

**A Proposed Campaign  
for Durham Academy**



**Preliminary Case for Support  
October 2017**

# Executive Summary

As a Durham Academy community, our ambition is driven by core values that prioritize the student experience in all we do. Our *2015 Strategic Plan: Strive, Connect, Support* guides us in connecting that experience through cohesive curricula and personal interaction. To create a campus experience that supports everything we value, we are proposing a \$25-\$27 million fundraising campaign.

## Why Now?

To put it plainly, certain campus facilities no longer support what we know to be optimal learning environments for students nor teaching environments for faculty.

Our culture has always been one of close, constant faculty/student interaction. Transformational campus upgrades such as the Preschool/Lower School (opened 2002) and the Upper School Learning Commons (opened 2012) have made such interaction more visible, accessible, and impactful. Every day we see our purpose-built facilities not only supporting but creating new ways to interact.

Our community of parents, grandparents, talented alumni, and committed educators has a history of responding generously when we identify compelling needs. Now is such a time. We are driven by our values, and by an urgency for today's students to benefit from our proposed campaign to:

- Continue the trajectory of improving the Upper School experience with a new STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and Humanities Center – the academic hub in the Upper School.
  - The design supports state-of-the-art science facilities, curricular connections among faculty, and the types of intellectual encounters that lead to breakthrough learning for students. The project is outlined in Phases 1 and 2 of the Durham Academy Campus Plan.
- Transform the Middle School experience with a campus designed purposefully for the intellectual and physical needs of young adolescents.
  - The Middle School Master Plan creates new academic and community spaces, reorients the campus for cohesiveness and safety, and supports rather than inhibits the Middle School learning experience. The project is described in Phases 3 through 6 of the Durham Academy Campus Plan.

See the proposed timeline for the completion dates each year from May 2018 until 2024.

### WHAT

- Create the academic hub at the Upper School, uniting STEM, English and history programs.
- Transform the Middle School experience with a campus designed purposefully for the intellectual and physical needs of young adolescents.

### WHEN

In 6 phases, with Phase 1 underway already, and completion dates each year from May 2018 until 2024.

### WHY

It is past time to improve certain campus facilities to be on par with Durham Academy's standard of excellence. More importantly, it is the right time – our time – to put what we know about creating optimal learning environments into action.

### How

A Board of Trustees-approved financing plan that leverages debt and philanthropic giving. The project combines \$23 million in bond financing with a proposed five-year campaign for \$25-\$27 million in donor support.

# Academic Settings That Reflect the Quality of the School

The hallmarks of the DA experience – a challenging college-preparatory curriculum and supportive attention to students as they grow into independent thinkers – are accomplished through meaningful interaction with faculty. At the Upper School, the design of the Learning Commons has brought this interaction out into the open, and has had a profound and positive impact on learning experiences for faculty and for students.

## Upper School STEM and Humanities Center

The new **Upper School STEM and Humanities Center** combines the collaborative space design of the Learning Commons with the needs of today's learning environment. Because the need for science classroom and lab space is so urgent, we have already started the Upper School construction project.

The 2-story, 46,000 square-foot enclosed building has two classroom wings, a central interior commons with seating for approximately 90 people, and an elevator. In great contrast to the “brown box” design of the classrooms that this new building replaces, the new building creates intentional spaces uniting STEM, English and history programs. Connections among faculty within and across departments are critical to the school's academic sequence, and collaboration creates opportunities for students to gain deeper understanding and discover insights.

## Middle School Master Plan

The **Middle School Master Plan** is designed in accordance with the same values. We are re-investing in Durham Academy's historic Academy Road home, built in 1966 for Preschool through Middle School, after a thorough evaluation of our options to relocate. We have a rare and exciting opportunity to re-imagine a campus designed exclusively for these formative years in an adolescent student's life. Middle School students will have the freedom to explore in a physical setting that is all their own and gain the critical study skills and academic grounding that are so important to their upcoming high school years. The plan continues our commitment to a safe and welcoming environment, and the campus will be vastly more functional for faculty, students, and parents.

The Middle School Master Plan creates a campus with more academic classrooms, bigger community gathering spaces, and a more cohesive central orientation. The exteriors and interiors of the buildings have not yet been designed, but the intent is for academic departments to be grouped together, supporting the faculty collaboration that is so critical to curricular connection.

The plan is sequenced over five years to minimize construction disruption and ensure all classes can shift among existing buildings (that is, no temporary modular buildings will be needed). All buildings and campus spaces will be designed to address current code and accessibility requirements, and campus safety remains a key design priority.

