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JULY 2025
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CLADDING
A GUIDE FOR FACILITY
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**ELEVATING CAMPUS
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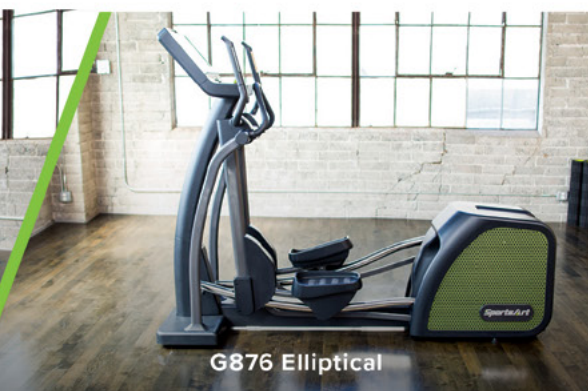
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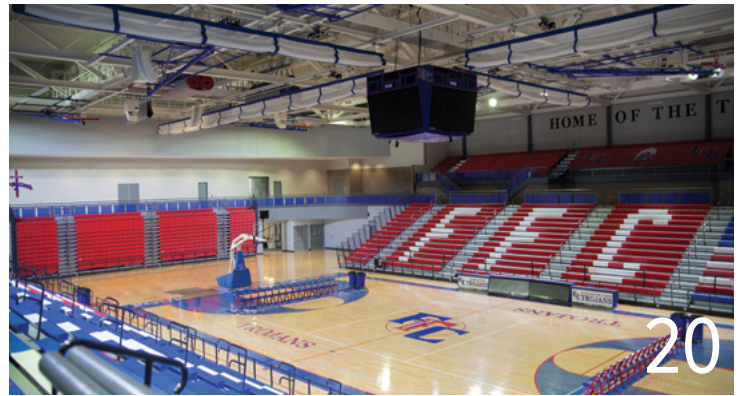
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Possibility and Hope at Spring Hill College

As chair of the Division of Education and assistant professor at Spring Hill College, Paige Dannelley has navigated the challenges of new educational requirements with a steady hand. Her focus is always on the hopeful, positive changes future teachers can facilitate—in their students' lives, in their local schools, and in their communities—drawing from a simple premise: "Every child needs a great teacher."



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Securing School Campuses: A Modern Approach to Access Control

As campuses grow more complex, schools rely on access-control systems to secure facilities, manage entry, and ensure safety. We explore their purpose, key components, challenges, and best practices for effective implementation.

Editor's Letter

JULY 2024

Dear Readers,

As the mercury climbs and the lawns get one last mow before orientation weekend, it's officially that sacred season on campus: Summer Project Crunch Time. If you've been anywhere near a private college this June or July, you've likely seen the signs—scaffolding on the science building, freshly poured sidewalks still roped off with caution tape, and a facilities team running on iced coffee and sheer willpower.

Summer is when campus transformation takes center stage. With the students (mostly) gone, it's full speed ahead for upgrades, overhauls, and all the projects that “we'll get to after commencement.” Now's the time for refreshing athletic facility seating (those bleachers won't bolt themselves), fine-tuning landscaping to wow the fall tours, tuning up the HVAC for those late-August move-ins, and of course—security systems. With student safety always a top priority, many campuses are rolling out enhanced monitoring, access control, and emergency communication systems before the fall semester kicks off.

In this issue, we're spotlighting four vital facility sectors that deserve a summer glow-up: campus security, performing arts auditoriums, athletic facility seating, and campus grounds. Whether it's installing the latest backstage tech in your arts center, replacing worn bleachers in the gym, or giving your grounds team a standing ovation for keeping the petunias pristine during a heat wave, we've got insights, innovations, and inspiration.

We've also taken a look at how these facility upgrades play a deeper role in recruitment, retention, and student engagement. Yes, students are coming for the academics—but a welcoming campus with safe, comfortable, and beautiful spaces never hurts.

So, here's to you—the planners, the doers, the fixers—turning summer's long to-do lists into August's finished projects. By the time the marching band warms up, the dining hall opens, and another class moves in, it'll all look effortless (well, almost).

Thanks for letting us be part of your summer hustle—and your year-round planning journey. Stay cool (literally and figuratively),

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Possibility and Hope at Spring Hill College

BY CYNTHIA MWENJA, PhD

Paige Dannelley, chair of the Division of Education and assistant professor at Spring Hill College, focuses on making sure that graduates of the program have the tools, competencies, and resources they need to immediately thrive in their classroom teaching jobs. She works tirelessly to recruit and mentor education students, and those relationships continue long after the students have graduated and entered the field.

In a profession that can be challenging and undervalued, Dannelley reminds faculty members and students to center hope in order to create the positive changes possible within their local schools and communities.

Dannelley's personal and professional background led to her current role. Four years ago, she retired from a career as a K-12 educator in Guntersville, Alabama, in order to find a position in which she could guide pre-service teachers.

