

CUSTOMER STORY: SALINA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SCOTT RICE
◦ EDUCATION SOLUTIONS ◦

SITUATION

In April 2014, voters in Salina, Kan., approved a \$110.7 million bond issue to address a variety of needs at Salina Public Schools, including improvements and renovations at both Salina South High School and Salina Central High School.

The district hired a local architect and a national design firm to engage students, staff and the community throughout the planning process, and made a plan to implement ideas received from several community meetings. To take advantage of best practices and optimize the educational experience of its students, the district began exploring opportunities through classroom design and the furniture used throughout the school.

SOLUTION

After meeting with the director of bonds projects with the district, Scott Rice was chosen to work directly with the school district to evaluate furniture options specifically created for educational environments.

The team started with teachers and staff, conducting a series of meetings to better understand their needs for their individual spaces. How do they teach? What do they need to make their classrooms “work”? Scott Rice also conducted professional development sessions with the educators regarding active learning and its benefits, and how classroom furniture and design played a role.

Next, the team worked to create a budget spreadsheet, working room by room to assign price estimates. Because the project was a bond project, budget was a considerable issue to navigate, made even more challenging because the project was set to install over multiple phases over several years to accommodate the school schedule and minimize classroom disruption.

Scott Rice began with three pilot spaces to test active learning furniture from three manufacturers: Steelcase, V/S America and Smith System. Using feedback from the pilot spaces, the school selected several unique designs and preferred pieces that could be easily moved between lectures and group work, as well as those that were easily adjustable for ADA compliance. The district also required desks and chairs that were not only easy to clean and durable to withstand daily student use but also could be moved without casters to eliminate potential damage points.

The furniture was placed in full classrooms where teachers and students could use the new pieces for three months each, and the furniture was rotated between the two schools. Installation was completed in three phases at two schools over a period of 18 months, and much of it was installed during spring break or during the summer months.



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As a result of the pilot spaces, the following products were chosen as key pieces for the classroom furniture:

SMITH SYSTEM INTERCHANGE WING DESK:

- The triangular shape can be configured for groups of all sizes as well as for individual lectures.
- The desk’s adjustable pin height legs accommodate ADA requirements.

VS AMERICA PANTOSWING LUPO CHAIR:

- The chair’s cantilever base provides flexibility for additional comfort, as well as easier cleaning through its ability to attach to the triangular desks.
- The blow-molded seat provides an air-cushioned effect for extra comfort.
- The concealed seat attachment is a single piece of steel tubing with no exposed connections or weak points.
- The seat design allows for students to sit in the chair in multiple positions.

SMITH SYSTEM CASCADE DOUBLE PEDESTAL TEACHER DESK:

- This mobile desk allows teachers to move it easily around the room to accommodate various teaching styles.
- The desk also contains a storage cabinet and file space for easy storage.

RESULTS

Despite construction changes and price increases over the two-year period, Scott Rice was able to complete the project on time and under budget, which allowed the team to use those additional budget dollars to address other needs not included in the original scope. They were also able to hold one of the manufacturers to their original quoted cost, despite the long timeline.

Scott Rice also ensured the entire scope of the project was designed and budgeted together, which required them to present it only once to the school board for approval, instead of multiple times at every stage of installation. This reduced unnecessary delays and allowed the team to order at will.

Also, because of Scott Rice’s integrated companies and partnerships – and because everything used was in the contract – they were able to provide a start-to-finish service. Unlike other firms that may outsource installation, for example, Scott Rice handled the entire scope, including:

- **INVENTORY**
- **DESIGN**
- **BUDGETING**
- **PROJECT MANAGEMENT**
- **LOGISTICS**
- **INSTALLATION**

Curtis Stevens, assistant principal at Salina South High School, said the classroom chairs are one of the favorites among the teachers, who appreciate the durability but also the flexibility. He added that the staff and students are more than satisfied with the new space:

“OUR SCHOOL HAS ALWAYS BEEN CENTERED AROUND FURNITURE THAT ALLOWS COLLABORATIVE WORK, SO IT FIT NATURALLY,” HE SAID. “STAFF LIKE HOW ALL OF THE FURNITURE SEEMS COMFORTABLE TO STUDENTS BUT ALSO IS CONSISTENT IN ITS LOOK ACROSS THE BUILDING.”