## Durham Academy Campus Plan

Phase	Description	Notes
<b>Phase 1</b> <b>Upper School</b>  <b>2017-2018</b>	Demolish Upper School physics building and build the STEM wing.	<i>Construction started summer 2017.</i>  <i>STEM and Humanities Center:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 science classroom/lab combinations</li> <li>• 14 English, history and math classrooms</li> <li>• 3 departmental faculty offices</li> <li>• 1 large makerspace</li> <li>• 2 small greenhouse areas</li> <li>• 6 small meeting/study rooms</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 2</b> <b>Upper School</b>  <b>2018-2019</b>	Complete the Humanities wing in the 2018-2019 school year.  <i>The existing double-decker classroom building between Kenan Auditorium and the Hock Center is demolished at the end of construction in summer 2019.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 science classroom/lab combinations</li> <li>• 14 English, history and math classrooms</li> <li>• 3 departmental faculty offices</li> <li>• 1 large makerspace</li> <li>• 2 small greenhouse areas</li> <li>• 6 small meeting/study rooms</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 3</b> <b>Middle School</b>  <b>2019-2020</b>  <i>Start site work as the Upper School nears completion, and start Phase 3 in the spring of 2019.</i>	Build new 50,000 square foot academic building with 13-14 new classrooms and an auditorium.	<i>The auditorium will be big enough to accommodate the entire Middle School, which is not the case in Taylor Hall today. Several of the classrooms (4-5) will support the fine arts curriculum and take advantage of the new auditorium. Most of the classrooms (9) are for other academic departments. The existing 400 building is demolished in this phase.</i>
<b>Phase 4</b> <b>Middle School</b>  <b>2020-2021</b>	Expand existing 500 building, creating 5 science classrooms with labs, 1-2 computer lab/maker spaces, and a renovated library.	<i>During this phase, the library and classrooms will be moved to Taylor Hall and other buildings, and then Taylor Hall will be demolished when it is no longer needed.</i>
<b>Phase 5</b> <b>Middle School</b>  <b>2021-2023</b>	Dramatic change to the campus; build a new administrative building at a newly designed entrance off University Drive (Phase 5a) and build a new 2-story classroom building with 25 classrooms (Phase 5b).	<i>At the end of this phase, buildings 100, 200, and 300 are demolished. The traffic flow around campus, including carpool lanes and parking, changes significantly.</i>
<b>Phase 6</b> <b>Middle School</b>  <b>2023-2024</b>	Build a new gymnasium and renovate the existing gym.	<i>The new gymnasium will be better suited for physical education classes and for extra-curricular athletic activities. The existing gym will remain for Extended Day programs.</i>

# Capital Planning That Reflects Prudent Financial Management

Throughout our history, our community has directed resources to the things that matter most — people and learning. When we have made thoughtfully considered choices to invest in new facilities, the end goal has always been to help faculty do their best work with students. The impact of past large capital projects has been enormous for faculty, students, and programs. The proposed campaign continues this focus, creating intentional instructional spaces and using those spaces to increase connections among teachers, students, and curricula.

**Our urgency is this:** We want today's students – Upper School, Middle School, and Preschool/Lower School – to benefit from this comprehensive plan. The proposed campaign is focused on the Durham Academy experience for the immediate needs of today's faculty and students, and on positioning the school for the future.

## Funding Strategy for the Campaign

The total proposed campaign goal is \$25 - \$27 million and has three objectives:

### (1) Funding for the Durham Academy Campus Plan:

- In April 2016, the Board of Trustees approved a construction and financing plan that allowed us to start the capital project. The strategy combines leveraging debt with philanthropic giving, and is the same approach used in 2000 to build the Preschool/Lower School. There is \$23 million in bond funding committed for the Durham Academy Campus Plan.
- With \$23 million in bond financing secured, **the philanthropic goal for the entire campus plan is \$18.5-\$20.5 million.**<sup>1</sup>
- The Middle School Master Plan prioritizes each year-long segment of a five-year construction plan by urgency, complexity, and cost. We will complete as much of the plan as philanthropic giving will allow.

(2) **Growing the endowment fund**, which nourishes the daily operating budget and assures the school's long-term financial viability. While the primary focus for this campaign is facilities needs, our strategy includes continuing to grow endowment. The Board has set an endowment objective of \$1 million in this campaign.

(3) **Ensuring the vitality of the Durham Academy Fund** throughout the five-year campaign, which supports experiences, activities, and faculty needs each year. The Durham Academy Fund goal is \$5.5 million.

Our history of prudent financial management and the financial stability of Durham Academy has put us in the position to finance the beginning of this project. We must rely on your support to finish it.

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<sup>1</sup> The total cost of the Durham Academy Campus Plan is \$41.5-\$43.5 million. The Board-approved plan combines \$23 million in bond financing plus donor support.

<b>Proposed Campaign Goal for Durham Academy</b>	
(1) Philanthropic Support for Campus Plan	\$18.5-\$20.5 million
(2) Endowment Fund	\$1 million
(3) Durham Academy Fund (five-year campaign)	\$5.5 million
<b>Total Campaign Goal</b>	<b>\$25-\$27 million</b>

Asking for such significant philanthropic support from our community is a serious endeavor. Our steps to increase confidence in achieving our community’s support for the campaign include:

- Testing the scope of the campaign through this feasibility study to gauge the interest and support for the priorities and for philanthropic giving.
- Analyzing previous capital campaigns to build on strengths and make improvements to fundraising planning and processes.
- Strengthening the Durham Academy Fund, which achieved a \$1.1 million milestone this past fiscal year.

## **Your Support Makes the Difference**

While the campaign goal is ambitious, it builds on a history of investing in the long-term health of our school. It is past time to improve certain campus facilities to be on par with the excellence that happens within those walls. But more importantly, it is the right time – our time – to put what we know about creating optimal learning environments into action. Please consider your role in supporting the proposed campaign – and in transforming the Durham Academy experience today and in the future.

Refusing to be comfortable with our accomplishments to date, we will continue to **instill in our institution the same spirit of vigorous self-improvement we expect of our students.**

*- from the Durham Academy Strategic Plan: Strive, Connect, Support*