

Rogers Park & Edgewater

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Charter School Puts Finishing Touches on New \$1.5 Million Gym Updated May 1, 2013 1:43pm

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ROGERS PARK — The [Chicago Math and Science Academy](#) is putting the finishing touches on a \$1.5 million gym, equipped with a scoreboard, four basketball hoops, fold-out bleachers and a partition.

About a year in the making, the gym will be the first permanent home for the charter school's sports teams and physical education classes.

"It's a big relief to actually have the facility you need for a successful gym class and basketball program," said Jennifer D'Ambrosio, the school's high school girls basketball coach.

In the four years she has worked at the academy, she's had to bus her team from the school at 7212 N. Clark St. to [Willye B. White Field House](#) at 1610 W. Howard St. for practices. Other times the team practiced in the empty lot behind the school and up against the Metra tracks.

Her students can't wait to have a gym of their own, she said. They keep asking her when they'd be able to hit the court.

"They're excited," she said.

All told, 12 to 15 teams from the charter school will use the gym.

It should open within a month, D'Ambrosio said, after the floors and bleachers are installed and the city approves occupancy.

The school began construction last summer.

Kenneth Johnson, the school's dean of students, said he wanted to publicly thank neighboring **Romanian Kosher Sausage Co.** for putting up with construction noise. "They put up with all of our crap" since crews broke ground, he said. "Thanks for tolerating our construction."

The Chicago Math and Science Academy, one of [Concept Charter School](#)'s 27 institutions throughout the Midwest, opened in Rogers Park in 2004.

Concept [won approval from the city's zoning board](#) Tuesday to open its second Chicago charter school, Horizon Science Charter School Academy, in McKinley Park. The proposal needs final approval from the City Council.

