

New Spalding arts and technology building has ‘wow’ factor

Dr. Michael E. Murphy watched Sept. 3 as some Archbishop Spalding High School students stood nervously at the doorway of a new video conferencing room.

“Come on in,” the president of the Severn school told the group. “This is your building, too!”

Inside the room, students saw a wide glass window that displayed a spectacular view of the school’s new stadium, which is nearing completion.

Students at the 1,200-student school are walking many unfamiliar paths as new projects are coming to fruition. The video conferencing room was just one of several dazzling features of Spalding’s new Arts and Technology Building, a two-story wing to a building that opened in 1966.

“I just wish I wasn’t a senior,” said student J.P. Ricker. “This is way past my expectations.”

Ricker and schoolmates were joined by several dignitaries, including Cardinal William H. Keeler, the retired Archbishop of Baltimore, Bishop Mitchell T. Rozanski, Father J. Bruce Jarboe, pastor of Holy Trinity in Glen Burnie and superintendent of Catholic schools Dr. Ronald J. Valenti for the Spalding’s opening liturgy.

Bishop Rozanski, who celebrated the Mass, told students that the school’s founding in the 1960s was visionary.

“Through these years, we have seen this school grow, not only in the buildings, but in you,” he said. “You learn the lessons you will need for the rest of your life.”

The new building and stadium bring with them an \$8.2 million price tag. The construction has been aided through the school’s “Transforming Dreams” capital campaign, which has been operating for more than a year.

Construction began in July 2008.

The Arts and Technology Building has four classrooms, two art rooms, two personal computer labs, an Apple Mac computer lab, the video conferencing room, administrative offices and a conference room.

Principal Kathleen Mahar said she is prone to say, "Wow," when she enters the new building. "There are endless possibilities," Mahar added.

Students at the school take part in visionary engineering and graphic arts classes that will be expanded with the new building.

The stadium, which included a track, is scheduled to be completed by mid-October and will feature a turf field.

Spalding has experienced tremendous growth recently, as a new gymnasium opened up three years ago. School officials say there is a waiting list for students who wish to enroll.

When construction is completed, Dr. Murphy said the school's front will be repositioned to be alignment with the new buildings and the existing chapel.

Spalding, Dr. Murphy said, is moving boldly into the future.

"I could not be prouder of this community," Dr. Murphy said, "and what they've been able to accomplish."