name | Ann Kreidle | Title | on behalf of Amy Gutmann, UPenn President and William Hite, SDP Supt. | | | |
| Organization | University of Pennsylvania | | | | | |
| Address | 4209 Spruce Street | City/State/Zip | Philadelphia, PA 19104 | | | |
| Telephone | (215) 823-5465 OPTION 3 | Fax | (215) 382-2031 | | | |
| E-mail | kreidlea@gse.upenn.edu | Website (if appropriate) | http://webgui.phila.k12.pa.us/schools/p/penn-alexander | | | |

Perspective Sheets:

| Organization | Name | E-mail | |
|-------------------------|--|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Public Agencies | School District of Philadelphia | William Hite | hite@philasd.org |
| Architect/Designer | Atkin Olshin Schade | Lisa Dustin | ldustin@aosarchitects.com |
| Developer | University of Pennsylvania | Paul Sehnert | sehnert@pobox.upenn.com |
| Professional Consultant | The Community Builders | Bart Mitchell | kcatania@tcbinc.org |
| Community Group | Spruce Hill Civic Association | Barry Grossbach | b.grossbach@gmail.com |
| Other | University of Pennsylvania | Amy Gutmann | president@upenn.edu |
| U3 Advisors | | Omar Blaik | blaik@u3advisors.com |
| | Philadelphia Federation of Teachers | Jerry Jordan | jjordan@pft.org |
| | City of Philadelphia Water Commissioner | Howard Neukrug | howard.neukrug@phila.gov |
| | Landscape Architect | Sue Weiler | sweiler@theolinstudio.com |

Please indicate how you learned of the *Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence*. (Check all that apply).

| | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Direct Mailing | <input type="checkbox"/> Direct Email | <input type="checkbox"/> Previous Selection Committee member | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Online Notice | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Previous RBA entrant | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Organization | _____ |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media | <input type="checkbox"/> Bruner/Loeb Forum | |

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| | | | |
|-----------|-------|------|-------|
| Signature | _____ | Date | _____ |
|-----------|-------|------|-------|

PROJECT AT-A-GLANCE

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This sheet, the Project Data sheet, and the representative photo will be sent to the Committee in advance as the *Project Overview*.

Penn Alexander School
Project Name

Address 4209 Spruce Street City/State/ZIP Philadelphia, PA 19104

1. Give a brief overview of the project. Approximately 500 words.

Knowing quality public education is critical to the economic stability and social well-being of an urban neighborhood, in 1998 the University of Pennsylvania joined forces with the School District of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers to build a state-of-the-art public elementary school surrounded by an urban arboretum, just west of Penn's campus in an area of West Philadelphia that had suffered from significant disinvestment and crime. The Penn Alexander School (PAS) was one of five components of a comprehensive community revival plan, the West Philadelphia Initiatives, in which a major private institution spearheaded a revitalization effort in collaboration with its neighbors, rather than build a fortress around the university campus. As a result of an extensive community planning process and significant contributions to the project from all partners, this pioneering partnership has transformed its urban neighborhood, bringing vitality, urban education excellence, green space, young families, and major economic investment to West Philadelphia.

The 85,000-square-foot school is located on the site of the former Philadelphia Divinity School, comprised of landmark historical buildings on a distressed five-acre plot that contained many 'centennial' trees. An extensive community planning process not only led to the creation of an excellent public school, but to the development and conservation of the site as a neighborhood amenity. By placing the new building in the center of the five-acre site and removing an existing parking lot, large areas were preserved for playgrounds, playfields and outdoor recreation, and a wetlands garden (part of the storm water collection system for the site). All of these areas are used by the community during non-school hours.

A glass facade on the building provides a warm and welcoming entrance for students to a sun-drenched atrium surrounded by 24 light-filled classrooms arranged for flexible groupings of students based on grade and subject. The interior arrangement of learning spaces fosters a community within the school. The building steps down the sloping site, resulting in a multi-level complex that connects the school directly to the landscape and the community, which serves as an important context for learning and engagement with neighbors.

Today, PAS serves over 500 students in grades Kindergarten-8. They reflect the rich ethnic, economic and linguistic diversity of the neighborhood. It is a top performing public school. Learning First Alliance calls PAS an "exemplar" for Philadelphia public schools and Philadelphia Great Schools gave the school a score of 10 out of 10. The building was awarded an AIA award. The storm water management system is recognized as a best practice for cities. The community has become a desirable place to live, with new and eclectic shops and restaurants, renovated Victorian homes, and even a dirt factory. Eighty-two percent of construction in the Philadelphia region is occurring in University City (the section of West Philadelphia in which PAS is located). The success of the partnership to create a high quality school for neighborhood revitalization has spawned a similar project by Drexel University in the adjoining community of Powelton as well as efforts led by Johns Hopkins in East Baltimore and Teachers College in New York City.

2. Why does the project merit the *Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence*? (You may wish to consider such factors as: effect on the urban environment; innovative or unique approaches to any aspect of project development; new and creative approaches to urban issues; design quality.) Approximately 500 words.

The Penn Alexander School merits the Rudy Bruner award for its innovative development process, building and site design, and community impact.

PAS represents a sea change in the ways in which large institutions typically work (or don't work) with their communities. In the mid 1990s, the West Philadelphia neighborhood was marked by high crime rates, abandoned buildings and few amenities. In response to a rash of violent crimes against University affiliates, student applications dropped, and University faculty and staff moved to other parts of the city. In this context, Penn made a bold commitment to revitalize the neighborhood for the benefit of all. Penn's then-president, Judith Rodin, reached out to the School District of Philadelphia which was experiencing overcrowding and poor academic performance in its West Philadelphia schools. Penn proposed to create a new neighborhood elementary school to ground the revitalization effort. The University also enlisted the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers, which had a difficult relationship with the School District, but whose cooperation would be key to designing the innovative educational program Penn envisioned. A Memorandum of Understanding, outlining each partner's role, provided a conceptual framework for institutional collaboration.

Senior officials from each institution formed an oversight committee to guide an extensive community planning process that would ensure the new school was truly of and for the community. Over 90 community members joined three committees (Educational Program, Building and Site Design, Community Services) and spent nine months planning the school, over a meal, in a conference room at the former Divinity School. They discussed research articles, visited schools, and heard presentations by architects and educators (which were videotaped and made available to community members who could not attend). Numerous public meetings were held in people's homes and church halls to update the community and solicit input.

The building and site design, with its focus on natural light, interior clusters with "porches," and its urban arboretum setting, reflect the place-making values of the community.

The school created the fertile ground needed to transform the community into one of the most sought-after residential areas of the city. Families now flock to the area because the educational program at PAS has been recognized as one of the strongest in the city. Graduating students are recruited to the most selective high schools in Philadelphia and its surrounding suburbs. Reinvestment in housing, an array of businesses, and community greenspace have replaced the dark and abandoned streets.

2015
RUDY BRUNER AWARD
PROJECT DESCRIPTION



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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1. Describe the underlying values and goals of the project. What, if any, significant trade-offs were required to implement the project? Approximately 500 words.

When conditions in West Philadelphia hit rock bottom, Penn faced a watershed moment. It could have built a fortress to protect its students and employees and left the community to flounder. Instead, Penn elected a bold path of establishing the West Philadelphia Initiatives to stabilize the neighborhood as a vibrant residential community. Penn understood that economic development and housing initiatives alone wouldn't do, so it chose to forge an unprecedented partnership with the school district, teachers' union and neighborhood associations to create an excellent public school, open to all children in the community, that would anchor a sustainable residential community for the benefit of all. The University insisted that the school be a traditional public school and that there be no special provisions for children of Penn faculty. It was truly intended to be a neighborhood school. In fact, Penn affiliates with families represented only a fraction of neighborhood residents. Today just 30% of the students at PAS have parents that work or study at Penn.

Each of the cooperating institutions took significant risks and made concessions in order to realize the goals of the project. For example, the School District agreed that PAS could choose its own curriculum, and, for the first time, the District and the union agreed to allow a school to select its principal and teachers by committee rather than through the seniority system in place at the time. The Philadelphia Federation of Teachers also agreed to an expedited review process to terminate PAS teachers who were not a good fit for the school. Penn declined to include its campus in the school's catchment area, to the frustration of some faculty who lived in campus housing, but critical to keep the focus on the nearby residential neighborhood.

Additionally, the University's Board of Trustees agreed to contribute \$700,000 per year for 10 years as an operating subsidy for PAS, to reduce class size and enhance the curriculum. The Trustees further agreed to the community's request that the University invest in a nearby failing public school, whose families feared that Penn would redirect all its outreach efforts to the new school. These commitments have been strengthened and expanded in recent years to include several schools in West Philadelphia.

As perhaps the strongest reflection of its values, Penn secured funding for a community-based planning process, which complicated the project but was essential for assuring the school's commitment to the community.

2. Briefly describe the project's urban context. How has the project impacted the local community? Who does the project serve? How many people are served by the project? Approximately 500 words.

PAS is located in University City, a 2.4-square mile residential area of West Philadelphia with a population of 48,589. University City is known for having one of the most diverse mixes of ethnicities, races, religions, socio-economic and education levels in the city. Housing stock in the neighborhood is also diverse, with large Victorian houses, row homes, apartment buildings, multi-family houses, and subsidized transitional and Section 8 housing. The neighborhood is in walking distance to the University of Pennsylvania, multiple Farmer's Markets, Clark Park, a movie theater and full service grocery store (both built by developers through the West Philadelphia Initiatives), a plethora of new restaurant and retail options, and multiple forms of public transportation.

This area was not always so desirable. In 1996, there were 1,584 crimes reported; in 2011, with an expanded reporting area, there were 885 -- mostly theft -- crimes reported. Due to the alarming state of the neighborhood, by 1996 applications to Penn were in decline. In 2003, as the neighborhood began to change, 18,827 students applied, and the numbers have continued to grow, to 31,282 in 2013. In 1996, there were no viable public school options that gave families reason to stay in the neighborhood once their children reached school age. This situation created an overpopulation of transient students in the neighborhood's multi-family dwellings and apartments.

Today, PAS not only serves the 550 children who attend the school, but its presence has positively impacted the lives of community members around it. Between 2000-2014, (since the school was built), about 1,500 people have moved into this area, and the percentage of family households has increased from 17.8% to 27.0%. Home values have soared from \$78,500 in 1996 to an average today of \$300,000, and sellers can get a premium for houses in the PAS catchment area. The streets are active with parents pushing strollers or watching their children play on the PAS green space or at Clark Park. One can see older children grabbing a bite at local restaurants like Bobby Flay's Burger Palace or Honest Tom's Taco House on their way to after-school classes at the University City Arts League. Neighborhood adults might be found heading to and from work, or gathering for Sunday brunch at Local 44 bistro. University City has become one of the hottest neighborhoods in Philadelphia.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION (CONT'D)

3. Describe the key elements of the development process, including community participation where appropriate. Approximately 400 words.

The development process started in 1996 when Penn approached the School District of Philadelphia about building a new elementary school close to campus. Penn then opened discussions with the teacher's union, which was eager for an opportunity for teachers to help plan a school. The parties spent more than a year negotiating what became the Memorandum of Understanding outlining the project goals and each partner's responsibilities.

To realize its vision for a collaborative community process, three committees were formed with participation by more than 90 stakeholders - teachers, parents, architects, landscape architects, social service providers, University faculty and community leaders. The committees made recommendations on the design of each component of the project - building and grounds, school program and community uses. The committees met weekly for nearly a year, usually over dinner in the abandoned chapel on site. The committees took road trips to visit communities with new schools in Boston and New York, read about successful urban schools and invited local and national experts to share their experiences.

Finding a location for a new school in a densely populated urban area can be challenging. Penn offered a 4.3-acre site it owned, just west of campus in the heart of the Spruce Hill neighborhood. The site housed a defunct divinity school, temporary buildings from the early 20th century that had become permanent, a daycare center and a distressed green space. Three architecture firms presented their ideas at community meetings.

