

# New sense of space

## Brookfield Academy students, staff excited about new Upper School

By Joe Petrie  
Freeman Staff

BROOKFIELD – As Brookfield Academy freshman Maria Hughes sat in front of a brand new computer Friday morning in Patriots Hall checking her grades, she knew she had a lot to be excited about for the rest of the year.

The computer she was using was in the wireless computer lab of the new Upper School of Brookfield Academy and her classrooms are spacious and stocked with advanced educational technology. And with the smells of fresh paint and materials still lingering in the air, Hughes said the love for her school has gotten even greater.

“It’s big, it’s huge,” Hughes said. “And the amazing thing is that people actually care about the school and make sure it doesn’t get dirty or anything.”

Hughes and her classmates have been enjoying their new school for almost a month, but Brookfield Academy will officially dedicate the new Patriots Hall at a ceremony at 1 p.m. Sunday.

Situated across the street from the former Upper School on Brookfield Road, Patriots Hall is significantly larger than its predecessor:

The new building is two stories tall, 111,450 square feet in size, includes 27 classrooms, four science labs with 80 work stations, three art studios, a spacious drama and music rehearsal room, two-level multimedia library, and a nearly 1,000-seat gymnasium.

The facility also includes an expansive college counseling center, fitness center full of new equipment, southern

exposure in the student commons, advanced classroom technologies and student lockers are situated in rooms, not hallways, in order to enhance community among the students and create a quiet atmosphere in the halls.

The building can accommodate up to 320 students. It cost \$12.5 million, which was raised through a capital campaign.

“On the first day, we had an art teacher who wrote ‘Am I dreaming’ on the board for her students when they came in,” said Upper School Head Daniel Davis. “I had a student come to me and say on the first day that he’s going to want to come to school now every day.”

With the new school, other grades in Brookfield Academy are going to see their space grow as well as the middle school students will move to the old high school and third- through fifth-graders



Kevin Harnack/Freeman Staff

Brookfield Academy’s Head of the Upper School, Dan Davis, left, and Head of School Robert Solsrud talk about the features of the newly opened Patriots Hall.

will move to the former Middle School, giving students in the prekindergarten through second-grade levels more room in the Lower School.

Brookfield Academy Head of School Robert Solsrud said the moves will take place in time for the fall semester to begin and the institution will make improvements to the other facilities during the course of the next several

years.

And for students in all the schools, the extra space is being welcomed with open arms.

“The biggest thing is the space,” said senior John Griffin. “In the old school, there were no quiet places to get work done, but now there’s a lot.”

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