



BUILDING

March 2014

Bright Futures

CENTER FOR LEARNING

RENOVATION PROJECT UPDATE



Welcome to the inaugural edition of Building Bright Futures, an Aspire of WNY newsletter dedicated to highlighting the Center For Learning (CFL) and providing updates on the ongoing renovation and expansion project of our Union Road campus. Over the next few months, we will be providing updates every two to three weeks regarding various aspects of the project, and what it means for the children that you support.

Things you may not know...

- The CFL has been operated for more than 60 years by Aspire of WNY (formerly UCP of WNY)
- One of the region's largest providers of educational services to medically frail, multiply disabled children, the CFL annually serves 500 children from 30 school districts.
- There is currently an enrollment of 120 children/young adults aged 3 to 21, with more than 50% at or below the poverty level.
- In addition to many individualized services and solutions, the CFL has dedicated Early Intervention (EI), Preschool, and School Age Programs.
- The CFL provides integrated preschool through its ownership and operation of Children's Discovery Corner child care center. This will continue at the renovated site.

Brief Overview of the Building Program

In 2013, Aspire of WNY began an \$8.3 million building program to purchase, renovate, and expand the CFL's current space; an aging 50-year old former elementary school building with inadequate electrical

service, heating system and air conditioning. In spite of the difficult conditions, the CFL has garnered recognition as an innovative provider of educational services to the most frail and challenged members of WNY school districts. The decision to acquire the existing building, coupled with the strategic renovation and modernization is expected to save millions of dollars versus the cost of finding new land and new construction.



This is the former OT space, and gym, soon to become the new cafeteria/auditorium.

Project Benefits

- Will be 100% handicapped accessible, complete with ceiling lifts, accessible bathrooms and powered entry doors.
- A covered pick up / drop off zone to protect mobility-restricted students from the elements.
- Interior redesign and building expansion to include 16 new classrooms specifically designed to serve children with disabilities, additional space to house adaptive equipment, cafeteria, and auditorium for assemblies.
- New and improved Occupational, Physical and Speech Therapy departments.
- Upgraded electrical service and new heating and cooling systems to accommodate students with medical/ respiratory issues year-round.
- Implementation of state-of-the-art instructional technologies, including smart boards, wireless access, and more.
- New comprehensive nursing clinic, designed to meet the growing needs of our medically-frail students.

Intended Outcomes

- The upgraded security systems will provide a controlled and secure building environment that is in full compliance with ADA, fire, health, and safety codes.
- To create an educational setting that supports state-of-the-art technology, allowing students with severe disabilities to access instructional materials that enhance both learning and control of their current and future environments.
- The customized interior designs result in enhanced specialty spaces for all therapies, sensory room, and gait training area.
- The completed project stabilizes the long-term future of the CFL by providing us control over our own dedicated space and removing lease uncertainties.



Top photo: Piles of steel onsite for the new additions.

Left photo: Work on new central entrance and one of two new additions is in progress.

What's Next...

This first issue of Building Bright Futures provides you with a brief overview of where we were, where we are going, and how we plan to get there. For those school districts and parents whose children we have served, know that Aspire's person-centered programs and individualized services enable students to live their lives to the fullest. As we bring this exciting new chapter in our history to fruition, we want to share our excitement with you via this newsletter. In the coming editions, we will further expand upon the many benefits and improvements we are making because of the commitment we are making to the Center For Learning.

NEXT ISSUE: *A closer look at our upgraded technologies and what that means for your children and students.*