

Summary: Capital campaign to return Barton Academy to a vibrant world studies school in the heart of Downtown

About the Project

The Barton Academy Foundation will raise \$10.1 million to renovate Barton Academy's interior for a state-of-the-art world studies school. This public/private partnership with Mobile County Public Schools will result in a world-class academy responding to the vital role international companies play in Mobile's economy. The school will be equipped and operated by Mobile County Public Schools, which already has spent \$4.2 million on exterior renovations since 2013.

About the School

Barton Academy for Advanced World Studies, a signature academy of Mobile County Public Schools, will provide diverse, multicultural learning for approximately 300 students in grades 6-9. The curriculum will include high-level courses in all core subjects – science, technology, engineering, math (STEM), English and social studies – with an emphasis on foreign languages, world geography and global economics. The goal is to prepare students for college success and leadership in an interconnected world.

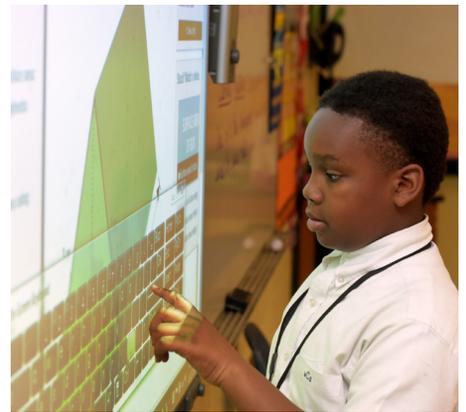
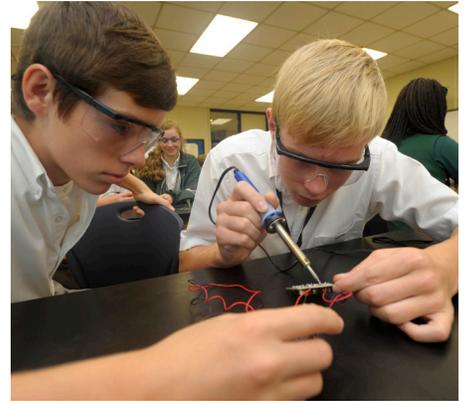
Who Benefits:

- **Students** receive an advanced education in a field with a limitless future. They greatly enhance their chances at great scholarships, great colleges and great careers.
- The **community** gains an economic development tool that makes us more competitive and more attractive to international investment.
- **Businesses**, both local and foreign, gain a workforce with global skills. The academy provides a truly portable education for foreign families who want their children to keep pace with international standards.
- **Mobile's revitalized Downtown** will have a new school in the heart of Downtown – a major draw for new investment and residents.
- The **school system** gains a national reputation for providing a quality education that is truly world-class.

Barton History

Barton Academy is much more than an architectural treasure; it's a symbol of bold moves that have made Mobile an innovator in education for almost two centuries. Constructing such a monumental school in 1836 for a city of only 13,000 showed boundless confidence and vision for growth. Now Mobilians have the opportunity to make history once again by joining this compelling effort to renovate Alabama's oldest and first public school as a modern world studies academy.

Vacant since 2007, Barton landed twice on Alabama's list of "Places in Peril." But the beloved landmark sprang back to life in 2015, when Mobile County Public Schools completed a \$4.2 million exterior renovation – renewing every surface from the fence to the top of the dome.



About Barton Academy for Advanced World Studies

Barton Academy for Advanced World Studies, a signature academy of Mobile County Public Schools, will provide a diverse, multicultural learning experience for approximately 300 students in grades 6-9. The curriculum will include high-level courses in all core subjects – science, technology, engineering, math (STEM), English and social studies – with an emphasis on foreign languages, world geography and global economics. Upon completion of ninth grade, students will be proficient in at least one foreign language and will have the ability to think critically and communicate across cultures.



The school is a direct response to the vital role international trade plays in Mobile's economy. The goal is to prepare students for college success and leadership in an interconnected world.

Following 9th grade, students will be prepared for transition to aligned college and career programs at Mobile's signature academy-level high school programs, particularly the **International Studies Academy, International Baccalaureate Academy, University of Alabama Early College Academy or Military Academy at Murphy High School.**

Curriculum

Barton Academy will emphasize comparative studies (United States to other countries) in all areas of the curriculum and take advantage of our thriving international community by establishing partnerships with community organizations, corporations and business leaders.

