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# Timothy Dwight Elementary School New Haven, Connecticut

**1** **MICHAEL HAVERLAND AND THE YALE URBAN DESIGN WORKSHOP ENHANCE A NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL WITH A MULTIPURPOSE ADDITION.**  
By William Weathersby, Jr.

**Architect:** Michael Haverland  
Architect/Yale Urban Design  
Workshop—Michael Haverland, AIA,  
designer and project architect; Paul  
Arougheti, Ben deRubertis, Al Dasher,  
Dominique Davison, Marcos Diaz-  
Gonzalez, Thomas Dunn, Joe Fong,  
Billy Forrest, Mark Gage, Kristina  
Lamour, Jen Lau, Michael Lee Poy,  
Tom Morbitzer, Kieran Trihey, Paul  
Whittaker, Jim Woodworth, Belinda  
Young, Yale Urban Design Workshop  
students

**Client:** City of New Haven, New  
Haven Board of Education

**Engineer:** Salamone Associates  
**Consultants:** Balmori Associates  
(landscape); Thomas Dunn/Paul  
Whittaker, Yale School of Drama  
(lighting); Kristina Lamour, Yale  
School of Art (graphic design)

**General contractor:** A. Prete  
Construction

**Size:** 9,300 square feet; 500 students

**Cost:** \$2.07 million (construction)

**Completion date:** May 2001

#### Sources

**Green glazed brick:** Elgin-Butler

**White split-faced brick:** Alba Stone  
Products

**Corrugated metal:** Reynolds  
Corporation/RAC

**www** For more information about  
the people and products involved in  
this project, go to Building Types  
Study at [architecturalrecord.com](http://architecturalrecord.com).

#### Program

Four blocks from campus, students  
from Yale University have learned  
lessons in the real world of planning  
and design for elementary educa-  
tion. Collaborating with community  
groups and the local government,  
the Yale Urban Design Workshop  
(UDW) enhanced the Timothy  
Dwight Elementary School with a  
9,300-square-foot, multipurpose  
addition. An eight-year-old organiza-  
tion that grew out of a design studio,  
the UDW brings together faculty  
and students from the School of  
Architecture and Yale's other profes-  
sional schools to provide planning  
and design services for communi-  
ties in Connecticut. Although the  
forum does not typically engage in  
construction projects, in this case  
federal, state, and local grants  
allowed this leap forward. "The  
Dwight School project is a model of  
how students can play an active role  
in community planning," says  
Michael Haverland, AIA, Yale assis-  
tant professor and UDW codirector,  
who was the project's principal  
designer, aided by 17 Yale students  
from various disciplines. "Students  
learned to navigate the intricacies of  
community coalitions and tight  
budget constraints."

The project was launched as a  
three-day community design char-  
rette in 1995. With more than 300  
participants including the mayor,  
civic officials, and local residents,  
the sessions targeted expansion of



the school on Edgewood Avenue.  
Designed by Eliot Noyes in 1963,  
the single-story, 38,000-square-foot  
school is situated within a low-  
income neighborhood and lacked an  
indoor recreation space or assembly  
hall. Its classrooms have no win-  
dows. A program was developed for  
a multipurpose room to accommo-

date its 500 students while also  
serving as a community meeting  
place. A \$2.4 million grant from the  
Department of Housing and Urban  
Development was awarded to Yale  
to develop the plan. Remaining  
funds were allocated by the State of  
Connecticut and the New Haven  
Board of Education.