The organizers videotaped these presentations and held "blockbuster movie nights with popcorn" for those in the community at large to give input on the design of what would be a large new building in their neighborhood. Atkin Olshin Lawson-Bell (now Atkin Olshin Schade) Architects was selected for a design that included abundant natural light and reclaimed much needed green space. Penn took the lead in developing agreements with the City and State for a nontraditional design and construction project led by a private university for a public school district. The school opened in temporary quarters in 2001, moved into its new building in 2002 and completed a phase-in of all grades in 2004.

4. Describe the financing of the project. Please include all funding sources and square foot costs where applicable. Approximately 400 words.

Construction of PAS was financed through an unprecedented Turnkey Agreement between the School District of Philadelphia and the University of Pennsylvania. Penn served as the private developer in the construction of the school. The negotiated price for the 85,000-square-foot building in the Turnkey Agreement was \$24 million or \$285 a square foot.

Penn also provided the 5-acre site on the western edge of the campus through a long-term ground lease for \$1 a year. Penn secured the project's financing primarily through their realty holding company, which issued a bond for \$20.4 million to fund the construction. Bonds were paid off by proceeds of the sale of the building to the School District per the Turnkey Agreement.

Important upgrades to the school and grounds were funded directly by the University, or through philanthropic sources such as Aramark, Commerce Bank, Samuel Schwab, Helen D. Groome Beatty Trust-Mellon Charitable Giving, Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, State Street Corporation, PA Department of Environmental Protection Growing Greener Program, and The Pew Charitable Trusts. Penn played a principal role in coordinating the refinement and execution of the many legal agreements between the various parties including with the School District of Philadelphia, the CM/GC agreement with Turner Construction, and the bond underwriting.

5. Is the project unique and/or does it address significant urban issues? Is the model adaptable to other urban settings? Approximately 400 words.

PAS is the first neighborhood public school to result from a collaboration of a private university, public school district and teachers' union. Often universities have opened charter and lab schools in which they are able to select the students and bypass the bureaucracy and constraints of school districts and teachers' unions. As it was conceived, PAS has demonstrated that public and private sectors can work together to achieve great schools within the normal structures of public education. With more than 90% of U.S. children enrolled in traditional public schools, Penn wanted to be part of the system. In that respect, PAS is adaptable to other settings. One goal of the PAS project was to develop a model so that other universities could follow a similar course in addressing significant issues of urban revitalization and quality education.

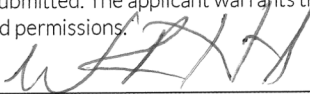
Today, several other universities are replicating the Penn Alexander model. Drexel University in Philadelphia is partnering with the School District of Philadelphia to merge two District schools - Powel and Science Leadership Academy - into a new K-8 neighborhood school that the university will assist with financial and human resources. Johns Hopkins University has opened a new school in the distressed community of East Baltimore. Teachers College, Columbia University opened its Teachers College Community School in Harlem, as a replication of Penn Alexander, in an area where Columbia University is expanding its footprint and delivering a similar array of community benefits. It is a testament to the power of the Penn Alexander model that cities and universities across the country visit the school on a regular basis to learn more about creating similar projects in their communities.

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by staff representative(s) of public agency(ies) who were directly involved in the financing, design review, or public approvals that affected this project.

| | | | |
|--------------|---------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Name | William Hite | Title | Superintendent |
| Organization | School District of Philadelphia | Telephone | (215) 400-4100 |
| Address | 440 N. Broad Street | City/State/ZIP | Philadelphia, PA 19130 |
| Fax | (215) 400-4101 | E-mail | hite@philasd.org |

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| | | | |
|-----------|---|------|--|
| Signature |  | Date | |
|-----------|---|------|--|

1. What role did your agency play in the development of this project? Describe any requirements made of this project by your agency (e.g., zoning, public participation, public benefits, impact statements). Approximately 400 words.

The School District of Philadelphia served as a joint partner with the University of Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers to design, create, build and operate a district school in West Philadelphia. West Philadelphia was not served well by its schools. They were overcrowded and in academic distress. Then Superintendent David Horneck assigned its chief of staff to lead the initiative for the district. Since this was a new type of partnership – university, school district and teachers union, it took several months to negotiate the terms of partnership. The result was an Memorandum of Understanding outlining the vision of the project and each party's responsibilities.

The District, Penn and PFT formed a coordinating committee of senior leadership and each institution assigned staff to co-lead the planning of three community-based committees that would develop the vision for the educational program, community program, and building and grounds. There were planning meetings for approximately one year before the final design was approved and ground broken. Simultaneously Penn and the District negotiated a turnkey agreement for the design and construction of the building and land lease.

The Board of Education took responsible for drawing the boundaries for the attendance area for the school. Rather than announce a decision, the board created criteria for determining the boundary. The process was very open, even the format of the hearing room was changed into a hollow square to allow for discussion. Penn made the necessary land for the project available to the School District through a long term ground lease at nominal cost. The school opened in 2001 with phase-in of grades over several years, enabled the school to build a strong culture of academic excellence.

2. How was this project intended to benefit your city? What trade-offs and compromises were required to implement the project? How did your agency participate in making them? Approximately 400 words.

The project goals were to demonstrate that urban neighborhood schools can be successful; to demonstrate best-practices in education; to relieve overcrowding in area schools and to show the added-value of school district-university-teacher union partnerships.

At the time, the trade-off required was to put public trust in a private university to follow through on the agreement. While the agreement detailed the terms, SDP had never partnered with Penn to build a school. It was an incredible opportunity that came at enormous risk for a public institution. It was also prior to the concept of universities serving as anchor institutions in cities. A compromise we made was to allow for a unique building project at a time when were trying to standardize our systems. We also had to navigate the concern that one community was receiving something that we couldn't give to every neighborhood. These were difficult discussions but the constant communication amongst the partners was the trust needed to pull off the project.

PUBLIC AGENCY PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. Describe the project's impact on your city. Please be as specific as possible. Approximately 400 words.

From the district's perspective, the greatest impact of this project is the addition of 560 high-performing seats to our district. Year after year, the school sends nearly all of its 8th grade students on to selective high schools. The first class of Kindergarten students are now freshman in college, many at top tier schools. The school has demonstrated that a neighborhood school reflective of a diverse socioeconomic community can be successful. Best-practices at the school are implemented district wide (e.g., site selection of teachers, flexibility in curriculum).

In addition, the school has restored trust that private universities can be good neighbors and critical partners in the battle to combat urban education crisis we face in Philadelphia. As a result of our success with this project, we are now partnering with Drexel University to open a similar school in the adjoining neighborhood.

Overall, this project has demonstrated to a city facing severe academic performance levels of its youth while it battles a financial crisis can join forces with an unlikely partner to bring about change that will have a lasting impact.

4. Did this project result in new models of public/private partnerships? Are there aspects of this project that would be instructive to agencies like yours in other cities? Approximately 400 words.

Without a doubt, the project resulted in a new model of public-private partnership – both in terms of capital projects as well as academic design of a school. The university-district partnership is now a model nationwide with Teachers College and Johns Hopkins opening the most recent schools. We also have just completed an agreement with Drexel University in Philadelphia to do a similar project in Philadelphia. Having the MOU was critical to the partnership and is regularly shared with other cities and researchers.

There are several aspects of this project that are instructive to other cities looking for strategies for urban school reform, including the Turnkey agreement, the Memo of Understanding, the community planning process, storm water management system and programmatic practices such as enrollment/grade phase-in, site selection of teachers and principals and curriculum flexibility.

5. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project? Approximately 400 words.

The most successful is the outstanding educational program that the school, under the leadership of a strong administrator, is providing for neighborhood children. The success of the school would not have been possible without the generous partnership with Penn. In addition to the MOU, Penn provides \$1330 per student to reduce class size and to supplement the academic program. That funding was originally for 10 years, but was recently renewed for another 10 years and included additional funding to provide for more students. The partnership led to a state-funded agreement to support the improvement of two schools near PAS. Community-involvement throughout the entire process of designing and implementing the school has created community ownership over the school. As a result, the community handles many of the projects that we can't fund. Even simple things like neighbors helping to pick up trash around the school, keeping a watchful eye on the building, and informing the school when "children are being children" can make a big difference. As mentioned above the success of the partnership has also led to another agreement in the City with another private university. There is nothing that we consider unsuccessful about this project. While the school cannot provide enough (seats) for all of the families wishing to attend, we see that as opportunity to increase enrollment at our other schools, of which many are significantly under-enrolled and fear closure.

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by a design professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, or other services. Copies may be given to other design professionals if desired.

| | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Name | Lisa Dustin | Title | Associate |
| Organization | Atkin Olshin Schade Architects | Telephone | (215) 925-7812 |
| Address | 125 South Ninth Street, Suite 900 | City/State/ZIP | Philadelphia, PA 19107 |
| Fax | (215) 9251594 | E-mail | ldustin@aosarchitects.com |

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Signature _____ Date _____

1. Describe the design concept of this project, including urban design considerations, choice of materials, scale, etc. Approximately 400 words.

The Penn Alexander School and its grounds are conceived as a diverse "neighborhood for learning" that emphasizes academic and social connections to the surrounding community. PAS occupies a five-acre city block in West Philadelphia, a 19th century urban, residential neighborhood, two blocks from the western edge of Penn's campus. A cluster of Neo-Gothic buildings designed by Milton Medary in 1928 for the Philadelphia Divinity School, and now occupied by a vibrant preschool and daycare facility, anchors one corner of the site and provides context for the siting, massing and scale for the school building. After many alternatives were studied, the new, 85,000 sf building was sited in the center of the property to allow for the creative use of the existing structures and to preserve a large number of specimen centennial shade trees. Much of the existing green space was preserved for playgrounds, playing fields and a wetlands garden.

The building steps down a sloping site, resulting in a multi-level complex that connects the School directly to the landscape and to the surrounding community, which serves as an important context for learning. The ensemble of new and old buildings creates an "alley" lined with native Tulip Poplars that reconnects the north & south streets of the historic Saint Marks Square. To the south, Victorian rowhouses provide a visual backdrop to a grassy amphitheater that serves as an outdoor classroom and home to annual School gatherings. The rain garden and other innovative stormwater collection strategies were incorporated to control runoff from the site, but also to provide hands on educational opportunities to teach students and the community about stormwater management and how it relates to the health of waterways.

The building's exterior materials include earth tone brick alternating with metal panels and glass. The brick was selected to be compatible with the stone of the existing buildings on the site and the metal panels reflect the sky and surrounding greenery. Large, operable windows with exterior shading devices, combined with skylights in the atrium, bring natural light the building's interior. A glass curtain wall serves as a welcoming front entrance to the School and provides a visual connection back to the historic stone buildings.

The interior arrangement of the learning spaces provides the basis for a community within; a 3-story atrium serves as the heart of the school and connects learning spaces for all ages.

2. Describe the most important social and programmatic functions of the design. Approximately 400 words.

The building was designed to express the School as a community, and to provide an open, sunny and optimistic environment for the children's development. The program and design of major spaces and spatial relationships were developed with substantial input from Penn's Graduate School of Education, local teachers and the community, and reflect the planning committees' recommendations for the vision for the School.

A three-story central atrium serves as the School's physical and programmatic center and provides open circulation, visibility, and seating areas and spaces for large and small gatherings. The building includes flexible classroom spaces and facilities for art, science and music, along with a gymnasium, cafeteria, library and administrative offices; rooms are arranged and outfitted for community use and for educational and recreational programs.

Learning is made visible in the building's open spaces, and older and younger students have visual contact throughout the day across the atrium and open staircases. Classrooms are clustered by grade level, each with its own flexible common space, adjacent to or overlooking the atrium. Multiple clusters of three classrooms, each with a 'front porch,' allow students to work independently or in small groups; sliding walls let teachers divide or combine classes as desired to support specific programs and activities. Classrooms are light filled and have small bay spaces with generous corner windows, providing opportunities for small group instruction.

