

### Complete Overhaul for Tomorrow's School:

#### Drees & Sommer Makes Educational Buildings Fit for the Future

- **Drees & Sommer: upgrades, new building and conversions are the answer to dilapidated school buildings**
- ***Gymnasium Grünwald* (near Munich) demonstrates that the school of the future is digital**
- **With the state school construction company *Landesbetrieb SBH | Schulbau Hamburg*, the city of Hamburg invests EUR 370 to EUR 390 million per annum in construction measures for Hamburg's educational establishments**
- **Federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia: the city of Cologne is due to complete eight big school building projects this year**

In late summer, school is discussed more than almost any other subject. In particular, the complex, often unexploited construction potential of German educational establishments shows that much action is needed. Drees & Sommer, a planning and consulting company specializing in construction projects and buildings, operates as a strategic partner for public educational institutions. It reveals that, at municipal level, strategic real estate management offers several approaches for changing the most common criticisms into real opportunities.

#### Moving Away from Architectural Eyesores Towards Attractive Education Buildings

German education buildings are offensive to look at. They have an extremely bad reputation, not only among students, parents and teachers, but also in the media. The dialog is dominated by the same old issues, such as the shortage of school spaces, the postponement of investment, and the lack of new teachers. These are criticisms which, according to Drees & Sommer, could worsen the dilapidated condition of buildings. In short, German school buildings are devoid of any attractiveness. Most of them are antiquated spaces, which are not exactly showpieces as German educational establishments, and certainly do not create a desirable working environment for young prospective teachers.

In order to change this situation and for the German school infrastructure to remain viable, a variety of spatial and organizational requirements have to be met. According to Matthias Schulle, school building expert and Partner at Drees & Sommer, these are special challenges that can only be met in a professional manner, using integrated construction measures: 'What is needed is to give German schools a facelift by strategic new building and conversion measures.

It is only by undertaking comprehensive upgrading work that municipalities can really show the criticisms and wishes of parents, students, teachers, and prospective teachers are being taken seriously.

The school building is not merely a shell to keep the rain out; as buildings, educational establishments have to reflect what they are supposed to be: places of assembly, inspiration, and – especially – future potential.’ How that works is shown by projects in the cities of Hamburg, Munich and Cologne.

### **School Can also Be Digital – *Gymnasium Grünwald* in the German Federal State of Bavaria**

One of the greatest shortcomings of German schools is antiquated classroom technical equipment and patchy or nonexistent digital infrastructure. How modern education buildings can succeed in exploiting digital potential is demonstrated by the *Gymnasium Grünwald* high school near the city of Munich, for which Drees & Sommer was engaged to provide a range of services. Embedded in an educational concept that is also echoed by the architecture of the school building, digital technology dominates day-to-day teaching at *Gymnasium Grünwald*. Centrally located large monitors, ceiling-based utility supply systems, interactive whiteboards and biodynamic lighting form the technological basis for this. It enables students to obtain extensive media skills, ranging from the digital attendance register to robot programming and tablet learning. Drees & Sommer was responsible for organizing this entire project. The experts also developed the energy design and used simulations to ensure an optimal supply of fresh air and daylight. And they did this with great success: recently presented with the German *STEM-friendly digital school award*, *Gymnasium Grünwald* is preparing its students for a digital future.

### **SBH | *Schulbau Hamburg* – a Federal State Stands Up for Schools**

For Drees & Sommer’s school building experts, construction projects are always completed in close cooperation with those in positions of responsibility in the federal state in question. How the cooperation between policymakers and real estate service providers can work is demonstrated by the city of Hamburg, a trailblazer in matters of school development. The Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg launched its school construction program back in 2010. Since 2012 this has been pursued strategically alongside a framework plan for school construction. With an annual budget of EUR 370 to EUR 390 million, *SBH | Schulbau Hamburg*, in partnership with more than 350 state schools, focuses on new building, refurbishment and management of Hamburg’s educational establishments. *Healthy building* is obligatory, in conjunction with healthy indoor air, and it goes without saying that a high standard of interior design is required.

Many schools can remain open while refurbishment works are carried out, keeping to a minimum any interruptions in the day-to-day running of the school.

It is precisely these efforts at regional level that yield so many positive results, the main ones being transparent identification of needs, clearly defined standards of quality for extensions and new buildings, and an official school development plan. For consultants and service providers such as Drees & Sommer, the transparency in *SBH | Schulbau Hamburg's* tender offers and processes is a strong advantage. Access to these enables real estate service providers to complete school projects sustainably and with the focus on the user. Projects include the refurbishment of *Gymnasium Rahlstedt* and the construction of a new multifunctional replacement building for *Irena-Sendler-Schule* in the Wellingsbüttel district. Project implementation is always centered on a user requirements analysis and a standard approach in which political and educational aspects are integrated into the project planning process.

### **North Rhine-Westphalia's Promotional Program for High Quality and State of the Art Schools**

North Rhine-Westphalia is also investing in its municipal school infrastructure. With NRW.BANK, the federal state launched the four-year *Good Schools 2020* promotional program, which runs until 2020. EUR 2 billion is being invested into refurbishing, upgrading and extending the municipal school infrastructure. Drees & Sommer's school building experts are currently providing support on several educational building projects in North Rhine-Westphalia, with project steering services being provided for some of these. The projects include the *Humboldt Gymnasium* in Cologne, one of eight major projects due for completion in Cologne in the current year. The school features a complex façade and a chamber music hall, which is designed for festivities and meets high acoustic standards. The extension was built over a two-and-a-half year period without disrupting the school routine, which necessitated a complex urban logistics plan. The new building was completed on schedule, in time for the start of the fall semester.

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## Media Release

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