As part of a family of educators—both of her parents and her sister are in the field, as well—she knew that she had the classroom and administrative experience to offer meaningful direction to future educators. She also knew that such caring guidance would be vital for pre-service and new educators at a time of teacher burnout and shortages. The position at Spring Hill opened at the right time, and Dannelley says that everything came together for her to secure her “dream job.”

Responding Deftly to Changes and Challenges

Dannelley stepped into her role at Spring Hill during a time of transition in its Division of Education. The Alabama legislature had passed new literacy and numeracy acts which aim to improve reading and math instruction in Alabama public schools, where many Spring Hill graduates find employment; the acts caused many education departments across the state to reconsider the content of their curricula. Spring Hill's Division of Education had also undergone extensive faculty turnover around the same time. Additionally, Dannelley started her work when Spring Hill was under accreditation review, so she was also in charge of the details involved in that intensive process. Michael Ferry, associate provost for Academic Affairs at Spring Hill College, values the way that Dannelley “quickly generated stability and constancy” in this time of transition with “an incredibly steady hand.”

Rather than being overwhelmed with the new educational requirements and other

challenges, Dannelley embraced the moment as an opportunity to reimagine what her division could deliver to Spring Hill students—and thereby, to Alabama classrooms. Over two years, Dannelley worked closely with her team to completely re-design their literacy courses; they drew on current research in the science of reading to include the most recent literacy strategies in order to fulfill the new state standards. They took stock of needed changes by assessing their previous courses and collaborating with national experts via conferences and personal communication. As Ferry states, they were also in contact with the Alabama State Department of Education to ensure their curriculum complied with the changing standards. Dannelley notes that wholesale course revision of the type they undertook presents additional challenges in an institution of higher education; once they decided the direction they wanted to take and how to meet the new Alabama requirements, they then needed to work with the Spring Hill curriculum oversight committee to move through the process of getting the changes approved.

As Dannelley took stock of the needs in Alabama schools and the expertise within her division, she and the stakeholders redesigning the curriculum decided to focus their program mainly on elementary education. As she observes, the state needs strong general education teachers at that level, and the faculty members in the Division of Education have the requisite strengths in K-6 instruction. Elisabeth Raftery, assistant professor of Education at Spring Hill, remarks that Dannelley was trusted to “guide the ship” through these seas of substantial change due to her extensive classroom and administrative expertise and the collaborative information networks she had cultivated.

In working through the process of redesigning the curriculum, Dannelley and her team were guided by the principle of wanting their graduates to be fully ready “on day one” as classroom teachers. This vision means that they strive to make sure that each Spring Hill

Division of Education graduate has a firm foundation in all of the strategies and skills they need to be effective classroom teachers right from the start. Additionally, Dannelley says, they pay close attention to helping their students develop vital “soft skills” that will enable them to be more effective teachers: the faculty members aim to ensure their graduates are both confident and emotionally regulated, that they believe in the purpose of education, and that they know how to care for themselves once they have secured employment in this demanding profession.

The first class to benefit from the new curriculum graduated in May 2025. Dannelley has been excited to watch them move through the program and to see the variety of places they have headed. In Alabama, education majors who have completed their undergraduate degrees can apply for Class B teaching certificates, allowing them to secure employment as classroom teachers once they pass praxis exams and other required assessments. Some

members of the 2025 class will be working in public and private K-6 schools; some will be volunteering in a Jesuit mission; and some will continue their academic studies in graduate school. Dannelley appreciates that the students are moving into many diverse kinds of positions because her goal is for each student to “cross the stage at graduation with lots of choices.”

Learning from and with Community Partners

Dannelley emphasizes the idea that, because their students will be serving children, their division’s practice really matters. She points out that this understanding creates a sense of urgency for Spring Hill faculty members and students alike. Dannelley and her team are maintaining the relationships they developed in the curriculum revision process so that they can continually bring information from current research into their classrooms, providing their students with the most effective teaching methods.

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Dannelley wants to avoid stagnation in her program, so she regularly seeks feedback from community partners to use for improvement. For one example, Raftery notes that Dannelley frequently polls the principals of schools where Spring Hill students are placed to ask what other skills or competencies they need. Dannelley wants to identify any holes in the curriculum so that their students are ready to be as effective as possible when they enter the classroom as teachers, whether in student placements or in their professional lives.

Dannelley also facilitates the sharing of valuable lessons among the student body and campus community. At the end of each academic year, she organizes an event at which each graduating education major gives a short speech discussing their development as a teacher over the previous four years. Strikingly, the Spring Hill Division of Education ensures that its students have frequent school-based

placements beginning in their first year, so every student has a wealth of experience to discuss. This event draws many attendees, including fellow students and family members. Spring Hill's president and CFO each make a point of being present, as well—the latter saying that the stories help him to remember “why we do what we do.”

Raftery also calls attention to the annual dinner that Dannelley arranges with the division's community partners in order to gain additional important feedback. During their time together, Dannelley asks what Spring Hill's Division of Education can do better. Additionally, she asks the group one of her favorite questions: “What gave you hope?” Raftery points out that Dannelley often asks this question of her students when they reflect on challenging classroom experiences. Dannelley invites her student to notice what gave them hope in the situation, even with the challenges. She also invites her students

to consider what might they be able to do in response to the situation in order to make positive change.