The arrangement of and relationship among classrooms also reflected the school's function as a demonstration facility for the School District of Philadelphia and emphasized academic connections and support from the surrounding community. The location of the large gathering areas – atrium, gym, lunchroom and library enable the School to use these spaces for large events that also build community.

ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. Describe the major challenges of designing this project and any design trade-offs or compromises required to complete the project. Approximately 400 words.

The major challenge of this project was to successfully build consensus among a large and diverse constituency. As a public school and a neighborhood facility, this project needed to incorporate the desires and aspirations of many diverse organizations and individuals. In addition to the University of Pennsylvania and the School District of Philadelphia, other groups invested in the project included the Spruce Hill Civic Association, several afterschool programs, and the Site & Design Committee comprised of many stakeholders. In addition, as a Philadelphia School District facility, the building was required to comply with stringent design and construction standards established by the School District. To provide a means for all voices to be heard, many public meetings, question and answer sessions and presentations were held to foster interaction with every segment of the surrounding community. There were also open forums, each attended by more than 200 people, where the entire community was invited to see and respond to design issues. Community concerns such as traffic, child safety, use of school facilities, aesthetic impact on the neighborhood, and the development of recreation facilities were some of the concerns voiced by meeting participants. Open interaction among the design team, the project developers, and the community created a methodology for all concerns to be carefully and thoughtfully addressed, and for productive ideas to be incorporated into the building design process.

Although time consuming and occasionally controversial, the community involvement process to design the School ultimately proved to be tremendously successful, greatly assisted the process, and led to an overwhelmingly positive reception of the school by the neighborhood community it was designed to serve. Budget and space constraints drove a compromise in scope. The original concept was to create a campus that incorporated historic buildings with new facilities for a School District pre-school, a professional development center, and community education facilities. The final design resulted in one new building, partial reuse of the existing stone buildings and enhancement and expansion of neighborhood greenspace. Three trade-offs were made that ultimately proved beneficial: a popular university-owned daycare center housed in a low rise existing building was relocated to a new facility on campus; the former onsite Penn parking lot that was used by neighbors and community groups after hours was reclaimed for greenspace and additional greenspace was made available by providing teacher parking at nearby Penn lot.

4. Describe the ways in which the design relates to its urban context. Approximately 400 words.

A primary priority in the design of the Penn Alexander School was the development and conservation of the site, the school's relationship to existing buildings on the site, and its neighborhood context. After many alternatives were studied, tested, and discussed with the project's many constituents, a location for the new building was chosen which allowed for the creative reuse of the existing structures, saved most of the existing specimen trees, and retained as much green space as possible for the school and community. The new building was placed in the center of the site, and linked to the existing buildings with a new courtyard, adjacent to the main entrance. A new, tree-lined, north-south walkway through the site was created, linking the major east-west streets to the entrance courtyard. The building height takes advantage of site's significant slope. The building's larger scale spaces, the gymnasium and cafeteria, are positioned near the commercial edge of the site, allowing the smaller scale classrooms and glass entrance to be near the residential section of the site.

Through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, an existing parking lot on the south side of the site was replaced with a storm water management system featuring a playing field, a small retention pond developed as a wetlands outdoor study area with space for outdoor classes and student projects and a porous surface playspace on top of a subsurface infiltration bed. The sustainable stormwater management elements are used by the School to teach students about the relationship between storm water, water quality and other related urban environmental issues. Remaining areas of the site were developed for playgrounds and other outdoor recreation and learning, intended for use by students and neighborhood residents, alike. The new building steps down the sloping site, resulting in a multi-level complex with direct access and views to the landscape on all sides. Circulation through the building follows the sloping terrain, allowing for an enhanced pedestrian experience.

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This sheet is to be filled out by the person who took primary responsibility for project financing or is a representative of the group which did.

| | | | |
|--------------|---|----------------|------------------------------------|
| Name | Paul Sehnert | Title | Director of Development Management |
| Organization | UPenn Facilities and Real Estate Services (Penn FRES) | Telephone | (215) 573-6845 |
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|-----------|-----------------------|--|------|-------------------|
| Signature | ? Paul Sehnert | <small>Digitally signed by Paul Sehnert, DN: cn=Paul Sehnert, o=UPenn FRES, ou=UPenn FRES, email=sehnert@upenn.com, date=2014.11.10 14:10:25 -0500</small> | Date | November 10, 2014 |
|-----------|-----------------------|--|------|-------------------|

1. What role did you or your company play in the development of this project? Describe the scope of involvement. Approximately 400 words.

The University of Pennsylvania's Division of Facilities and Real Estate Services (FRES) acted as a private developer for the design, implementation and completion of the construction of the Penn Alexander School under the terms of a Turnkey Development Agreement with a agreed upon value for the sale of the property to the School District of Philadelphia (SDP). Although Penn had a long history of working with District, Penn Alexander represented Penn's first Turnkey Agreement with the District. Penn FRES was responsible for any cost or delays resulting from the design and construction process. With these roles, Penn had a material interest in the successful completion of the project. Important upgrades to the school and grounds (e.g., glass windows, three-story light-filled atrium, high-grade carpet, siting of the building to preserve historic trees) that were added to the project between the initial agreement and the final turnover of the property were funded directly by the University and philanthropic sources. To facilitate this aggregation and distribution funds, Penn FRES acted as project treasurer for both the sources and uses of funds. As a division of the University, Penn FRES also had an important fiduciary role in management of the project, including subsequent phases. Penn FRES is responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the grounds in accordance with a negotiated Operating Agreement with the School District. Penn FRES stepped into this role in order to address community concerns who felt that the standards for maintenance of the site would be lessened if conventional school district approaches and resources were used. Penn FRES coordinated the refinement and execution of the many legal agreements between the various parties such as with the SDP, the CM/GC agreement with the builder, Turner Construction, and the bond underwriting, including the long-term ground lease, the Turnkey Development Agreement and the Operating Agreement.

2. What trade-offs or compromises were required during the development of the project? Approximately 400 words.

The development of Penn Alexander School represented the involvement and vision of multiple stakeholders. As in any major capital project, there were trade-offs between the expectations of the various participants and project costs. Given the preset \$24.3M value for the Turnkey Development agreement, there were many scope reductions and value engineering decisions that were made to align scope with the budget. The project had many elements, including the renovation of the former historic Divinity School for the Parent Infant Center (an independent day care) and the classrooms and related K-8 school program areas that were to be located in the renovated former Divinity School Building. We had to prioritize funding to address the key elements of the school project (e.g., the day lighted atrium, the open corridors and the overall quality of the building and grounds) but over time, we have been able to address the other project elements, such as renovation and expansion of the adjacent private daycare center - Parent Infant Center.

A key compromise Penn made was to absorb certain cost overruns in the interest of completing the project to the satisfaction of the many constituencies. As an example, Penn's made a contribution to renovate the Spruce House a small building on the site at 43rd and Spruce to accommodate two Head Start classrooms for 36 low-income students. Schedule drove other additional costs. As an example of this trade off the Divinity School library space had to be renovated as temp space so that the school could open as promised.

The turnkey model enabled an innovative design process not typically used in public school construction and the first of its kind in Philadelphia, but one which attracted responses from a broad range of architects and included significant community input in architect selection; and thus, a completed project of superior design quality.

DEVELOPER PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. How was the project financed? What, if any, innovative means of financing were used? Approximately 400 words.

The project drew on multiple sources of funding to finance the construction and operation of the school. Penn UCA, a realty holding company subsidiary of the University, was the Obligor of a tax exempt General Obligation bond issue to finance the construction. Bonds would be paid off by proceeds of the sale of the building to the School District of Philadelphia, per the Turnkey agreement. Other funds were from University sources and together with donations from private funders such as Aramark, Samuel Schwab, PA Department of Environmental Protection Growing Greener Program) upgrades were made to the basic program. Penn's Long term ground lease with the SDP also was a form of innovative finance, since the effect of the nominal cost ground lease is to eliminate the significant price of the land to the SDP.

4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of the project? Approximately 400 words.

Clearly the most successful and significant outcome of the project is the quality of the education that West Philadelphia children receive at this public school. The state-of-the-art facility and grounds significantly contributes to this impact. Equally important is the community revival that has resulted from the excellent educational experience combined with a building and grounds that are attractive and efficient and encourages shared use by all in the community - the school, community and University partners and researchers.

The quality of the design won an AIA award in part for the innovations, including a lot of daylight in the interiors, upgraded finishes throughout, a central atrium and other innovative use of common space, which combines to generate an overall excellent day to day experience for students and staff.

The site design includes a number of environmentally friendly elements, including a best practices urban stormwater management system with a rain garden of native plants and porous pavement surface play area. The exterior grounds were planned and partially built and landscaped with donated materials and labor through the City Year Program.

At the time, the least successful outcome is the funding shortfall which led to the reduction and elimination of certain Phase II enhancements, classrooms and supporting facilities for teacher training in the former Divinity School building. Since the project completion, we have been able to fund the teacher training site and the location of the other enhancements has been needed for expansion of a private daycare center.

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This sheet is to be filled out by a professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, legal, or other services. Copies may be given to other professionals if desired.

| | | | |
|--------------|----------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Name | Bart Mitchell | Title | President and CEO |
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| Signature |  | Date | 11/24/14 |
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1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project? Approximately 400 words.

The Community Builders (TCB) developed an ambitious neighborhood strategy for Penn that would stem the decline in the adjacent West Philadelphia neighborhood and the most challenging element of the strategy was the call for a new high quality public elementary school to keep and draw and sustain diverse families. We then led the early efforts to get the new reform administration of Superintendent David Hornbeck amenable to the notion. What followed was a multi-year negotiation between Penn, the district and the teachers' union and often overlapping community process involving physical planning for the facility and grounds. TCB worked on all dimensions of the effort with Penn personnel, even hiring an executive educator on our staff to help frame proposed standards for the critical three party MOU that enabled Penn to have confidence the school would be run in a way that could assure its success. We also staffed and helped manage the construction process, a "turnkey-like" arrangement unlike normal school district construction processes. This was all done in an intense day to day collaboration with senior Penn personnel and Penn President Rodin herself, who was intensely involved throughout the extraordinary complex and difficult process.

2. Describe the project's impact on its community. Please be as specific as possible. Approximately 400 words.

The quality of the design of the Penn Alexander School and its grounds, the quality of the space enabling the school to create a wonderful educational experience when combined with a unique management agreement that assured quality, with a major Penn financial contribution supporting a larger per student investment and with Penn Graduate School of Education professional support enabled the school to be extraordinarily successful as a public school in a still very challenged large public school district. Notably home values within the school catchment area increased substantially since the school's opening. The West Philadelphia area has seen a boon in construction, new shops, new restaurants and increased employment opportunities for all.

The larger context for this urban place, however, is its role as the centerpiece of the transformative and multi-dimensional West Philadelphia Initiatives, the name Penn gave to the strategy that evolved from the first version we developed for them years ago and which they implemented over more than a decade. The Penn Alexander School is an extraordinary place at the center of one of the most dramatic neighborhood transformations in late 20th Century United States - an extraordinary (too extraordinary!) coming together of vision, civic leadership, enlightened self-interest and public private collaboration.

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. How might this project be instructive to others in your profession? Approximately 400 words.

As a centerpiece of the West Philadelphia Initiatives, the Penn Alexander School conveys a lesson of hope to those of us engaged in the often fragmented and always resource constrained revitalization of struggling neighborhoods in urban America. Hope that with disciplined attention to the multiple dimensions of neighborhood life - from schools to jobs to stores to safety to attractive streets and parks and more and with political will and resources, neighborhoods - and particularly the struggling families that call them home - can see a better future. Hope too that the Penn story can enable us to draw the "eds and meds" so central to the fate of struggling urban neighborhoods into the kind of enlightened self-interest engagement that can help us achieve the civic leadership, hence political will, hence resources to make this closer to commonplace than so unusual.

4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project? Approximately 400 words.

