

THE MAGAZINE OF MILITARY HOUSING, LODGING & LIFESTYLES

# DEFENSE

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# THE Green ISSUE

Achieving efficiency  
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# Accelerating Learning



*The West Point Middle School project includes renovating the existing school and constructing a 31,000-square-foot addition.*

*The U.S. Army Corps helps support the Army family through school construction*

**By JoAnne Castagna, Ed.D.**

In 1821, the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in New York established the first school on a military installation to serve the children of service members. Almost two centuries later, the West Point community and Department of Defense continue to be committed to providing these children an education to take them into the 21st century, even in the current tough fiscal times.

This is being demonstrated with the much-needed renovation of the historic West Point Middle School being completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District. The school educates 300 students in grades five through eight.

In 2011, Army Corps contractor Benard Associates of Wayne, New Jersey, began the renovation of the school. The project includes renovating the existing school that was built in 1934, which was designated a landmark; demolishing a wing to the school that was built in 1954; and constructing a new approximately 31,000-square-foot addition.

The more modern 62,000-square-foot educational facility will include new state-of-the-art general purpose, art, science, and music classrooms that will have interactive Smart Boards and wireless Internet access. This includes a new digital arts lab and clay workroom in the art classrooms and a new acoustic band room, as well as a full digital video production studio.

In addition, the school will have an improved cafeteria, playground, restrooms, library, parking area, and handicapped access, as well as a new central air system, security system, and fire protection and communication intercom system.

### **Incorporating Sustainability**

The new structure will meet the environmental requirements to be certified LEED Silver by the U.S. Green Buildings Council by incorporating energy-efficient doors and windows; additional windows to make use of natural light; energy-efficient hot water heating and chilled water cooling systems; upgraded insulation; water conserving toilets; and motion detector faucets.

The West Point campus is filled with historic buildings, including the 80-year-old middle school. "To maintain the historic look and feel of the campus we did a few things," said Larry Danner, project engineer and contracting office representative, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District.

"In the new renovated 1934 building, we made sure that the new brick and precast bands and caps matched the existing building colors; we incorporated the original wood floors into the new main office spaces; and we used the original 1934 library shelving in the parent waiting area of the new main office."



*The updated West Point Middle School will be a contemporary, 62,000-square-foot educational facility.*

**This project is a testament to the military's commitment to provide world-class educational opportunities for the children of the men and women serving in our nation's military.**

"The students are going to benefit greatly by this renovation," said David Rudy, principal of West Point Middle School. "They will have access to learning spaces that are safe, modern, and efficient and they will have a setting in which 21st century curricular objectives may be pursued. This project also is a testament to the military's commitment to provide world-class educational opportunities for the children of the men and women serving in our nation's military."

The project is being performed in phases while classes are in session and is expected to be completed in 2014. "Recently, the Army Corps held a tour of the school for the parents and staff members," said Rudy. "Several parents commented on the quality of the work, and the attention to detail that went into its outfitting. They also noted how well the exterior of the addition matched with the existing 1934 structure. This is a very happy community." ■

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