Mentor with a View to the Future

Dannelley says that Spring Hill attracts many kinds of education majors, and many of them have strong ties to their communities; they wish to be trained as teachers so that they can return to their communities in order to improve them. This goal aligns with Dannelley's philosophy that “you cannot change the world, but you can change where you are.” As she notes, schools often play a part in the feel of a local community—thriving schools can engender local residents' trust. As a result, Dannelley states, “We want our students to understand that impact; they won't get rich, but they will have an immeasurable impact on many lives.”

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to the education profession. In the future, she aims to expand her role as an ambassador for education, sharing her own stories from her professional career. She has observed that many college students do not want to study education, and those who do often get pushback from their friends and family who see such work as undesirable. By contrast, Dannelley hopes to help everyone see that education is still an honorable occupation; her pitch is both simple and profound: “Every child needs a great teacher.”

Dannelley is that great teacher to her own students and advisees. Ferry admires how “incredibly responsive” Dannelley is to her students; they look up to her and appreciate the enduring connection she makes with them. Raftery has enjoyed Dannelley’s mentorship in several capacities. Raftery was an administrative assistant in the Division of Education when Dannelley took the chair position, and she subsequently earned a degree

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in Education from Spring Hill. After earning her master's degree, Raftery began covering classes as an adjunct in the division, and she is now working full time as a tenure-track professor. At each step of the way, Raftery appreciated Dannelley's mentorship. Through Dannelley's gentle guidance, Raftery was able to realize that her calling is to develop future teachers, particularly those who wish to work in Catholic schools. Raftery knows that she would not have "had the courage or inclination" to have this realization on her own, so she is incredibly thankful for Dannelley's guidance.

Raftery sees that Dannelley "constantly" meets with many others who appreciate her mentorship, as well. Many of Dannelley's former students, now working in their own classrooms, call with questions such as how to manage specific children's needs or how to collaborate productively with their administrators. As Raftery says, "Forming future teachers doesn't end at graduation; the first five years are crucial." Out of love for her profession and her students, Dannelley selflessly provides mentoring support for the long haul.

As Dannelley points out, the field of education can be extremely challenging. Beyond the expectations of her professorial role, she feels called to take on roles in coaching, mentoring, and developing future educators. Raftery notes that Dannelley also gets tapped for demanding campus service work because her voice and experience are so valuable to the Spring Hill College community.

Despite the rigors of the career and demands of the job, Dannelley offers a model for other educators by ensuring that the students in her program have the means and capabilities they need to excel in their work. She provides inspiration to the field by focusing on the hopeful, positive changes that teachers can facilitate—in their students' lives, in their local schools, and in their communities—reminding everyone she encounters that education continues to be not only a viable but also a vital profession.



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SAFETY & SECURITY

Securing School Campuses: A Modern Approach to Access Control

BY MIKE BUSBY

In education today, ensuring the safety of students, faculty, and staff has never been more important. As campuses grow and become more complex, schools are turning to comprehensive access-control systems to secure facilities, manage entry points, and provide peace of mind for everyone.

A well-designed access control system goes beyond simply locking doors. It forms the foundation of a school's overall security strategy, offering tools to manage who has access to what, when, and under which conditions. What follows is an in-depth look at the purpose, components, challenges, and best practices of implementing a comprehensive access-control system across school campuses with an emphasis on smart planning, scalable solutions, and long-term support.

The Growing Need for Campus Access Control

Schools are no longer the open environments they once were. Increased concerns around intrusions, emergencies, and unauthorized access have placed significant pressure on

school administrators to take proactive security measures. While cameras, fences, and resource officers all contribute to a safer environment, electronic access control provides the agility and precision needed in today's world.

Access-control systems help schools:

- Prevent unauthorized entry
- Manage after-hours and scheduled access
- Log entry activity for investigations or audits
- Enable building lockdowns during emergencies
- Streamline access credentials for students, staff, and visitors
- Support centralized control across multiple buildings

For large or multi-site campuses, centralized management and device integration is key to effectiveness.

Key Components of a Campus-Wide System

A reliable access-control system combines hardware, software, and infrastructure into a seamless whole. The following components make up a modern access control strategy for educational facilities:

1. Controlled entry points. Electronic locks, keypads, card readers, and intercoms serve as the gatekeepers to each building. These devices can be installed at main entrances, staff-only doors, or restricted areas like data rooms or science labs.

For example, the Viking K-1770-IP combines a keypad and proximity card reader with VoIP communication, ideal for controlled access at faculty entrances or dormitories. For visitor entry, the E-32-IP stainless steel intercom offers a vandal-resistant option that provides reliable voice communication over SIP networks.

2. Credential management. Staff and student credentials come in various forms: PINs, proximity cards, or mobile credentials. The management system should allow administrators to add or remove users quickly and assign different levels of access by time or location. Compact card readers can be installed at internal doors or gates to control access by ID badge.