The most successful aspect of the Penn Alexander School is that it's so much more than a great urban place - its a great urban place that is home to a dynamic educational life and its a great urban place that's central to an exemplary and dynamic neighborhood transformation.

The least successful aspect of it, is that was way, way too hard....And still is way too much the exception in its representing a politically complex decade long transformational success.


COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Name | Barry Grossbach | Title | Former President |
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1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play? Approximately 400 words.

The site for the development of the Penn/Alexander School (PAS) rests directly in the middle of Spruce Hill, a neighborhood community represented by a community association of which I was president and zoning committee chair at the time of the school's development. The lead partners - Penn and School District of Philadelphia created a community planning process comprised of three committees. As the president and zoning committee chair for the civic association, I was asked to serve on the Facilities Site Committee which had the responsibility of assessing potential architectural submissions and site development plans and, therefore, determining what the physical and educational dimensions of the school would be once the project was completed.

The committee had representatives from the key stakeholders--the University of Pennsylvania, the School District of Philadelphia, and immediate neighbors and community representatives. All shared equally in the decision making responsibility and the committee operated with remarkable consensus in selecting the architectural firm and signing off on the physical and educational development of the site. This represented an unprecedented shift in the ways in which the University and the School District worked with our community.

2. From the community's point of view, what were the major issues concerning this project? Approximately 400 words.

Spruce Hill had long championed the development of a quality public school in its community. Neighboring communities could claim a public school within its boundaries, but Spruce Hill was not one of them. Not only did we want a public school, but we wanted a "quality" public school that would be staffed by teachers for their excellence and expertise and not their seniority, and a physical development that would be architecturally compatible with the abandoned Episcopal Divinity School that was housed on the site. The buildings on this square block in Spruce Hill are uniquely historical architecturally, and it was critical to the community that any additional facility not detracts from the site's grandeur. There was, of course, the concern expressed by immediate neighbors of how any school at that location would impede the quality of life, as well as how the School District would maintain the surrounding school grounds. Consequently, we insisted that the University of Pennsylvania NOT turn over the land to the School District, but that it remains in university hands so that we in the community could have more direct influence on how the grounds were maintained.

Probably the most vexing community issue regarding the school was the question of who could attend. Everyone in West Philadelphia wanted a "piece of the action" and parents salivated at the prospect of being able to send their children to a first rate public school. Thus, the whole question of whether the school should be peopled through lottery or a defined catchment area dominated community debate. In Spruce Hill the question was pretty clear. If this was to be a neighborhood school, then children in the surrounding neighborhood had to have the opportunity to attend. Our position was that there should be a defined catchment area that was as broad and as "population diverse" as possible, but that there needed to be predictability for parents in order to make this work. Ultimately, the school district agreed.

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. Has this project made the community a better place to live or work? If so, how? Approximately 400 words.

The development of the school has had a significant and positive impact on the community. We have been attempting to stabilize our home-owning population Spruce Hill for decades. The pattern was always the same. Penn Faculty and staff would buy in the neighborhood, but once they had children of school age they would move to the suburbs if they couldn't afford private schooling. Young people not affiliated with the University not consider our community as place to settle down. As a result, Spruce Hill could never crack the 17% threshold of homeowners and had to deal with large numbers of investment property owners who used single family zoned properties as student rooming houses.

The development of the school changed that. Houses now were in demand by potential homeowners and investment property owners began selling to families as the market demand dictated. Suddenly we had homeowners on blocks and in homes that had never had them before.

As the number of families increased there followed a demand for additional goods and services, so businesses sprang up to cater to the growing demand of households.

The neighborhood, once the home to a predominantly student and transient population, became a community of families and working professionals who were attracted to the area because of the quality of housing and architecture and greenery.

There is no doubt that the development of PAS is the most significant thing that has happened in Spruce Hill for the positive in my over forty years of living here. It is safe to say, that of all the changes that the neighborhood has experienced or will experience in the future, the success or failure of the Penn/Alexander School will serve as the biggest determinant. So far, it is ALL success.

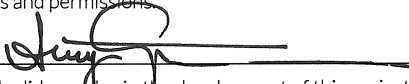
4. Would you change anything about this project or the development process you went through? Approximately 400 words.

It is easy to look back and think of what might have been done differently. Hindsight is a great tool to have in any critique. So, let me indulge a bit and offer a couple of observations. While this project was a venture for Penn and the School District, it would have been better to have clearly stated at the beginning that this public school would have a defined catchment area. They could have made it very clear from the beginning that they had no intention of supporting financially a school development whose population would be based on a lottery or any other selection process that would extend beyond the immediate neighborhood. Such clarity would have spared the communities in University City much debate and soul searching and frayed nerves and relationships that fortunately we healed. Secondly, and of equal importance, the initial plans for developing additional classroom space beyond the primary construction site should have been pursued. As I said, hindsight is a great tool for saying what should have been done. The fact that PAS has been so successful, and that there is a question of its ability to accommodate all those in the neighborhood who are eligible to attend, does raise the question of how that second stage of development that the Facilities and Site Committee discussed could have come about. That it is even the question that it is today speaks to the success that PAS has become.

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1. What role did you play in the development of this project? Approximately 400 words.

My predecessor, Dr. Judith Rodin, and her executive team forged the partnership between the University of Pennsylvania, the School District of Philadelphia (SDP) and the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT) that resulted in the extraordinary Penn Alexander School and a revived community. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was executed for a ten-year period that was effective when Penn Alexander opened in 2001 as part of a comprehensive community revival plan, called the West Philadelphia Initiatives. When I became Penn's president in 2004, I embraced responsibility for stewardship of this partnership and support of the efforts of the principal and my colleagues at the Graduate School of Education at this high-performing neighborhood school which remains one of the single best examples of the University's commitment to local engagement. As the end of the term of the initial MOU approached, we worked with the SDP and the PFT as well as community leaders and Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell to renew the agreement. The discussions resulted in a second ten year renewal of the agreement through June 30, 2021. In addition, Penn agreed to underwrite the costs of an additional classroom, including teacher compensation and contributing \$1,330 per child for the 18 new students through academic year 2021.

The Penn Alexander School's well earned reputation for excellence has been recognized nationwide by the American Institute of Architects, Urban Land Institute, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Learning Alliance, Great Schools as well by numerous national publications.

2. Describe the impact that this project has had on the your community. Please be as specific as possible. Approximately 400 words.

The Penn Alexander School is one of the highest performing schools in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The School was an essential element of the University's plan to revitalize and reinvigorate our West Philadelphia neighborhood. Founding principal Sydnor and her team have worked assiduously to create a wonderful learning environment for the students, a supportive framework for engaging parents, and an esprit de corps among the teachers and staff that is truly remarkable. The parent-teacher association is one of most effective and and productive I have seen.

There is a pride of ownership within the community which takes seriously its role in continuing to shape the Penn Alexander School. Community leaders work with and challenge the University and its partners to be true to the ideals that lead to its creation. Students and neighbors have the opportunity to learn about green initiatives from the storm water management system under the grounds and the well-tended garden. Last year more than 46% of PAS students are from socioeconomically disadvantaged families. I am enormously proud that Penn Alexander graduates are highly sought after by selective high schools when they graduate; 100% of the students who graduated last year attend selective high schools. The first class of Kindergarten students have graduated from high school and many are enrolled at highly-selective colleges and universities; nine Penn Alexander graduates are enrolled at Penn.

In addition to its educational benefits, the Penn Alexander School has made the neighborhood a very desirable place to live. Real estate values have increased significantly and realtors actively market a home's location inside the catchment area. We are fully cognizant of and work hard to balance the effect of rising property values, which contribute to neighborhood stability, and our objectives for creating and sustaining a high performing, diverse, public, neighborhood school and a revitalized community.

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them? Approximately 400 words.

As noted above, my predecessor, Dr. Judith Rodin, led the development efforts to create the Penn Alexander School as an essential effort of a comprehensive community revival plan. She details her experience in her book, *the University & Urban Revival: Out of the Ivory Tower and Into the Streets*. When I became Penn's President, I had the opportunity to learn first-hand from Dr. Rodin, Councilwoman Blackwell, and key members of my executive team about the political challenges at the neighborhood, City and State levels. In addition, I was fully briefed on the work that must be continued to build even stronger relationships with community leaders and organizations. Our work to nurture and strengthen relationships with and support from our key partners, the School District of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers, is ongoing. The University played a leadership role alongside its other partners in discussion with community leaders as we struggled with whether to create a city-wide magnet school, a private school, a charter school or a neighborhood school. There were also a series of questions about the boundaries for the catchment area, which ultimately the School District determined with input from the community, the University and the teachers union. The Philadelphia Federation of Teachers made ground-breaking compromises on site selection for teachers. In collaboration with the School District, the teachers' union also agreed to reduced class size, a role for the University in the selection of the principal, and curricular innovations to be undertaken with advice from Penn's Graduate School of Education.

The innovative and award-winning building and grounds design is a direct result of a turnkey agreement in which Penn assumed the development and construction of the site. The University provided additional funding to make certain changes in the physical design of the building and agreed to support millions of dollars of changes to create an optimal learning space for the students in which there was flexibility for some community use after hours. The University agreed to make contributions to support these initiatives of up to \$700,000 per year for ten years and to provide the expertise and support of its Graduate School of Education. Also as noted above, Penn has now agreed to extend those commitments and to support an additional kindergarten class through June 2021.

4. What do you consider to be the the most and least successful aspects of this project? Approximately 400 words.

The most successful aspect of this project is measured in the results of the exemplary work of the principal and her staff, parents, and other supporters which has far surpassed our high expectations. In turn, the school's success has grounded a community in vitality. The number of students who have-- learned from dedicated first-rate teachers (a significant percentage of whom have earned their national certification), gone on to selective high schools and to college, developed award-winning science projects, and had the opportunity to experience the arts through the theatre and music programs--is remarkable. Excellent leadership, an innovative and engaging curriculum, wonderful teachers who have reduced class sizes and the resources and support they need, and enrichment activities and other resources have resulted in a school that is a model of which Penn is exceedingly proud and has become a strategy embraced by other universities to support the growth of their communities.

If we had it to do over, we should have been much more systematic about contemporaneously documenting the process and the rationale for strategies pursued to ensure that the model was replicable. We might also have made provisions to accommodate additional students because we do not have capacity to accommodate the 700 students contemplated in the original agreement because available space in an adjacent building is now occupied by an expanded childcare program.

Send to Contact

OTHER PERSPECTIVE

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| Signature |  | Date | 11/14/14 |
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1. What role did you play in the development of this project? Approximately 400 words.

I had two distinct roles with the Penn Alexander School (PAS). One in my capacity as a Senior Vice President at the University of Pennsylvania responsible for the construction of the new school. Another as a community as community member living in West Philadelphia and as a parent of two young boys who would be eligible to attend the school upon its opening.

While I am no longer directly involved with Penn Alexander, my firm works nationwide with universities and other anchor institutions to develop and implement place-based economic development strategies that have contributed to the resurgence of our most struggling urban areas.

2. Describe the impact that this project has had on the your community. Please be as specific as possible. Approximately 400 words.

Penn Alexander has had a profound impact on the community of West Philadelphia as well as other areas of the city and in several states. Having been a resident for 17 years, my family and I experienced first hand the transformation of this neighborhood. From a dilapidated, abandoned, and transitional housing stock, a diverse and active community took hold, bringing life to the streets, commerce to its main corridors and playgrounds to its parks. While many initiatives led by the University of Pennsylvania contributed to such as revitalization, the PAS was the glue that brought people together. As parents we came to know our children's friends and their families. We dined together and coached soccer together. We attended birthdays and graduations. Our lives intertwined with our neighbors cementing a true sense of community.

OTHER PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them? Approximately 400 words.

The project was initiated by the University after reaching an agreement with the School District, the Teachers Union and the community groups. Each had specific goals that sometimes pulled the project in opposite directions. This was no less evident in the design and construction of the school under a public/private partnership. The process required a lot of compromise to balance the community needs with those of the university and the school district.