The curriculum will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Intense foreign language instruction at all grade levels (including Spanish, German, Russian or Chinese)
- Project-based cultural studies of individual countries and regions
- International program opportunities
- Opportunities to earn high school credits while in grade 8 and college credit in grade 9
- Instruction by highly qualified teachers with proven records of success
- Participation in community international activities and arts programs

Entrance Requirements

Because of its accelerated curriculum, the school will have rigorous entrance requirements. A 3.4 GPA or 85% yearly average in all core classes will be required for admission and continuation. The system will offer equitable access for students with qualifying GPAs, including under-served populations.

Paving the way to a brighter future

World studies schools throughout the U.S. pave the way to scholarships and admission to some of the best and most-competitive universities in the world. Research shows critical thinking skills, creativity and academic achievement are significantly higher for students learning and using a second or third language.

Barton Academy for Advanced World Studies will be a winning program for ALL of Mobile

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■ The **community** gains an economic development tool that makes us more competitive and more attractive to international investment.

■ **Businesses**, both local and foreign, gain a workforce with global skills. The academy provides a truly portable education for foreign families who want their children to keep pace with international standards.

■ **Mobile's revitalized Downtown**, with its growing residential population, will have a new school in the heart of Downtown – a major draw for new investment and residents.

■ The **school system** gains a national reputation for providing a quality education that is truly world-class. **And that benefits us all.**

About Barton Academy Foundation

The Barton Academy Foundation (BAF) has its roots in a preservation effort to save historic Barton Academy. When the school system moved its central offices from Barton in 2007, the landmark was immediately threatened by vacancy and a lack of maintenance. Local preservation groups – including Mobile Historic Development Commission, Historic Mobile Preservation Society and Downtown Mobile Alliance – rallied support to preserve Barton and formed the Barton Academy Historic Preservation and Restoration Committee in 2009 to explore a new life for the historic complex.

Working with specialists at Mobile County Public Schools and the University of South Alabama, the group looked at a variety of ideas before enthusiastically endorsing a plan to create a world studies school. **Barton Academy for Advanced World Studies represents the best of all possible outcomes: a major landmark is preserved and reborn in a way that enhances and benefits public schools, Downtown and the community.**

The Barton committee evolved into Barton Academy Foundation and was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The Foundation partners with Mobile County Public Schools in raising funds to create Barton Academy for Advanced World Studies as an innovative school and an engine for growing the area's economy.

Following the investment of \$4.2 million on exterior repairs and renovations by Mobile County Public Schools, the Foundation has set a goal of raising \$10.1 million for interior renovations. The MCPSS will provide funding for all on-going operations, classroom equipment and technology once the building is completed.

The Foundation is seeking contributions from businesses, corporations, foundations and individuals who will join us in preparing students to succeed in the global economy. Response to the world studies plan has been enthusiastic from business leaders, economic development leaders, preservationists, students, parents and Barton alumni.

In addition to providing a world-class education, the school will make Mobile more attractive for international investment and jobs. For students, Barton will pave the way for acceptance into the finest universities worldwide and prepare them to succeed in a globally connected and interdependent world.



Reinventing this celebrated school as Barton Academy for Advanced World Studies will make our area more attractive to foreign investment and help secure our position as the Gulf Coast's international economic leader. It will prepare students to excel in a global marketplace by providing a program guided by international curriculum standards.

Barton Academy History

In 1836 public education was rare in America. Yet Mobile saw a need and made history by hiring the nation's top architects and educators to build a monumental public school that would set the standard for our state. Now Mobilians have the opportunity to make history again by joining the compelling effort to renovate Barton Academy as a modern world studies academy – a project perfectly aligned with Mobile's future and growing global economy.

Led by Willoughby Barton, Mobile County established the state's first public school system in 1826 and began building Barton Academy in 1836. For the design, the school commission selected architects James Gallier Sr. and brothers James and Charles Dakin, who began their careers in New York and made their mark creating some of the best-known buildings in New Orleans.

The school commission bought an entire block on Government Street in 1830, but problems raising funds delayed construction until the state legislature allowed a lottery. By early 1836 they had \$50,000 in lottery funds, a \$15,000 municipal loan and private donations, including a large gift from local millionaire Henry Hitchcock.

In 1839 students began attending Barton – but for a tuition fee. The construction debt prevented full and free public education, and classrooms were rented to private schools with costs supplemented by the school commission. After more than a decade, a new board of commissioners reorganized the school system and reopened Barton as a fully public school in November 1852. This system became the model for public education throughout Alabama.

Aside from being closed during the Civil War, Barton was Mobile County's public high school until Murphy High School opened in 1926. Barton served as an elementary and middle school until the 1960s when it became the school system's central office. In 2007 offices moved to west Mobile.

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Fundraising is underway to renovate the interior for use as a world studies academy and prepare this old school for a dramatic new role in the 21st century and beyond.

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