3. Intercom and communication systems. Entry intercoms, especially at main doors, allow staff to screen visitors and remotely unlock doors when appropriate. VoIP intercoms that integrate with existing phone systems offer cost-effective installation and centralized control.

4. Relay controllers and door interfaces. Relay modules activate electric strikes or maglocks when access is granted. For remote management, IP-based controllers like the Viking RC-4A allow doors to be triggered across the network, with scheduling and override capabilities.

5. Centralized software tools. Managing

dozens, or even hundreds, of devices across a campus requires intuitive software. Systems that support remote access, batch programming, and firmware updates help IT departments operate more efficiently.

The Viking Device Manager software simplifies the setup and maintenance of IP-based Viking equipment by allowing users to manage devices in bulk from a single dashboard.

Designing for Education

Every school has its own set of requirements, depending on layout, size, population, and existing infrastructure. A successful access control strategy should include the number and type of access points into the campus; who needs access, and when; integration with existing phones or security systems; plans for expansion or future construction; and emergency response protocols. A campus may begin with securing only a few primary entrances and expand gradually to internal doors, portable classrooms, or other facilities.

Every campus also faces its own set of challenges when investing in or upgrading an access-control system, but those hurdles shouldn't prevent campuses from ensuring the safety of their communities. For instance, there may be budget limitations: many school security upgrades rely on grants or phased funding. However, modular systems that don't require licensing fees or mandatory subscriptions can reduce long-term costs.

Buy-in from all user groups—from administrators to custodians—is crucial. Including stakeholders in planning helps ensure the system is practical and effective across the board. For everyone's sake, systems must be secure but not burdensome. Keypads with backlit buttons, voice-guided intercoms, and clearly labeled entry points improve ease of use while maintaining protection.

Phased Implementation Strategy

Schools often implement access control systems

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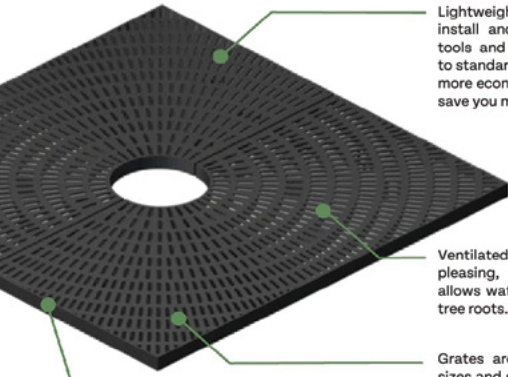
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in stages to align with budget and logistics. A typical phased rollout might look like this:

- **Phase 1:** Secure main entrances with intercoms and card readers.
- **Phase 2:** Extend access control to faculty entrances, storage areas, and server rooms.
- **Phase 3:** Integrate paging and notification

systems for emergency alerts.

- **Phase 4:** Centralize credential management and reporting across buildings.
- **Phase 5:** Include exterior facilities like field houses, garages, or temporary classrooms.

Each phase should maintain compatibility

with the previous one, allowing the system to scale smoothly.

Integrating Emergency Communication

An effective access-control system is closely tied to emergency communication. Paging systems, panic buttons, and two-way communication are essential during drills, lockdowns, or actual emergencies.

For instance, SIP-compatible paging adapters like the Viking PA-IP can connect to existing speaker systems and broadcast alerts from any phone on the network. Devices like the 40TB-IP allow two-way audio in hallways or classrooms, doubling as both a paging speaker and intercom.

Maintenance and Support

Access control isn't a "set it and forget it" system. Schools need a plan for credential management and periodic audits; firmware and software updates; routine equipment checks; and staff training and refreshers. Working with a provider that offers free lifetime support can reduce long-term maintenance burdens and provide peace of mind.

Meanwhile, access control continues to evolve alongside technology. Future enhancements may include mobile credentials and touchless access; biometric verification at high-security doors; cloud-based access management; and AI-driven alerts and data analysis. Schools that prioritize compatibility and scalability now will be better positioned to adopt these innovations as they become mainstream.

A thoughtfully designed access-control system is one of the most effective ways to enhance safety and security on school campuses. With modern technologies, clear planning, and reliable components, schools can gain greater control over who enters their buildings without disrupting day-to-day learning.

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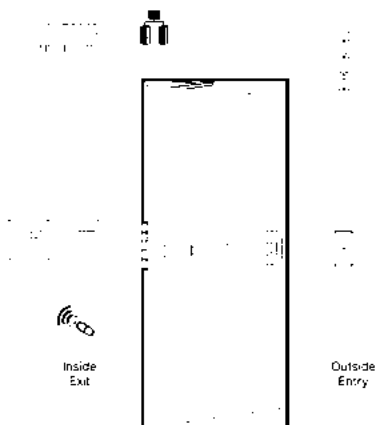


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ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Mike Busby is the Sales and Marketing Manager at Viking Electronics. With a background in manufacturing and product development, he supports customers, drives marketing strategy, and represents Viking at industry events nationwide, helping shape solutions in security and communication.