4. What do you consider to be the the most and least successful aspects of this project? Approximately 400 words.

The most successful aspects of this project is the education that the children receive. My two boys and their classmates have been more than prepared for the demands of their respective high school and college experiences. My neighborhood is now vibrant and a destination for young families wishing to plant their roots. Our most challenged cities now have a successful place-based strategy from which to learn from.

The least successful components were twofold - as a parent, I had wished that the school had had an athletic program. The initial idea was that this would be developed in partnership with Penn's athletic department but that did not happened as planned.

The partners had planned to to develop a center for teacher development next to the school. The idea was to use PAS as a citywide tool to improve public schools around the district. Due to funding constraints, we we were not able to fund the center at the time. However, several years later Penn was able to fund space for the Philadelphia Writing Project which provides teacher training to the region.

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Name | Jerry Jordan | Title | President |
| Organization | Philadelphia Federation of Teachers | Telephone | (215) 587-6738 |
| Address | 1816 Chestnut Street | City/State/ZIP | Philadelphia, PA 19103 |
| Fax | (215) 665-1903 | E-mail | jjordan@pft.org |

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|-----------|---|------|----------|
| Signature |  | Date | 11/20/14 |
|-----------|---|------|----------|

1. What role did you play in the development of this project? Approximately 400 words.

At the time of the project development in 1996, I served as the General Vice President and Director of Staff of the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers. In this capacity, I representative of the PFT in the unprecedented partnership with the University of Pennsylvania and the School District of Philadelphia to develop a university-assisted public school as part of the University's community revitalization efforts. I was and am deeply involved in all aspects of the collaboration both encouraging partnership and participating in its implementation. For more than a year, PFT had ongoing communications with both Penn and SDP to determine the responsibilities of each partner. The PFT's role included supporting an innovative teacher and principal selection process that is now available citywide. The opportunity to design a school from scratch had never been offered to us before. To have our teachers at the table to design not only the educational program but also the physical layout of a new building as well as teach smaller classes and implement curriculum that we determined was the fit bit for students was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that the PFT was proud to support. Our support remains steadfast today.

2. Describe the impact that this project has had on the your community. Please be as specific as possible. Approximately 400 words.

The impact of Penn Alexander exceeds expectation. A diverse group of students are not only successful but have a thirst and curiosity for learning; a faculty has been given the support and resources to bring about high quality academic outcomes for students; it has encouraged urban renewal and alleviated overcrowding in area schools.

Most importantly, Penn Alexander was and remains today a true joint labor-management-university venture focused on ensuring students reach their fullest potential.

OTHER PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them? Approximately 400 words.

A new building to house Penn Alexander was designed. That design did not include a separate auditorium and lunchroom, which we thought would be best. Instead the gymnasium was combined with an auditorium as one space.

Also, the PFT agreed that Penn Alexander would be a demonstration school and all staff would be site-selected including the principal. This was a departure from the traditional contractual transfer and assignment process.

4. What do you consider to be the the most and least successful aspects of this project? Approximately 400 words.


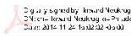
The school leadership and staff have been exemplary. Twelve teachers hold National Board certification, the highest certification for teachers. The university has been steadfast in its commitment to support the school and in fact has increased both its financial and inkind support to the school so that more children can be served. The physical structure and design of the school provides for and promotes a sense of space and community and scheduling flexibility.

Furthermore, the school has been true to its vision. It has become a beacon of the community.

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

| | | | |
|--------------|----------------------|----------------|---|
| Name | Howard Neukrug | Title | City of Philadelphia Water Commissioner |
| Organization | City of Philadelphia | Telephone | (215) 685 6103 |
| Address | 1101 Market Street | City/State/ZIP | Philadelphia, PA 19107 |
| Fax () | | E-mail | howard.neukrug@phila.gov |

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Signature   Date _____

1. What role did you play in the development of this project? Approximately 400 words.

I played multiple roles, as did my wife, in the development of the school.

As a City Water Department official, I supported my staff in writing a successful \$250,000 grant for the development of the school's innovative, first of its kind stormwater management system - a rain garden, underground infiltration bed, porous asphalt play area and 100% management of the roof runoff.

As a neighbor (actually the closest physical neighbor) to the future school, I sat on the site and planning committee, helping determine the site for the building, the size of the classrooms, the general use and purpose of the physical space and grounds.

As a parent of a child entering the first kindergarten class, I was the school's first Home and School Association President.

My wife has been among the most active parents associated with the school from its beginning. Where I was the first HSA president, she held that honor during the graduation year of our daughter from 8th grade - the first class of kindergarten-entry graduates. She has been a constant presence at the school, with an emphasis on community and education and performance.

Our 2 children both attended PAS and then had successful years at Central HS. Joe is now in his 3rd year at McGill University and Sarah just began her first year at the University of Pennsylvania. We consider a lot of their success to be due to their years at PAS.

2. Describe the impact that this project has had on the your community. Please be as specific as possible. Approximately 400 words.

This school has brought community to a marginal area of West Philadelphia that was struggling to identify itself. It has brought many, many families and children into our community, something that did not really exist prior to the school's opening. It has become a demonstration site for storm water management, the #1 public K to 8 school in the city and has increased home values. In short, it has brought a sense of success, purpose, diversity and identity to this neighborhood that has a long history of transient students, absentee landlords and professionals largely associated with the University.

As the Water Commissioner for the city, I would like to specifically describe the impact of the storm water management system in place at the site. The school site, one of the few open green spaces left in West Philadelphia posed a significant challenge in terms of storm water retention and soil erosion, yet offered significant opportunities to provide environmental education and environmental diversity to the community. The stormwater management system incorporates watershed protection practices with community education and outreach and the enrichment of the school. Redirecting water from the school's roofs and site topography into an underground retention system that feeds into a constructed wetland provides a variety of environmentally sound practices. Storm water that normally would have rushed off the rooftops into the sewer during storm events is now abated by the collection of this water into a retention system. Water fed from this retention system into the rain garden is cleaned through the use of remedial plants used in the rain garden. This natural cleansing system insures that any water that eventually makes it way to the sewer is considerably cleaner and the time of concentration of the storm flow is significantly reduced, reducing the frequency and duration of the combined sewer output. The retention of this water and its use in the rain garden also insures an increased potential for evapo-transportation, which results in a decreased amount of water entering the sewer. The combination of the rain garden and the retention system removes pollutants from the sewer as well as significantly decreases the amount of water entering the sewer.

An outdoor classroom space with signage explaining the system enables environmental education for the students but also for groups interested in designing and implementing these practices and the general public which heavily use the site for recreation.

OTHER PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them? Approximately 400 words.

The Philadelphia School system and its State-support is (and was) very limited. Large decisions had to be made about how to use capital dollars in a manner that provides the most back to the children and the community. As a member of the site and planning committee, I was very much involved in the look and feel of the school building and grounds.

My wife, a certified teacher, held similar position on the education committee. She was able to have significant input to the development of the school curriculum with the School district and the University of Pennsylvania and the leaders of the school itself.

Again, trade-offs and compromises were made throughout the process, and continue to this day, given the limited funding of the School District. In addition, limitations were always present given the civil service rules of the District that were difficult to bend.

Examples of where trade-offs and compromises were made include: size of the classrooms, the removal of plans for a separate auditorium and a full time art teacher. The partnership, however, enabled many of these compromises to be overcome. For example, my wife, several other parents and principal worked together to make sure that the lack of an art teacher did not mean the elimination of art programming for students. Over several years, the parents and school have now created a weekly art program for students. To address the limited scope of the building, every space has become multifunctional. Students practicing their violins do so in the atrium. This exposes children who would not have been interested in playing an instrument in the joy of music, it provides "music" to the school, and it teaches children to learn how to work together rather than "close the door to the noise."

4. What do you consider to be the the most and least successful aspects of this project? Approximately 400 words.

Penn Alexander has dispelled all the too commonly acceptable urban myths by demonstrating that high quality public education, neighborhood stabilization and sound environmental practices are possible in our most struggling cities. The school has made it to number one in Philadelphia as a K to 8 school, while maintaining a diverse social and economic student body. It's graduates are attending great high schools and colleges. The property values in the neighborhood are way up. The number of children in the community are rising. The site provides a best practice for one of the top ten urban problems of stormwater management. The pride of the community and sense of place is very different now than it had been. Crime is down and business is thriving.

Among the least successful aspects of the school are that its success has not yet (note: yet) been extrapolated to other schools. There are signs of replication, including a storm water management project at a nearby school as well as a new university-assisted public school in the works in an adjoining neighborhood.

The full success of the PAS school is when it is not a special school in Philadelphia, but its model is replicated elsewhere.

Other Perspective – Landscape Architect

Sue Weiler

Partner

Olin Studios

Public Ledger Building, Suite 1123, 150 South Independence Mall West

Philadelphia, PA 19104

215-440-0030 x822

sweiler@theolinstudio.com

1. Describe the design concept of this project, including urban design considerations, choice of materials, scale, etc.

The design concept was to turn the open space and parking lot of a previous Anglican Seminary site into an urban neighborhood grade school surrounded by an urban arboretum with the neighborhood as context.

No public school site in Philadelphia had ever undertaken this level of landscaping, contextual appreciation and would not have happened without a public/private partnership. The concept entailed finding a way to locate the needed footprint of the new school building in conjunction with the existing seminary buildings - some of which had already been converted into a day care center - as well as tie it to neighborhood needs, circulation patterns and context of Victorian architecture, brick sidewalks, and nearly 100 year old Plane trees.

As a walkable neighborhood and wanting to ensure kids could walk to school, pedestrian access and safety was important as was free access to the play areas and circulation routes for the neighborhood. The new building was located on the site to allow distinct play areas to surround the building. A parking lot was removed and replaced by a multi-use play field surrounded a south facing terraced amphitheatre which also help to resolve multiple elevational differences. A rain garden, with all native plants was developed to help facilitate storm water retention as well as offer an additional exterior environmental education opportunity. In fact, the actual planting of this was completed as a neighborhood event (as was the fine grading and seeding of the amphitheatre).

2. Describe the most important social and programmatic functions of the design.

The most important social and programmatic functions were the connections to the neighborhood both physically and socially. For example, a wide walkway between the school and the divinity school buildings reconnected a treasured street - St. Marks Square. The walkway is lined with Tulip Poplars. The visual and physical openness of the site facilitates this.

3. Describe the major challenges of designing this project and any design trade-offs or compromises required to complete the project.

Major challenge was to site the new building appropriately and to keep it in scale with existing site and neighborhood buildings. In addition to the technical challenges, negotiating the desires of the community, the constraints of the budget and operational needs of the school presented challenges throughout the process. Without a collaboration, the difficult conversations would not have been had yet they are types of conversations that provide lasting strength.

