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education



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The dilemma facing the Brimmer and May School – a private secondary school in Chestnut Hill, MA – was their need for additional classroom space without sacrificing their primary playing field. The solution was to construct a new below-grade addition beneath the existing athletic field, located adjacent to their main building.

Dedicated as the Robert B. Almy Jr. Academic Center, the 11,500 square foot addition to the existing Chase Building includes science classrooms and library spaces for grades six through twelve. The design incorporates an open air courtyard which provides daylight and fresh air to the new academic space. The underground addition includes the middle and upper School library, music room and classrooms. The new science labs were part of a renovation to the Chase Building, they are not underground.

The rebuilt natural grass athletic field was constructed at a raised elevation, partially extending above the below-grade building addition. During construction, the Chase Building was fully operational, with all use of the playing field suspended during the construction.

This project posed its own unique construction challenges. With a student body ranging from early childhood through grade twelve in close daily proximity to the construction site, the safety of students and faculty was of utmost importance. The Project Team also worked to accommodate the concerns of a densely-populated surrounding residential neighborhood relative to noise, traffic and parking.



Project:

Robert B. Almy Jr.
Academic Center –
Below-Grade Addition
and Playing Field

Owner:

Brimmer and
May School

Architect:

Imai Keller Moore
Architects

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Photography: Edward Jacoby

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“The Brimmer and May School was very pleased to work with the team at RWS once again. Ten years ago, RWS was chosen as the contractor for the School's Chase Theater. The result was the construction of a wonderful space by a company that took the time to understand the needs and culture of our School. When considering the construction of an underground library/classroom space, we needed a contractor who understood how to work with a small independent school, had experience with below grade construction, and understood the personality of our institution. RWS succeeded at all of the above. It was a pleasure working with the very professional team from RWS. Their concern for deadlines, neighbors, and safety was remarkable. In addition, the building is beautiful!”

CAROL CROFFY, ASSISTANT BUSINESS MANAGER, BRIMMER AND MAY SCHOOL

“It has been a pleasure working with the team from Richard White Sons on another building project for Brimmer and May. Not only was the building delivered on time but the team was as unobtrusive as possible, quite a feat since they were working alongside an existing building. Everyone who worked on the project valued the safety of our students and made it a top priority. I could not be more pleased with both the process and the outcome.”

ANNE C. REENSTIERNA, HEAD OF SCHOOL, BRIMMER AND MAY SCHOOL

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