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According to Sean Farrell, senior project manager at Layton Construction, establishing collaborative relationships is key to successful construction projects. One of the best examples of this maxim is a multi-phase university project for which Layton Construction is serving as construction manager. Layton, part of the STO Building Group, is a nationally-ranked commercial contractor with ten offices around the United States. The firm specializes in healthcare, industrial, warehousing, and higher education projects. As construction manager, Layton hires the sub-contractors and manages and oversees the project as part of a team.



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— Sean Farrell, Sr Project Manager
Layton Construction

Hope's Brian Whalen, Vice President of Sales, acknowledges that the project was a real test of Hope's capabilities. He is especially proud that they Hope's was able to expedite the schedule even in the face of design changes and in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. The shop drawing approval process – including preparation of blueprints of windows and doors with all setting conditions, sizes, customized designs, and required testing – took longer than normal. Changes were made along the way that might have pushed back the delivery schedules for some, but Hope's made adjustments during the production process to deliver all materials on time. Whalen gave a nod to Joey Riggan and the team at Alexander Metals, the frame and glass installer team, saying the overall project went extremely smoothly once the frames were on site.

Says Whalen, “It was a fantastic collaboration among all the parties. Hope's worked closely as the manufacturer to fulfill the architect's design vision, and then the installer worked closely with us to make sure everything was installed executed properly.”



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Hope's® Windows, Inc., is a business based on 100 percent customized work design and manufacturing. Hope's provides a specialized skillset to assist clients in design and production of unique window and door assemblies. Meeting the expectations of Layton Construction in combination with the aesthetic vision of the client and architect was definitely a challenge. The overall experience was a testament to the quality standards of the university and an honor to be a part of. In business since 1912, Hope's had the global experience to make it happen.

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Seating Solved

HOW INTERKAL HELPED A COLORADO SCHOOL REMAKE ITS ARENA—AND WHAT THEY CAN DO FOR YOURS

BY ANNIE THELEN

South of Denver and nestled in the heart of Colorado is where you can find Fountain-Fort Carson High School, District 8. It's the home of the Trojans of Fountain-Fort Carson (FFC for short) and inside is where you can find the Trojan Arena, the school's massive gymnasium arena capable of seating over 4,000 spectators. This gym holds countless events for the school and community, and when it started to show wear and tear, the team at FFCHS knew it was time to revitalize the space.

continued....



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The arena needed an upgrade, specifically the retractable bleachers. They wanted an innovative solution for their seating—something eye-catching, durable, and comfortable for every spectator—and turned to Interkal as their seating partner. Interkal is an industry leader in fixed and retractable seating products and more, with installations completed all over the globe, including K-12, colleges and universities, and professional and private venues.

There were a few issues the school faced when building an arena that would work for both spectators and staff, starting with the large upper balconies. While they were perfect for the Trojan Arena's busier events, during smaller events it would gather debris and keep spectators spaced apart, causing the venue to feel empty. Meanwhile, no matter what the size of the crowd, the team at FFC saw that when the balcony was available, people would sit there, even if there was plenty of open space down below. While these problems might not seem like they could cause much trouble, they can greatly affect the mood of the entire arena during games and other events. If spectators are far away from each other, it

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keeps the energy of the crowd down, which could lead to athletes feeling disconnected. Plus, more labor would be spent cleaning up after the event, since there were more seating areas that needed to be cleared.

Interkal found a solution. Instead of leaving the upper seating on the balcony exposed during smaller events, the Trojan Arena could install branded vinyl curtains to keep them covered when not in use, eliminating the extra labor required for an area that would only be used for a few patrons. But for big events, the vinyl curtains easily come down to free up plenty of room for massive crowds to flood the arena. It's a win-win solution.

The vinyl curtains are not only easy to use, but they save both time and energy for the school. Instead of workers needing to clean debris from the balconies each time, the vinyl curtains provide an effective cover, so the area remains clear of dust. Visitors can't sit down where the curtains cover the seats, so the

crowd is more centralized. This helps boost the energy of the arena, leading to louder cheers to energize the players.

With the innovative vinyl curtains, stylishly decorated with the school logo and mascot, even the smallest events still feel lively. It brings people together, which is at the core of everything that Interkal does.

The rest of Trojan Arena is just as packed with the school's colors, with the Excel Seat Modules outfitting the arena in red, white, and royal blue. Not only do they also spell out FCC but have an American flag designed on them as well, honoring the rich JROTC and military history of the school. The colors come together to create a stunning look for the entire stadium.

With the vinyl curtains solving the spacing issues and the beautiful school colors complementing the space, the school and Interkal were able to create a safe, durable, and spectacular arena sure to get Trojan fans even

more excited about the next game.

Interkal does more than just install seating. They are your partner in creating seating solutions that will bring communities together for decades, allowing audience members to kick back and relax. Not only do they deliver the seating you need but also create innovative solutions to help your facility reach new heights. So, take a seat, rest comfortably, and enjoy the show. Or if you're at the Trojan Arena, enjoy the game.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Annie Thelen is the current Marketing Specialist for Kotobuki Seating International and Interkal, where she helps build brand identity and narrative for all companies under the Kotobuki umbrella. See Interkal.com or Kotobuki-seating.co.jp/en/.