4. Describe the ways in which the design relates to its urban context.

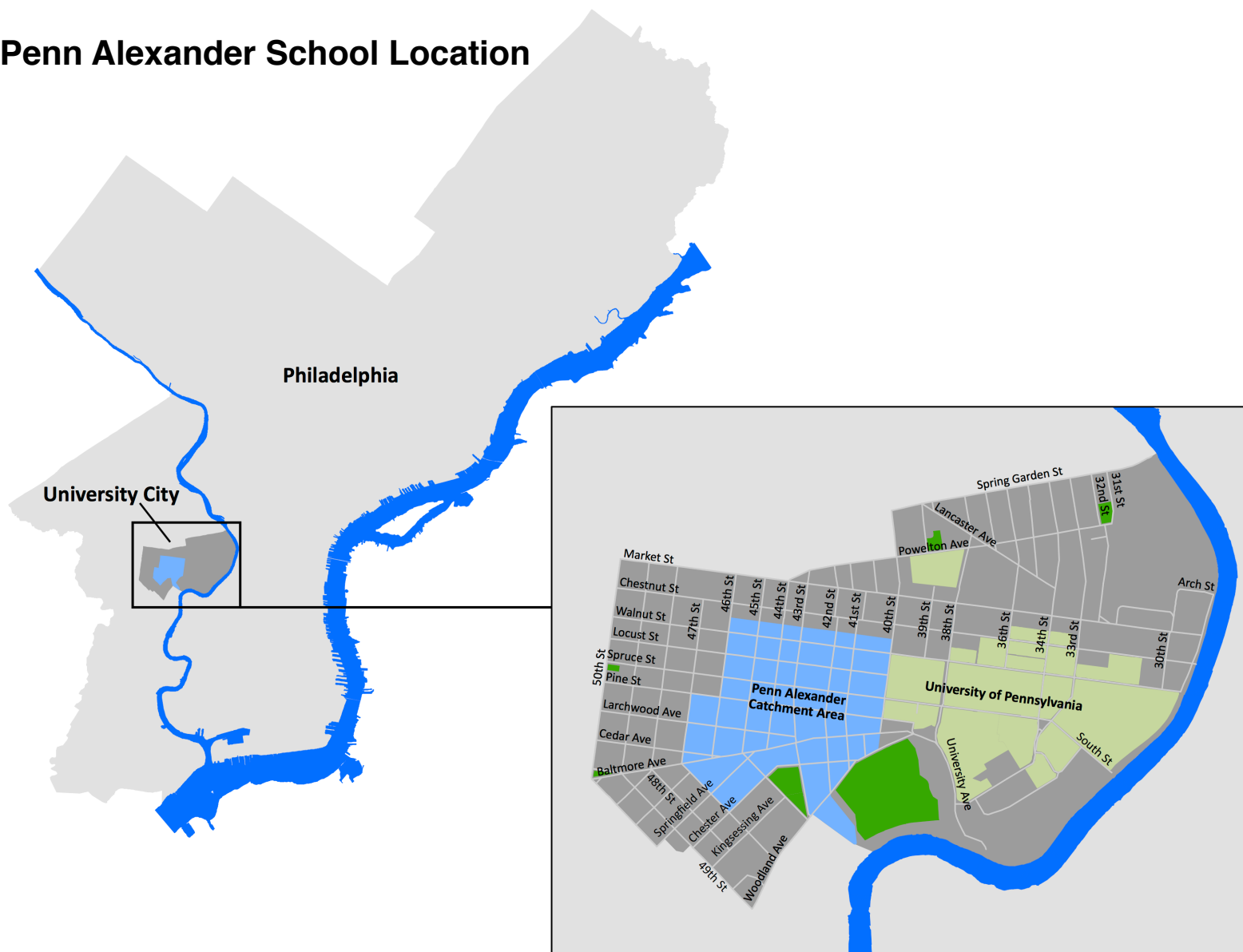
Again, because of its location in a residential neighborhood that was undergoing significant and well needed revitalization, positive links were necessary. The public/private partnership of Penn and the School District enabled there to be a significant landscaping design. Typical public school grounds are not landscaped - or at least the landscaping consists of covering the site in black asphalt. This is starting to change as urban areas find other solutions but having an urban arboretum is unprecedented for school grounds in Philadelphia and has enabled the school to serve a larger community purpose other than educating the specific students who attend the school.

Penn Alexander Supplemental Materials

- Location Map
- Metrics & Photos of Revival
- School Building Photos
- News clippings



Penn Alexander School Location



The Penn Alexander School is located at 4209 Spruce Street (two blocks west of the University of Pennsylvania campus) in the University City area of West Philadelphia.

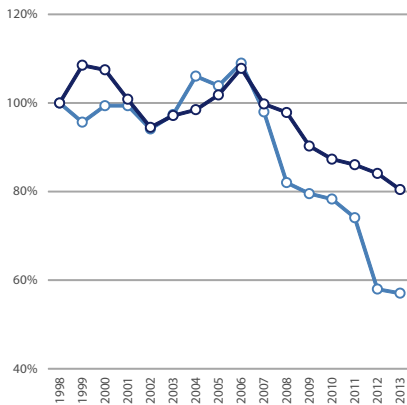
The accompanying **Metrics of University City Revival** reflect the following trends in growth of the community from the inception of the school in 2001 to 2014:

- Decrease in crime
- Increase in population
- Increase in ethnic diversity
- Increase in retail/reduction in commercial vacancy (last 5 years data)
- Increase in publicly accessible green space
- Increase in pedestrian counts at specific locations, (including a corridor outside of the school's catchment area)
- Increase in housing units
- Increase in average house price

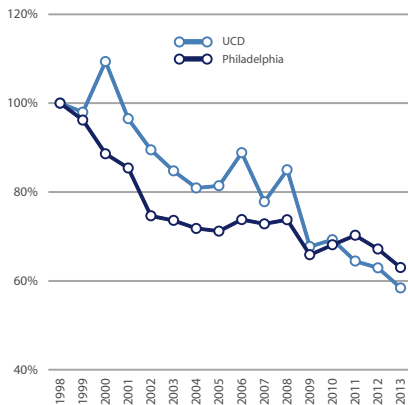
Metrics of University City Revival

Prepared by University City District

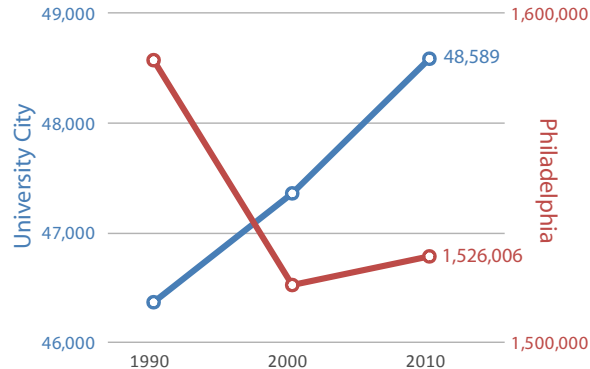
Violent Crime



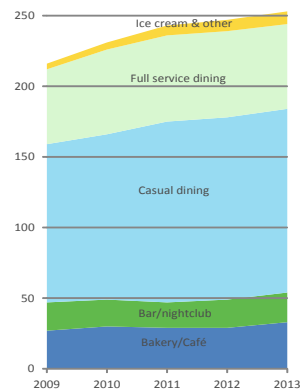
Property Crime



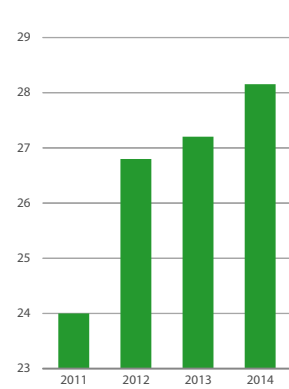
Population



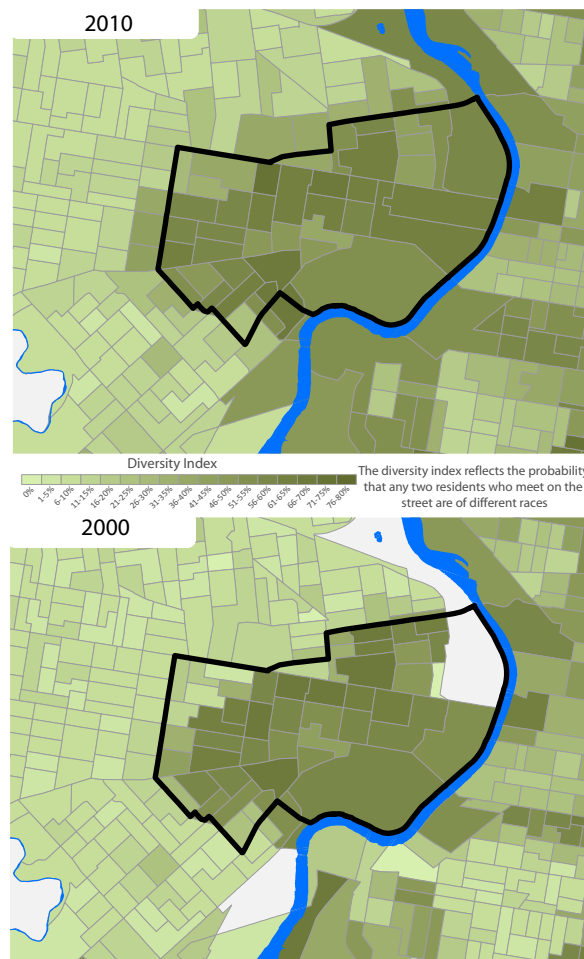
Businesses



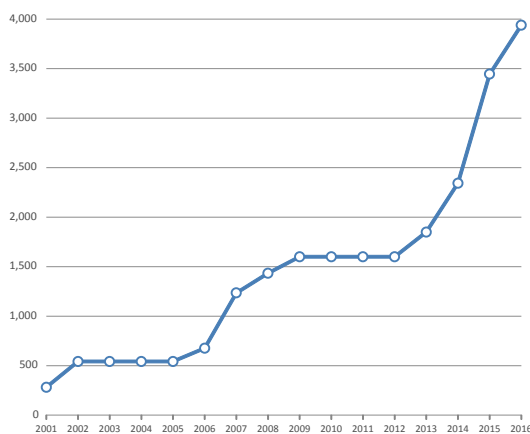
Cumulative Acres of New Green Space



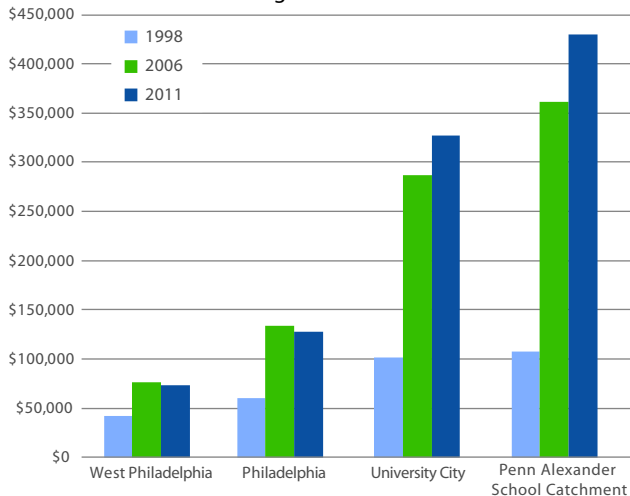
Diversity



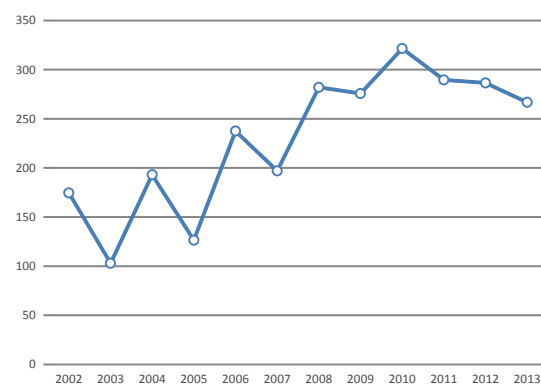
Cumulative New and Anticipated Multi-Family Housing Units



Average House Price



Hourly Pedestrian Count on Commercial Corridor Adjacent to School Catchment Area



Place making in West Philadelphia Before and After School Opening



BEFORE - School Site



TODAY - School Site



BEFORE - Sample vacant property in commercial corridor in neighborhood.



