



## Project

# Collaboration, geotechnical expertise help independent school successfully manage construction projects

## Summary

- For more than a decade, Haley & Aldrich has worked with a school in Boston to plan and execute campus construction and renovation projects.
- We collaborate early with all stakeholders to anticipate geotechnical challenges, enabling the school to get ahead of potentially costly schedule delays.
- We also draw on this forward-thinking, collaborative approach to limit disruptions and to help the project stay in budget and on schedule so that student safety remains the priority.

# Client challenge

More than a decade ago, leaders at an independent boys' school for grades 7 to 12 were looking to develop a long-term, go-to team of design and construction experts that could help them plan and execute all campus construction and renovation projects. Modern, student-focused, premier facilities play a critical recruitment role in today's environment, and because parent and alumni donations fund many initiatives, wise spending is crucial. [Campus upgrade projects](#) also present a unique challenge because the focus is on student safety and comfort — all work has to strictly adhere to timelines that revolve around aspects of student life, such as sports seasons and holiday breaks.

A crucial part of their go-to team would be a [geotechnical engineering](#) partner with a reputation for deep technical excellence. The school's business manager turned to their landscape architect, who had worked with Haley & Aldrich previously and asked for our expertise. The first project was developing and executing a master plan for new athletic fields, including lacrosse and soccer. That first project showed the school the value of our team's geotechnical expertise, so they asked us to contribute to more campus projects—and we're still working with them 10 years later. They look to us for our technical excellence, ability to collaborate with design team members, and proactively address and mitigate underground challenges.

## Our approach

Our geotechnical team has proactively addressed subsurface challenges early on in our work with the school and collaborated with other stakeholders to develop design considerations. From the first project, we set a unique tone by engaging early—collaborating with the landscape architect and other stakeholders during the design concept phase to anticipate geotechnical challenges. We helped the school get ahead of potentially costly schedule delays caused by sediment settlement issues, shallow bedrock, and bedrock removal.

We used available data to ensure elements such as flooding, environmental impact, and long-term performance were considered in the master plan. Together with the landscape architect, we developed the best recommendations for executing the athletic fields project. This forward-thinking, collaborative, team approach limited the potential for future change orders and helped the project stay within budget and finish on time — before the fall sports season.

After that first project, the school turned to our geotechnical team early on when planning campus renovations and expansions to identify potential underground impacts and develop a scope of work with design team members. Sensitive to the school's needs, we conducted investigative work on weekends or when facilities are unoccupied to limit the impact on students and faculty — and kept them safe.

Recently, our team's knowledge of campus bedrock conditions helped the school avoid potential budget and timeline issues by anticipating pitfalls when building an addition to the campus chapel. Since it is a historic building, we had to ensure there was little-to-no impact to the existing structure of the chapel. We saved the school significant costs by

recommending that they remove bedrock from the new structure's footprint. As with all of the school's projects, our approach ensured that the outcome would benefit students while not disturbing their lives.

Always taking a proactive, collaborative approach, partnering with other contractors to form a cohesive team, understanding design and performance criteria, and having the right expertise are just a few reasons why the school continues to depend on the Haley & Aldrich geotechnical team.

*"We don't just do borings and then disappear. We understand performance design ideas and work with schools and other contractors to get the best results. True collaboration limits costly surprises down the road."*

Scott Goldkamp, Haley & Aldrich

## Value delivered

- Developed partnerships with other contractors to form a long-term, cohesive team to create design recommendations with campus objectives in mind-
- Engaged with the school early to help avoid construction and design surprise costs by understanding the school's soil and bedrock conditions
- Used information the school had about its below-grade conditions during the conceptual design phase to predict what could impact the master plan

For more information, contact:



[Scott Goldkamp](#)

Program Manager, Geotechnical Engineering