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REIMAGINING EDUCATION FACILITIES WITH RETROFIT CLADDING

A GUIDE FOR FACILITY MANAGERS

by Jonnie Hasan, P.E.

*Improving Efficiency, Sustainability, Aesthetics,
and Occupant Comfort with Minimal Disruption*

Across North America, educational institutions are grappling with aging infrastructures that struggle to meet today's performance, environmental, and design expectations. Facility managers face mounting pressure to reduce operational costs, meet evolving building codes, and enhance the learning environment, without disrupting daily school operations or exceeding tight budgets.

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Retrofit cladding solutions, including rainscreen systems, over-roof assemblies, aesthetic wall upgrades, and engineered deck systems over pool areas, offer a practical, low-disruption path forward. These systems address not only energy inefficiency and weather protection but also allow schools to renovate problematic spaces and rejuvenate tired exteriors.

For those exploring such a project, we explored how retrofit cladding strategies can transform educational facilities, boost sustainability, solve chronic maintenance issues, and breathe new life into outdated architecture—especially when delivered by a single-source partner with integrated design and construction capabilities.

What Is Retrofit Cladding?

Retrofit cladding refers to the installation of new exterior or structural layers—walls, roofs, or decks—over existing building components. These upgrades provide enhanced functionality, durability, and aesthetics without requiring full demolition.

Key retrofit systems for educational buildings include:

- Rainscreen wall cladding, for improving thermal performance, managing moisture, and extending building life
- Roofing systems consisting of over-roof assemblies that increase insulation and weather protection without removing existing roofs
- Deck systems over pools, which

are structural systems that resolve moisture problems common with indoor pool enclosures

- Aesthetic wall cladding, which is designed for a visual refresh, offering color, texture, and identity without extensive thermal or envelope upgrades

These retrofit solutions modernize facilities while maintaining occupancy and complying with modern sustainability goals.

Thermal Upgrades and Operational Savings

Older school buildings often suffer from poor insulation, thermal bridging, and leaky envelopes. Retrofit cladding systems allow facility managers to upgrade performance to modern standards.

Rainscreens and roof retrofits add continuous insulation, vapor control, and air barriers. Systems are typically installed without disturbing internal finishes, making them especially suitable for schools that typically need to maintain operations.

The U.S. Department of Energy notes that schools can reduce HVAC-related energy use by 20 to 40 percent with effective building envelope improvements. These upgrades also create more stable classroom temperatures, improving student comfort and concentration.

Moisture Management and Mold Prevention

Moisture intrusion is a major concern in aging buildings, especially in pool areas, where high humidity and outdated waterproofing can lead to structural decay, indoor air quality problems, and unsafe conditions.

Retrofit cladding and deck systems address these concerns by Integrating vapor barriers and drainage mats into rainscreen and roof

assemblies to manage water and condensation and by preventing mold and mildew growth with proper detailing and material selection, thereby reducing health risks and maintenance costs.

These improvements support a healthier indoor environment, which has become an increasingly important consideration for school administrators post-COVID.

Lower Embodied Carbon

Retrofit strategies minimize demolition, reuse existing structures, and avoid the carbon-intensive materials required in new construction. According to Architecture 2030, building reuse can reduce carbon emissions by up to 75% compared to building new.

For districts working toward LEED, CHPS, or other green certification programs, retrofit cladding provides measurable gains in embodied carbon, waste reduction, and resource conservation.

Managing Moisture Challenges in Active Pool Areas

Indoor swimming pools are a valuable asset for many educational institutions, supporting physical education, athletics, and community engagement. However, these facilities often present persistent challenges—especially when housed in older buildings that were not designed with today's understanding of building envelope science.

Retrofit Deck and Cladding Solutions for Moisture Control

With active daily use, school pool enclosures often suffer from:

- Persistent condensation on ceiling surfaces and roof decks
- Water vapor infiltration into wall and roof assemblies, leading to corrosion or mold
- Roof leaks due to failing seals, aging membranes, or poor detailing
- Premature degradation of building components due to high humidity and chlorine exposure

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To address these challenges, retrofit roof deck systems can be installed directly over the existing structure. These systems are engineered to:

- Provide continuous thermal insulation and high-performance vapor barriers that contain moist indoor air and prevent condensation at cold surfaces
- Use corrosion-resistant components, including stainless steel fasteners, flashings, and support assemblies that resist degradation from humid and chemically aggressive pool air

Incorporate detailed, code-compliant edge, curb, and penetration detailing that help ensure long-term leak prevention and watertight integrity

These upgrades mitigate long-term water damage and extend the life of the building structure. Many can be installed in stages or during off-peak times, maintaining student

and community access to educational facilities.

Aesthetic Upgrades for 21st-Century Appeal

While performance and durability are top priorities, many educational institutions are also looking to modernize the outward appearance of their facilities—not only to boost pride and student morale, but to align with contemporary educational branding and community engagement efforts.

