



Progressive High School Chooses Enzo® to Enhance Learning Environments

PROJECT:
Jackson High School
Massillon, OH

PEERLESS PRODUCTS:
Enzo Indirect/Open
Cerra Direct

ARCHITECT:
Harris/Day Architects
Canton, OH

ELECTRICAL ENGINEER:
Sheeser Buckley Mayfield, LLC
Uniontown, OH

LIGHTING REPRESENTATIVE:
Jack Duffy & Associates
Cuyahoga Falls, OH

Massillon, Ohio's Jackson School District has a vision: "Students achieving their highest potential, inspired by teachers who are making a difference, encouraged by parents who are providing support, and a community working together to ensure that every child realizes his/her dreams."

Within Jackson, this vision is more than a catch phrase. Everyone involved—administrators, teachers, parents and taxpayers—agrees students should be given the best possible resources and environment for an optimal learning experience. They expect excellence, and accept nothing less.

The recently completed Jackson High School is proof positive. A three-year construction project involving renovation of the existing facility and a 150,000 sq ft addition, this unique three-story structure forms a model learning center—and is a fun place to be, according to its 1,800 daily occupants.

Encompassing 72 classrooms, vocational wing, media center, performing arts center, three gymnasiums, administrative offices, full service cafeteria and commons area seating up to 600 students, the 500,000 sq ft building is state-of-the-art in every way.

Jackson High School has received the highest rating on the State of Ohio's District Report Card for seven consecutive years, and according to Principal Rick Campbell, it's no accident. "Our goal is clear: to provide an outstanding educational environment for every student. Over 80% of our graduating seniors go on to pursue higher education. This proves we're doing things right, but it's a continuing challenge."

One notable aspect of that challenge, says Campbell, is growing pressure to achieve high test scores. "Now more than ever, we want to be sure the learning environment is 100% fool proof. We don't want distractions. The ambient temperature, the lighting, the furniture and equipment—all of this is important to keep things comfortable and convenient so teachers and students can stay focused and succeed."

Fortunately, the Jackson School District has a history of experience with indirect lighting systems, having

moved in that direction as it began the process of renovating its elementary and middle schools in the late 1980s. At the time, Director of Facilities Mike Schwartz and his team—including Harris/Day Architects and engineering firm Sheeser Buckley Mayfield—researched lighting options and determined indirect was their best choice for classrooms. The decision was met with skepticism at first.

"We heard from the naysayers that suspended indirect lighting was a mistake, that kids would swing from the fixtures, fill them with paper and dirt, but of course none of that really happened," says Schwartz. "What did happen was that students could see so much better, teachers were amazed at the increased focus in the classroom, and there was a noticeable drop in absenteeism.

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"The fact is, traditional classroom lighting can hinder learning," Schwartz explains. "It casts shadows and causes glare on blackboards, marker boards and



PROGRESSIVE HIGH SCHOOL—CONTINUED

computer screens. Students find this difficult and can't always focus on the subject at hand. They complain of eye strain and headaches. This is not something we're willing to live with at Jackson."

In the 1990s, as one of its elementary schools was in the planning stages, the team narrowed its lighting selection to Peerless' Enzo® Indirect/Open, a 95% uplight/5% downlight suspended system. The results have been so positive that the district has now standardized on this product. All classrooms in the new high school are equipped with Enzo Indirect/Open, which Schwartz enthusiastically refers to as "the finest lighting I have ever seen in a classroom."

"When we moved to Enzo Indirect/Direct early on, there was an immediate reaction," recalls Sheeser Buckley Mayfield president Jim Eckman. "The teachers loved it. The students loved it. The comfort and calming effect of well distributed indirect light, with a slight downlight component, was a big hit from the start.

"There's a common perception that indirect lighting is expensive, but it's not," adds Eckman. "With Enzo, the cost per lineal foot is greatly reduced from the days when indirect lighting meant custom lengths of extruded aluminum. The Enzo system is quicker and easier to install than conventional 2' x 4' lay-in classroom lighting, and when you add the energy savings accrued from single-lamp T5HO fixtures, it's a win-win all around. No question, Peerless has done an outstanding job of developing quality lighting that is affordable for budget conscious school districts. Enzo would be my preference for classrooms and other open learning spaces every time."

Principal Campbell is sensitive to the fact that taxpayers are concerned about how their money is spent, and that the new Jackson High School appears "gold plated" to some.

"People walk through and think, 'this is gorgeous, what a bright, interesting, fun place to be. You must have spent more than you should have.' Well, not

true," insists Campbell. "The project was completed under budget. Our team was diligent in the planning and construction process and made intelligent use of every available dollar."

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In fact, the Jackson High School project came in significantly lower than cost-per-square-foot guidelines published by the Ohio School Facility Commission. "And that's only a measurement of build costs," reminds Facilities Director Schwartz. "Reduced maintenance and life-cycle savings will continue to pay dividends for decades to come.

"Take classroom lighting as just one example," Schwartz continues. "The Peerless Enzo product

is remarkably efficient. Electrical consumption has been significantly lowered. This is a durable, low maintenance system, and our inventory of lamps and ballasts has been reduced 50% because a single T5HO lamp in the Enzo fixture gives us as much light as traditional fixtures with two T8s. Which would you rather deal with? It's pretty much a no-brainer."

Schwartz, Campbell and virtually all Jackson teachers and administrators rave about the difference Peerless lighting has made in their classrooms.

"Anybody can bend metal and ship a lighting product," summarizes Schwartz. "But not everybody can do what Peerless does—and even fewer are inclined to advance the science of lighting in this way. We have always been very impressed with the Peerless team, their products, and what they do for us in the education field."