TODAY - Askum Mediterranean Restaurant



BEFORE - Sample vacant storefront in neighborhood



TODAY - Milk & Honey Dollar Stroll Night



BEFORE - Sample abandoned home in neighborhood



TODAY - Renovated home



Front facade at night



Atrium



View of Allée toward St. Marks Square



**Stormwater Management System
(Playfield, former parking lot)**



**Community Planting of Playfield
with City Year**



Penn Alexander Playground

Trenton assault:
Police say more
arrests are
expected. **B3.**

MONDAY, APRIL 5, 2010

B

The Philadelphia Inquirer

WWW.PHILLY.COM

Neighborhood blooms around top-rated school

W. Phila.'s
Penn
Alexander
is a draw
for young
families.

By Stephen Seplow
FOR THE INQUIRER

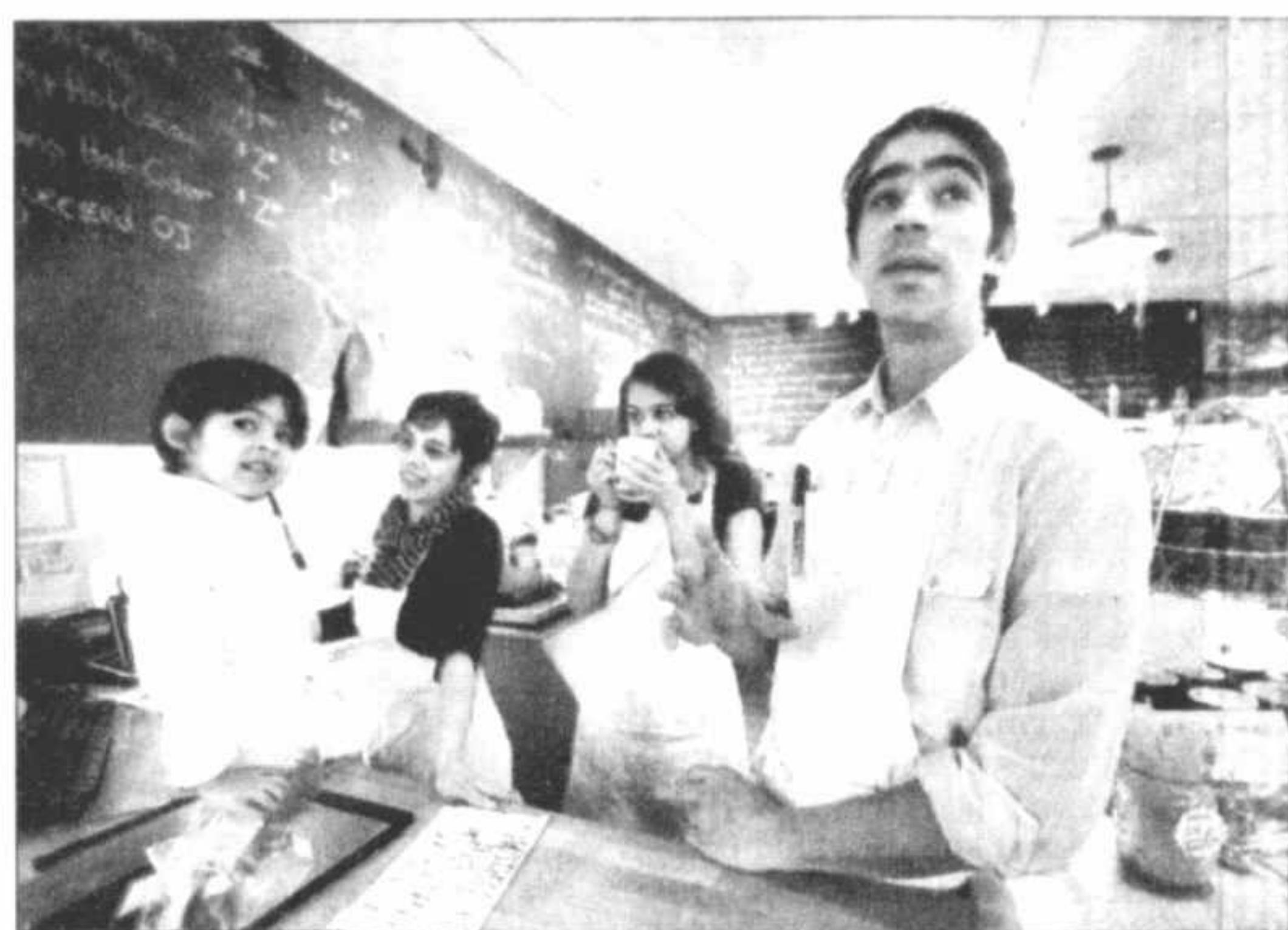
The Yeows, Elizabeth and Emmanuel, both 37 and transplants from Southern California by way of the Washington suburbs, had their hearts set on a Center City lifestyle after Emmanuel, a federal employee, was transferred here last summer.

Then, Elizabeth recalled, a Philadelphia friend provided some local wisdom: "It's easier to find a good house in Philadelphia than a good school." Which sent Elizabeth, a teacher with three children, to the computer to research the Penn Alexander School in University City. Which led the Yeows from their

Center City dream to a home at 45th Street and Larchwood Avenue in what has become Penn Alexander's coveted catchment area.

One more family — three more children — in University City's Spruce Hill neighborhood who would not be there if the Philadelphia School District and the University of Pennsylvania had not come together almost a decade ago to build the ultramodern K-8 school at 42d and Spruce Streets.

The school, with math and reading rankings well above the state average, has helped make the community one of the most sought-after in the city, bringing rapid change in a
See **NEIGHBORHOOD** on B4



DAVID M. WARREN / Staff Photographer
Annie Baum-Stein (second from left) and her husband, Mauro Daigle (right), opened their deli on Baltimore Avenue in the fall, inspired by an influx of young families. With them are son Luca, 5, and daughter Anaia, 14.

Easter collections



Children from St. Patrick Church race to pick up Easter eggs in nearby Rittenhouse Square after Mass. This was the second year for the hunt.
MICHAEL BRYANT / Staff Photographer

Church puts all its donations into charities' baskets

By Patrick Kerkstra
INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

There is nothing small about Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church, particularly on Easter.

Not the choir, not the congregation, and not the charity, either.

"We don't apologize for being large, we don't apologize for packing out a place, but our largeness has got to turn into something for someone else," the Rev. Alyn E. Waller told thousands of congregants Sunday at a special service in the 10,200-seat Liacouras Center.

Each Easter the Cedarbrook church picks three charities to receive donations from congregants. The service typically generates \$50,000 to \$75,000 for the organizations, said Waller's wife, Ellyn Jo. Waller calls it sowing.

"Today we come to sow into these organizations," he said.

This year, Enon selected the child-services organization Wordsworth, the antiviolence Father's Day Rally Committee, and a pair of doctors providing care to street children in Nairobi, Kenya.

Sowing, Waller said, is part of being involved in "real ministry" rather than simple "religiosity."

"The real test of what we do is when we give the benediction, and when we get up out of here, are you going to love somebody? Are you going to help somebody? Are you going to get involved in the community?" Waller asked his congregants.

As an example, he pointed to the Father's Day Rally Committee, which describes itself as "a respon-
See **EASTER** on B6



MICHAEL BRYANT / Staff Photographer
Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church's service at the Liacouras Center, raising money for three causes, moves Denise Bryant with a hymn.



TOM GRALISH / Staff Photographer
For many who don't live in the state, "New Jersey is defined by its turnpike," says James Simpson, who heads the N.J. Department of Transportation.

Rough road ahead for N.J. commissioner

By Paul Nussbaum
INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

James Simpson, the new commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Transportation, inherits plenty of problems as he takes over the sprawling agency.

The state Transportation Trust Fund is running dry. The condition of New Jersey's crowded highways is the worst in the nation, accord-

ing to federal data. NJ Transit ridership is down and fares are slated to increase 25 percent. The state's toll collectors recently drew unwanted attention for hundreds of complaints by motorists about nasty behavior.

And then there are the New Jersey Turnpike rest stops.

For many who don't live in the state, "New Jersey is defined by its

turnpike," said Simpson, a Brooklyn native who is moving with his wife and two young children from Wayne, Delaware County, to Princeton for his new job. Traveling the turnpike, he said, is "a negative experience."

"I won't let my kids go in the bathrooms. I wait till we get to another state."

See **SIMPSON** on B12

PSPCA to clear, disinfect shelter

Officials hope the process will finally rid the building of a persistent strain of virus blamed in dog deaths.

By Sam Wood and Amy Worden
INQUIRER STAFF WRITERS

A rare and deadly illness struck the city's animal shelter in June, killing six dogs. Three others were euthanized after showing signs of infection. The outbreak forced a quarantine at the Pennsylvania SPCA facility on West Hunting Park Avenue.

Last month, a Labrador retriever at the shelter in Hunting Park died of the same virulent infection — *Streptococcus zooepidemicus*, or "strep zoo" — prompting more drastic action.

PSPCA officials said last week they were planning a "population break" — emptying the shelter of dogs — in an effort to eradicate the disease.

After last year's outbreak, the PSPCA treated all the animals at the shelter with antibiotics and disinfected the former warehouse.

The same strain of strep zoo killed the three-year-old chocolate Lab last month, agency chief executive officer Sue Cosby said.

"It could be we never completely eliminated it from the building," she said.

Symptoms of strep zoo, which can be confused with canine influenza, include cough, runny nose, and fever. In severe cases, dogs bleed from the mouth and nose.

The plan, which Cosby expects to be finalized this week, calls for re-
See **SHELTER** on B2

Inside

Study: Soda tax wouldn't affect waistlines

"Small taxes won't prevent obesity," Rand economist says. **B2.**

City applies itself

It plans to release a 311 application for the iPhone. **B2.**

Daniel Rubin's column does not appear today.

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DAVID M WARREN / Staff Photographer
Annie Baum-Stein helps son Luca Daigle with cuffs. She jokes that for the first time there are nannies in the neighborhood.

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Top school helps an area come to life

NEIGHBORHOOD from B1 neighborhood that was seen as gasping for air 15 years ago.

Housing prices are up, crime is down, and amenities such as Clark Park and the popular neighborhood swimming pool have been upgraded. And there are a lot more children.

Not all of that was inspired by Penn Alexander alone. "The school is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for a high quality of life in University City west of 40th Street," said John Puckett, a professor in Penn's Graduate School of Education who has worked with neighborhood schools and is now writing a history of Penn's expansion since World War II. He also lives in the catchment area.

For longtime neighborhood resident Barry Grossbach, a former president of the Spruce Hill Community Association, what you see that you didn't used to see "is a lot of young people not connected

to the university. You see baby carriages, infants more than anything else."

Penn Alexander was the final piece of a long-term Penn undertaking initiated in 1996 by Judith Rodin, then the university's president, after Vladimir Sled, a Russian native and Penn biochemist, was murdered while walking home with his fiancée. The crime shocked the neighborhood, traumatized the campus, and led to a systematic effort that first led to safer, cleaner streets, more home ownership, and the overhaul of hundreds of unsightly and abandoned houses. It's the school, though, that has made the catchment area hot.

Penn Alexander, with an architect chosen by Penn, opened in 2001, although the \$19 million building, paid for by the Philadelphia School District and constructed on a five-acre site owned by Penn, wasn't finished until 2002.

Debates about the boundaries for the catchment area were bitter, dealing as they did with two basic concerns: education and property values. Some objected to any catchment area, saying every University City child should have an equal shot at Penn Alexander through a lottery.

Melani Lamond, a longtime real estate agent in the neighborhood, remembers those outside the catchment being "worried that their neighborhoods would be destroyed. Everyone would want to move in the catchment area and that's all." That, in fact, has not happened.

Penn insisted on traditional neighborhood school boundaries, and the school district — with Penn's advice — chose a tree-lined area with many blocks of large, stately homes, and some with relatively inexpensive apartment buildings, that generally is bounded by Sansom Street on the north, 40th Street on the east, Chester and Woodland Avenues on the south, and 46th Street on Pine and 47th from Pine to Chester.

The school district then created a rigorous curriculum that is further tweaked by Penn's Graduate School of Education. Class sizes are relatively small, and Penn contributes \$1,300 in extra funding per student each year, which helps give kids what they can't get in most other schools: art, music, dedicated science facilities, and more.

For the 2004-05 school year, the first year of full enrollment at Penn Alexander, the racial makeup of the school was 58.4 percent African

American, 22.5 percent white, 13.2 percent Asian, and 5.8 percent Latino.

By 2008-09, when enrollment had reached 527, the demographic had changed considerably: 44.2 percent African American, 30.7 percent white, 12.9 percent Asian, and 5.3 percent Hispanic. Fewer families are fleeing when their children reach school age, and more middle-class families are buying or renting homes that landlords once rented to college students.