Aesthetic Retrofit Wall Cladding

For schools that do not require extensive thermal upgrades, aesthetic cladding systems offer a transformative, cost-effective solution. These lightweight panels are installed over existing façades and bring immediate visual impact.

These aesthetic solutions offer:

- Colorful, textured finishes using materials such as aluminum composite,

phenolic panels, or fiber cement

- Durable performance against weather, UV exposure, and vandalism
- School branding opportunities via color schemes, emblems, or patterning
- Fast installation, with minimal preparation required on stable substrates

These improvements can dramatically alter the perceived age and condition of a facility, elevating its reputation with students, parents, and the broader community.

Supporting Learning Through Design

Studies have shown that building design and aesthetics can impact student performance. The University of Salford's "Clever Classrooms" study found that well-designed learning environments can improve academic progress by up to 16 percent in a single year. The visual impact of refreshed exteriors reinforces a culture of excellence and a commitment to progress.

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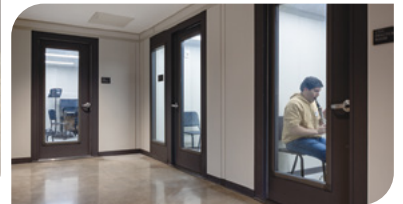
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Minimal Disruption to Daily Operations

Perhaps the greatest strength of retrofit systems is their ability to be installed with little to no interference in academic activity.

- Exterior wall and roof systems are installed from scaffolds or lifts without entering classrooms.
- Deck retrofits in pools can be implemented during summer breaks or off-hours and staged, sealing off construction zones from active areas.
- No demolition or relocation is typically required, preserving valuable instructional time.

These strategies allow facility managers to focus on enhancing the student experience rather than navigating logistical hurdles.

Streamlining Success with a Single-Source Partner

Retrofit projects require a high level of integration: design coordination, material compatibility, compliance with energy and fire codes, and precise sequencing. Working with a single-source partner ensures all these elements align smoothly.

A single-source provider can offer:

- Design-build support, including site evaluation and energy modeling
- System compatibility, ensuring roofing, wall, and deck assemblies work together
- Centralized warranty and accountability, eliminating finger-pointing between trades or suppliers
- Fast-track scheduling, leveraging prefabrication and coordinated installation crews

This holistic approach reduces risk, accelerates timelines, and provides better lifecycle value.

Warranties on thermal performance, waterproofing, and structural integrity covering 20 to 30 years are common with system-based cladding solutions. When partnering with a single-source, facility managers have one point of contact should problems arise—not multiple contractors and manufacturers passing blame.

Funding and Incentive Opportunities

Retrofit projects often qualify for a range of financial incentives:

- Federal funding, such as ESSER, supports HVAC and envelope upgrades that improve air quality.

- State and utility rebate programs reward energy-efficiency improvements to insulation, windows, and roof assemblies.
 - Section 179D of the IRS code offers tax deductions of up to \$5 per square foot for public building energy improvements.
- Retrofit systems deliver measurable, lasting value. And when implemented through a single-source partner, the process becomes simpler, faster, and more accountable—ensuring that every dollar invested helps create an environment where students can thrive.

Proactive alignment with these programs can offset capital expenditures and improve return-on-investment timelines.

Retrofit with Purpose

For educational facility managers facing pressure to modernize, save energy, and solve persistent building issues, retrofit cladding solutions offer a practical, future-ready path forward. Whether the goal is to cut energy costs and carbon emissions, renovate problematic pool areas, refresh building aesthetics, or execute improvements with zero classroom disruption.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Jonnie Hasan, P.E. serves as vice president of business development and R&D for IMETCO, a leading manufacturer of premier metal products for the building envelope, offering a comprehensive range of high-performance metal roofing, wall, and deck systems and accessories. With over 22 years of experience in commercial construction and design-build delivery in the cladding industry, Hasan has a Master of Engineering in Sustainable Development and is a certified Building Envelope Envelope Commissioning Provider (BECxP) and Commissioning Authority + Building Envelope (CxA+BE) through the University of Wisconsin.

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Elevating Campus Culture

THE NEXT GENERATION OF AUDITORIUM AND PERFORMING ARTS FACILITIES

BY ED BAUER

In private higher education, auditoriums and performing arts centers represent a significant intersection of cultural ambition and institutional mission. They are more than bricks and mortar—they are beacons of creative expression, recruitment magnets, and vital community connectors.

As institutions respond to evolving expectations, campus leaders are increasingly viewing these facilities as central to a thriving academic and cultural identity. For campus leaders tasked with shepherding a performing arts facility project from concept through completion, we've created an executive-level roadmap.

Strategic Vision and Early Planning

The success of a new performing arts or auditorium facility is determined long before ground is broken. Discussions around the project must be framed within strategic priorities, accreditation standards, long-term enrollment goals, and donor relations.

The earliest planning phase should include:

- **Needs assessment.** Engaging academic leadership in the performing arts, faculty in music, theater, dance, and communications, as well as student affairs and events management, ensures alignment with functional needs and programming aspirations.
- **Market analysis.** Understand your institution's competitive position regionally. Benchmarking against similar private colleges and identifying regional gaps in cultural venues will shape capacity, programming goals, and community use.
- **Community partnerships.** Whether through regional arts organizations, K-12 partnerships, or local tourism boards, community collaboration from the outset helps define how the facility can serve beyond the campus.

