Fieldston's New Cell Culture Labs, Complete with Smartboards
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As long as anyone can remember, the Fieldston science room 410A, otherwise known as the “museum,” housed an elaborate mural and countless preserved specimens. Unfortunately, time had taken a toll on the museum. The mural had faded and lost much of its original luster, and many of the specimens had fallen victim to neglect and decomposition. In recent years this room became more of a storage space for laboratory supplies and was inaccessible to students. However, this summer the museum underwent a tremendous metamorphosis and has emerged as a modern cell culture lab. During the transformation, the beautiful original display cases were salvaged and relocated into the main lab of 410. The best-preserved specimens were rescued and displayed in the main lab, where they are once again viewed by students on a daily basis.

Inside the museum, the mural was given a complete facelift, restoring it to its original splendor. Meanwhile, the entire room was gutted and given a complete makeover. An extension to the room contains a new sink, refrigerator, and dishwasher. New cabinets and countertops containing an array of modern cell culture laboratory equipment, including a culture hood, incubator, gel electrophoresis chambers, and three digital microscopes with dedicated laptop computers now fill the room.

This conversion will have a tremendous impact on our science students. The Molecular Biology and Advanced Topics in Biology students will now be capable of performing experiments using the latest...
techniques involving recombinant DNA technology. Further, this new space provides the perfect environment for students in the Independent Research course to conduct their ongoing research projects.

This past summer, room 410, the main lab, was renovated with new cabinets and sinks along one wall, a new ceiling with new lights and fans, and a ceiling-mounted projector and a Smartboard, an interactive whiteboard system at the front of the room. (With a Smartboard, you can project onto it from a computer, VCR, or DVD player. It then acts like a giant touch screen; you can also use it as a whiteboard and draw or write on it. Then when the lesson is finished, you can post it on your website and email it to your students.)

Last summer, 410B was renovated from an abandoned makeshift greenhouse into an up-to-date wet-lab. When the renovations in 410A are viewed in conjunction with recent updates in 410 and 410B, the entire 410-laboratory suite represents the prototype for a modern high school teaching and learning environment.