The standing-seam aluminum-roofed addition extends the school's role as a community activities center,

announcing itself with bold signage (opposite). The white split-faced brick relates to the pre-cast concrete of the

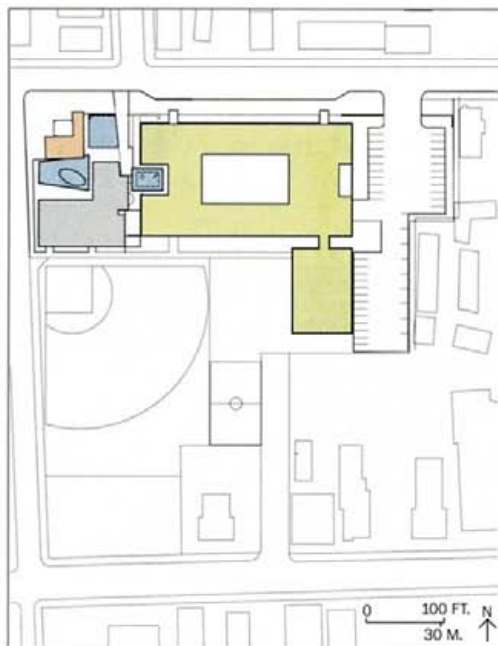
existing school, while alternating runs of green glazed brick introduce color and texture (above and below).

Clerestories light the multipurpose space and project the school's identity to the neighborhood.



The elliptical foyer connects the addition to the classroom wing and provides a new entry point for the community (below). One of two office/meeting rooms required by the community (opposite, top). The addition frames a new playground for kindergarteners, well within view from indoors (opposite, below).

- Existing school
- Existing police substation
- Addition
- New outdoor areas



## Solution

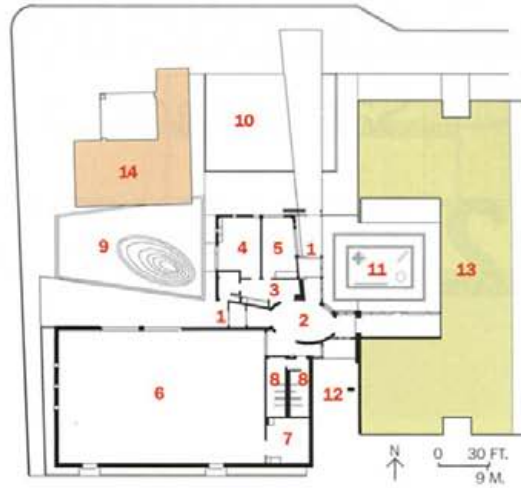
With maintenance and security as priorities, client mandates developed through the charrette included no flat roofs, no porches where the homeless could gather at night, the use of durable, vandal-resistant materials, and more natural light.

Rising at the west end of the school, the L-shaped addition creates a new, prominent entry axis. A supergraphic billboard announces the school's presence to the neighborhood. The short leg of the building's footprint runs perpendicular to two wings of the school to frame three outdoor spaces that pinwheel around it: a small playground, a formal entrance garden, and a flexible courtyard. A double-height, elliptical lobby serves as a pivot point between a classroom wing, the multipurpose room, and two office/meeting rooms earmarked for community organizations.

The 57-by-90-foot multipurpose room functions as a gymnasium and auditorium. Roll-out basketball goals, a folding stage platform, and stacking chairs can all be stored, and the room opens onto both the public courtyard and playing field.

## Commentary

The Dwight expansion displays a creative exploration of materials and budgetary ingenuity. To counterbalance the dull concrete and beige brick cladding of the existing structure while relating to its masonry construction, alternating courses of green glazed brick and white split-faced brick clad the addition, interspersed with sections of corrugated metal. A dropped ceiling in the lobby is stripped to its perforated aluminum surface and dramatically uplit. Standard fire-rated doors in the multipurpose room were installed upside down so children could see through the windows, and small windows punched through the base of the walls also allow child-size views. Filled with light and reconnected to the community, the vibrant addition makes the Dwight's classrooms pale in comparison. They seem ripe for a redesign. ■



1. Entry
2. Lobby
3. Security
4. Office/meeting room
5. Classroom
6. Multipurpose room
7. Storage
8. Rest room
9. Courtyard
10. Garden
11. Outdoor play area
12. Service area
13. Existing school
14. Police station