From an executive standpoint, the key deliverable at this stage is a comprehensive programming statement—what the facility needs to be, whom it will serve, and how it will function within the larger university ecosystem.

Architectural and Acoustic Design Challenges

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demands active oversight from campus executives, as decisions made here determine not only functionality but also future operating costs and revenue potential.

Key Considerations:

- **Sightlines and seating.** Consider whether a traditional proscenium theater, black box space, or convertible stage area is most appropriate.
- **Acoustics.** The nuances of spoken word, amplified sound, orchestral performance, and live theater require different acoustic profiles. Variable acoustic systems (e.g., adjustable panels and curtains) allow one space to meet multiple needs.
- **Technical infrastructure.** Today's auditoriums demand advanced rigging systems, lighting grids, soundboards, and projection capabilities. Ensure systems are future-proofed with appropriate conduit, catwalks, and digital backbones.
- **Back-of-house and support spaces.** Dressing rooms, rehearsal studios, scene shops, green rooms, and loading docks, and storage space must be sized for production scale.

Architects must also navigate context. Many private college campuses have strong architectural identities; new facilities should fit the existing character while allowing for a contemporary expression of creativity.

Financing the Facility: Balancing Ambition with Affordability

Constructing a performing arts center is among the most expensive types of campus building projects, often ranging from \$20 to \$100. Executive leaders must be prepared to craft a sophisticated financing package.

Common financing mechanisms include:

- **Capital campaigns.** Performing arts centers provide compelling naming opportunities, from the main stage to rehearsal rooms and donor lounges. Alumni and cultural patrons are particularly responsive to supporting the arts.
- **Bond financing.** For institutions with strong financial ratings, tax-exempt municipal bonds remain a standard mechanism. Bonds must be structured with a clear understanding of debt service impacts on operating budgets.
- **Public-private partnerships (P3s).**

Some universities have successfully partnered with local governments or regional performing arts organizations to share use and costs. While P3s can be complex, they may unlock unique funding combinations.

Cost containment is paramount. A rigorous cost estimating process at each design milestone—schematic, design development, construction documents—helps ensure budget alignment. Executives should consider hiring an owner's representative to safeguard the institution's interests during construction.

Construction Management and Timelines

With design finalized and financing secured, the project transitions to pre-construction and construction phases.

Executive Priorities:

- **Selecting a delivery method.** Design-Bid-Build remains common, but Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) or Design-Build methods can improve coordination and cost control.
- **Project management oversight.**

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Weekly owner/architect/contractor (OAC) meetings keep the project on schedule and flag issues early.

- **LEED certification and sustainability goals.** If sustainability is a campus priority, aim for LEED Silver or higher. Energy-efficient lighting, solar-ready roofing, and geothermal systems can be integrated in early design. Investing in high-efficiency systems can yield operational savings.
- **Commissioning and testing.** Before opening, rigorous commissioning ensures mechanical, electrical, acoustic, and safety systems function as intended. You don't want to shortchange the time allowed for this process, even when everything appears to be in order and everyone's eager to get the show going.

Construction timelines typically range from 18 to 30 months, depending on scope and weather impacts. A soft opening several weeks prior to grand opening allows time to resolve punch list issues and test systems with real audiences.

The Ripple Effects: Institutional and Community Benefits

Once completed, the real work

begins—activating the space to fulfill its promise. A state-of-the-art performing arts facility is a multifaceted asset to a private college campus.

Institutional Benefits:

- **Recruitment and retention.** The facility is a visual and experiential differentiator. Prospective students—especially those in the arts, education, and communications—view it as a sign of commitment to creativity and student life.
- **Academic integration.** Performance spaces support coursework in music, theater, dance, media studies, arts management, sound design, digital production, and even business and marketing.
- **Event hosting.** A well-designed auditorium can host guest lectures, symposia, commencement ceremonies, and donor events—enhancing the institution's public image.

Community Impact:

- **Cultural anchor.** The center becomes a hub for local arts groups, K-12 outreach, and civic engagement. Rental income from community

performances or regional orchestras can offset operating costs.

- **Economic driver.** Performing arts centers draw visitors who eat, shop, and stay locally. In many towns with a private college at the center, these venues become downtown revitalizers.
- **Philanthropic gateway.** High-profile events provide occasions to engage donors, host recognition ceremonies, and generate goodwill among alumni and local leaders.

A Legacy That Resonates

For private colleges looking to elevate their cultural profile, enhance academic offerings, and forge deeper ties with the community, few investments match the resonance of a performing arts facility. Success means maintaining clear sight of the institution's mission while navigating thousands of decisions across years of planning. But the result—an auditorium filled with the voices, lights, and energy of a new generation—cements a legacy of creativity, learning, and community connection that will echo for decades to come.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Ed Bauer has been in publishing for over twenty years. He worked on the staff at Mount Union College.

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