"The catchment area has turned it into a stable family neighborhood, with kids on almost every street," said Andrew Meloney, the West Philadelphia planner for the City Planning Commission.

From the beginning, the school was expected to have a healthy impact on property values.

A differential long existed, with homes closer to Penn, the city's largest private employer, costing more than those farther away. But the gap has widened since Penn Alexander opened, and now a house in the catchment area will cost about \$100,000 more than the same house across the line, according to Kevin Gillen, vice president of Econulst, an economic consulting firm in West Philadelphia, and an expert in the Philadelphia housing market.

Cynthia Roberts, a University City activist who heads the popular neighborhood Parent-Infant child-care and after-school center, said that her daughter was only 2 when they moved to University City in the 1980s and that there were very few other children. "If I saw someone else with a stroller two blocks away, I'd want to wave, 'Hello, hello.'"

Now, Roberts said, "it's so wonderful to be walking down the street in the morning and see all these kids and their parents walking to school."

Annie Baum-Stein, who in the fall opened Milk & Honey, the first gourmet grocery in the area, also has a child in kindergarten. "The joke among my friends is that for the first time you're seeing nannies in the neighborhood," she said.

Baum-Stein said she and her husband, Mauro Daigle, were swayed to open the store on Baltimore Avenue between 44th and 45th Streets by the idea that the growing number of young homeowners in the neighborhood needed a place to shop.

Across the street from Milk & Honey, Jon Bekken and his wife, Alexis, opened the impromptu cramped Bindlestiff Books in 2005.

One-third of its inventory is for children and young adults. "We always thought that children's books would be important," Jon Bekken said. "The school does create a population more engaged in reading and education."

Roberts feels the impact of the demographic shift at the Parent-Infant center, which is in the midst of a \$1.5 million expansion partially funded by Penn. The center serves 240 children in two groups — infants to preschoolers and those up to sixth grade who come after school, and the expansion will add 50 spots.

Roberts said the waiting list for infants can reach 18 months and many are registered before they are born. "Lots of kids on our waiting list have the first name of 'Baby,'" she said.

Lee Huang, who works for an economic consulting firm in University City, chose Penn Alexander before he had children. Huang said he and his wife moved to the neighborhood for the school, but that was 10 years ago, before it was even built, and well before their daughter, Jada, was born. "They were talking about it then and we thought, 'That's a good thing.' We didn't know how good it was going to be. And, God willing, this is where she will be going next fall."

Which is why he arrived at Penn Alexander's front entrance a few minutes after 7 a.m. on the last Wednesday in January. It was 30 degrees and raw, and like the six other parents there, he was dressed to withstand the frost. It was the day to enroll children in next year's kindergarten class, and, though registration didn't begin until 8:30, Huang and the others had arrived early to beat the competition.

There are about 50 kindergarten slots at Penn Alexander. Acceptance, unnervingly, is first come, first served.

What Huang and his colleagues didn't know was that they were already dangerously close to the bubble. About 45 parents, some arriving well before 6 a.m., had been given numbers earlier by principal Sheila Sydnor to verify their place in line. She told them to go home, warm up, and return at 8:30. Huang, who eventually received number 53, was told he would hear in about six weeks whether Jada had been accepted.

He got the word two weeks ago.

"She got in," he said happily. "I was holding my breath. I was a little nervous."

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The Washington Post

Urban Colleges Learn to Be Good Neighbors

By Lois Romano

Washington Post Staff Writer

Monday, January 9, 2006

PHILADELPHIA -- Ten years ago, the University of Pennsylvania was under siege, its ivy towers wreathed by an abandoned industrial wasteland, filth and soaring crime. Parents feared for their children after two student homicides. The neighborhood McDonald's was nicknamed McDeath. Students were virtual prisoners on campus.

Administrators began to worry that enrollment was threatened as one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious schools was fast developing a reputation as unsafe.

"They had one of two choices after the murders. They could build up more barricades, surround them with a moat and fill the moat with dragons," said Barry Grossbach, a community activist in the West Philadelphia neighborhood. "Or they could reach out and save the community. . . . It was self-preservation."

Penn chose the latter. The university and private developers have invested about a billion dollars over the past decade in security, retail, schools, the local housing market and what Penn refers to as "economic inclusion" -- making sure the community and minority companies get a piece of the success.

Today, Penn is among the hottest schools in the country -- sitting smack in the middle of a clean and vital retail neighborhood where crime has been reduced by 49 percent in the past decade, and where students swarm the streets shopping at upscale stores. Penn has jumped in the U.S. News & World Report college rankings to No. 4 and attracts significantly more applicants -- successes that school administrators attribute in large part to Penn's "West Philadelphia Initiative."

Penn is at the forefront of a national trend of urban colleges that are aggressively trying to bridge "town-gown" tensions by investing heavily in adjacent troubled neighborhoods -- and by making a connection with local civic life. Since Penn launched its efforts in 1996, officials from more than 100 schools have made

pilgrimages to study how it transformed a decaying neighborhood with a thriving drug traffic into a vibrant college community.

The sea change on city campuses comes when urban school applications are at an all-time high -- up 14 percent since 2002 -- as the children of baby boomers drift away from bucolic academic settings toward the action.

"The return to urban schools reflects a broad shift in popular culture -- cities are cool again," said Bruce Katz, urban expert at the Brookings Institution. Consequently, "there is a greater appreciation that a university's fortunes reflect the place in which they are situated -- there is no separating the interests," he added. "They know they have to step up to the plate."

Many schools have. Yale University -- in the notoriously shabby downtown of New Haven, Conn. -- has developed retail and office space nearby, offered financial incentives to employees to buy homes in the neighborhood, and joined with local schools to offer tutoring, internships and college advisers. Trinity College and local partners spent more than \$100 million to turn a run-down area in Hartford, Conn., beset by drive-by shootings and condemned buildings into a 16-acre Learning Corridor with four local schools. Temple University, in a marginal neighborhood in North Philadelphia, is involved in running local schools and is working with developers to bring in restaurants and retail.

Clark University in Worcester, Mass., took similar steps, improving the historically poor and run-down area around the college by opening a school that starts in seventh grade, renovating housing and providing funding to refurbish storefronts.

In Columbia University's historic struggle with Harlem in 1968, the school proposed building a gym near the campus, touching off neighborhood opposition and the student takeover of five buildings. Facing new suspicions over expansion plans, the school established a 40-member community advisory council in 2003 to assure residents that the plans will come with job training, jobs and opportunity for small businesses.

In the District, schools have struggled to smooth community tensions brought on by campus expansion and rowdy students. At Howard University, administrators started investing in the community about a decade ago, agreeing to rehabilitate 28 run-down, boarded-up houses that the school had owned for 30 years, and had once intended for use in an expansion. Howard took a loss to offer the homes at

reasonable prices to university staff members. Community relations improved overnight.

Howard established its Center for Urban Progress to tie academic programs to work in the community, and last August opened a magnet middle school on campus. The college is working to develop a new residential-retail center on Georgia Avenue that it hopes will bring life back to community streets.

"We see ourselves as an extension of the community," said Maybelle Taylor Bennett, director of the Howard University Community Association. "It's enlightened self-interest."

The issues are different for Georgetown University and George Washington University, which are in upscale residential and business areas that do not need the intervention and financial support required by Hartford or West Philadelphia. Still, seeking to maintain strong relations, the two schools established a 24-hour hotline so neighbors can report loud parties or other inappropriate student behavior.

As a case study, Penn's urban renewal effort is probably the most comprehensive -- targeting every service and institution that makes a community vibrant. The university restored shuttered houses and offered faculty incentives to move into the neighborhood; invested \$7 million to build a public school; brought in a much-needed 35,000-square-foot grocery store and movie theater; and offered the community resources such as hundreds of used Penn computers.

"We said we teach our students about civic engagement. You can't do that and not be role models for civic engagement," said former Penn president Judith Rodin, who was a catalyst in the renewal efforts.

But Penn was a long time coming to that philosophy, and when it began its overtures the community was skeptical. In the 1950s and '60s, the university -- with the help of federal and local officials -- displaced residents to expand. Homes were abandoned, businesses fled, crime took over -- and Penn simply fortified its walls.

"We destroyed a neighborhood that had existed for 50 years. And we replaced it with a neighborhood that had no life, no vibrancy on the streets," said Omar Blaik, Penn's senior vice president for facilities and real estate services.

"The animus," Rodin said, "was legitimate."

Rodin arrived in 1994 at a low point for the university. During her first month, a 26-year-old graduate student was robbed and killed outside his West Philadelphia apartment. By mid-1996, 30 armed robberies had occurred near the university, an undergraduate was shot and wounded, and Vladimir Sled, a Russian doctoral student, was stabbed to death trying to thwart a robbery.

"We hit the wall," recalled Maureen Rush, Penn's vice president for public safety." . . . It was clearly becoming an issue for admissions."

Administrators quickly agreed that there had to be a full-scale assault on the problem. The first steps were to form a partnership with community leaders and neighborhood associations and to light the neighborhood, clean it and make it green. Lights were enhanced at 1,200 properties, and 400 trees were planted as well as 10,000 flower bulbs.

Gradually, university buildings were refaced to open out toward the streets, and all new buildings had ample windows facing the street, making the school appear welcoming and providing additional lighting on the streets for safety. The school spends more than \$20 million annually on security -- among the highest amount in the country. It employs 350 security officers and 100 sworn police officers, who operate out of a station on campus.

So heightened is the concern over security today that a recent uptick in robberies near campus triggered a quick and intensive response. The school enlisted the help of a patrol task force from the city police department, and added street lighting and surveillance cameras at intersections to the 300 already around the campus.

But in 1996, even with cleaner, greener and safer streets, businesses were not rushing back, saying it was too risky to be a pioneer. "We'd lay out the red carpet -- we'd even plan the path so they wouldn't see anything unattractive," Blaik said. "But we'd still get a letter saying, 'No, thank you.' "

It was clear that if the neighborhood was going to be developed, Penn had to cover much of the risk. Rodin went to the board of trustees for seed money -- dismaying faculty members who thought the money should be spent on academics.

The trustees bought into the vision. Within a few years, Penn moved its bookstore off campus to encourage foot traffic, and brought in retailers such as Urban Outfitters and the Gap. Today, there is a waiting list of retailers and developers.

The most recent project is a \$100 million development of apartments and commercial space.

To bring back residents, Penn spent several million dollars renovating 20 dilapidated houses and priced them so middle-class residents could afford them. Nearly 1,000 employees have accepted the incentives to buy homes in the community.

But most people agree that the most important thing the university did was commit to build a public school. "That changed everything," said Tony Sorrentino, director of external affairs for the facilities office. "It brought families back."

The Penn Alexander School, which covers kindergarten through eighth grade, is an airy, glassy building that sits right outside of Penn's campus and serves 500 students. Penn's education department plays a major role in developing the school's curriculum and hiring its teachers. Penn has committed \$1,000 per student annually for 10 years to ensure the quality of the school remains stable.

"The goal was to solidify and stabilize the neighborhood," said Nancy Streim, associate dean for graduate and professional education. She is working on plans for an international studies high school.

Today, Penn's popularity is such that it accepts about 20 percent of applicants, compared with 37 percent a decade ago, said Lee Stetson, dean of undergraduate admissions. And with much of the infrastructure done or in planning stages, administrators say that they have the time to further personalize their commitment to the community.

To that end, Penn is in the process of opening a community health clinic at a high school. The medical center offers a "Service Learning Academy" to high school students interested in health care, and a cardio-cancer center will create 1,500 jobs. For the first time, Penn this fall invited local high school students to campus for a tour -- 600 showed up. An administrator e-mails the Penn community weekly, itemizing the community's needs and asking for volunteers.

"This is the time to move forward with a very people-friendly plan for the neighborhood," Amy Gutmann, Penn's president, said as she ticked off a long list of current programs and future plans. "It's very important not to be complacent. All this is what keeps Penn riding high."