

## St. Edmond's Academy

Wilmington, Delaware

A middle school expansion

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**Owner:** Saint Edmond's Academy  
**Architect:** Anderson Brown Higley  
Associates  
**General Contractor:** Whiting Turner

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A \$12-million educational and capital expansion program at Saint Edmond's Academy is changing the face of the Catholic boy's school, a fixture of the Wilmington community since 1959. Ground was broken in 2005 for an addition to the middle school, allowing the addition of grades K-3, construction of a field house, a chapel, science lab, and band room.

"If anything describes this project, I would say it's 'variation'," said Daniel Greenfield, the Thornton Tomasetti project engineer overseeing the structural design. "The architect designed a lot of variability into the architectural styling," he said, "even the topography varies up to 10 feet." As a result, engineering for the new facilities involved a column layout that allowed for limited orthogonal columns and grids. "The challenge," Greenfield said, "was getting our steel to fit just right into the architect's design."

A 76-foot span of the field house roof was built using steel bowstring joists. Narrow beams were necessary in several places to accommodate the wall dimensions.

The most unusual part of the project? "I'd say it was the train lobby," Greenfield said. A donor to the project is a model railroad enthusiast, so a 600-square-foot section of the lobby was designed to hold a model railroad setup. "I think everyone enjoys that," he added, "not just the kids."

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