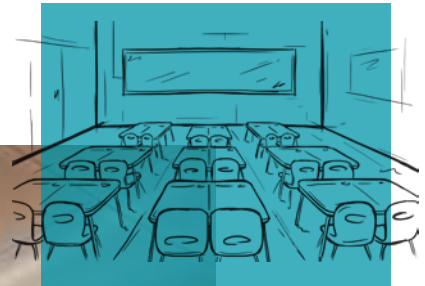


# New Middle School grows with the community

Cushing School District, Cushing, Oklahoma



With recent economic growth in Cushing, Oklahoma, the community saw an opportunity to improve its schools and build for its future. Rockfon® ceiling systems met Cushing School District's challenges of creating a durable new middle school and a high school fieldhouse that could withstand constant student use, while providing an attractive appearance and high performance.

## Products in use

- Chicago Metallic® 1200 Seismic
- Chicago Metallic® 4000 Temptra™
- Rockfon® Curvgrid™
- Rockfon® Cubegrid™
- Rockfon® Infinity™
- Rockfon® Planostile™

Meeting current and future needs, Cushing's new middle school now serves 600 students and can grow to accommodate 200 more. The 140,000-square-foot facility houses 40 classrooms, acoustically isolated band and choir rooms, a modern media center, practice and competition gyms, interior and exterior courtyards, an indoor and outdoor art instruction area, a storm shelter, and state-of-the-art keyless security.

The middle school's educational spaces are further designated into a center for 5th - 6th grades and another for 7th - 8th grades. "It's basically two schools in one," described Koln Knight, Cushing Public Schools' superintendent. "It's a great design. ... By moving to the center concept, our children will start out together and they will go through their entire educational experience as Cushing Tigers."

Current middle students will continue with 9th through 12th grades at the newly expanded high school. A 6,000-square-foot football fieldhouse addition increased its total square footage to 194,000. Supporting up to 80 players, the new facility offers a football locker room, coaches' offices, training room, video room and storage.

"Rockfon was capable of achieving Cushing schools' performance and aesthetic requirements, as well as the timeline and budget," said Jim Frasca, Rockfon's district sales manager. "Collaborating with the building team, we delivered the schools' ceiling suspension systems, open plenum metal ceiling system, curved and straight specialty metal ceiling panels and perimeter trim."

Prior to Cushing's new and expanded educational facilities, space was in such high demand that the students already were in their seats for the 2015-16 academic year as the finishing touches were being made on the buildings. BWA Architects not only designed the new middle school and high school expansion, the firm also helped raise awareness and support for funding the \$30 million construction projects.

The priorities of Cushing's new middle school include: grade centers for age-appropriate educational focus, advanced classrooms and science laboratories, increased open space ambient light, secure common areas and drop-off/pick-up points, and overall, innovative, efficient design.

In selecting Rockfon's products for the middle school, BWA's Boynton sought a ceiling system that could "create interest, while keeping the majority of the spaces open to structure."

Working closely with BWA, Lambert Construction served as the construction manager for both the middle and high school projects. Lambert's project engineer Shannon Gilchrist remembered, "At the peak of construction, we had about 100 people on site. Once the school year started, we had about 30 people who continued working at night and on weekends so as not to disrupt the students."

"The newest building was designed in the '70s and certainly the safety concerns that we have today for students weren't the same then," added Melissa Amon, assistant principal at Cushing Middle School.



Coordinating schedules with Lambert, R.L.S. Construction completed its installation of the Rockfon ceiling systems during the summer break. "The ceiling systems installed rather easily," noted Rick Smith, owner and president of R.L.S. "With four people and Rockfon's system, we were able to meet the scheduling and the budget. It worked really well and looks good, too."

BWA's Boynton agreed and said that the clouds, "created the interest we were looking for in a soft form" and "kept the look of the ceilings linear, as well keeping in line with the form of the spaces and corridors."

D & E Supply provided R.L.S. with Rockfon's metal ceiling systems. In the middle school's corridors and library, R.L.S. created nine curving clouds using Rockfon Curvgrid one-directional 2-by-6-foot curved aluminum ceiling panels. These feature a perforated dot pattern and an Acoutex™ backer for a Noise Reduction Coefficient (NRC) of 0.70 promoting quiet, comfortable learning spaces.

The 1,392 square feet of Curvgrid panels were inserted in Rockfon's factory-curved suspension system. "Our patented, primary carrier system reduces labor-intensive hanger drops. It conceals the suspension from view to create a neat, ribbon-like appearance," remarked Frasca. "Accentuating these curves, we finished the aluminum panels and perimeter trim in standard Black and Satin Silver, plus a custom Tiger Orange."

"There's a lot of color on the ceilings – all of our school colors," proudly stated Cushing School District's director of plant management, Chris Hubbard. Tiger Orange ceiling accents were used in the corridors, commons, cafeteria, library and administration areas.

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Also finished in the same black, silver and orange colors, the middle school's library features 400 square feet of Rockfon's ceiling systems including Curvgrid metal ceiling panels, Infinity Perimeter Trim and Cubegrid open plenum ceiling system. Finished on all sides, Cubegrid's 2-by-2 open cells are formed with Chicago Metallic 1200 seismic 15/16-inch suspension systems to easily accommodate light fixtures, air diffusers and security cameras, while masking pipes, ducts and wires in the plenum. "Integral cross tee couplings, no visible hanger slots and no visible holes makes Cubegrid the cleanest open cell suspension available," explained Frasca.



Throughout the high school's fieldhouse addition, R.L.S. installed more than 600 Rockfon Planostile 2-by-2-foot galvanized steel ceiling panels with lay-in reveal edges into the Chicago Metallic 4000 Tempra 9/16-inch suspension system. The panels and grid were both finished in Satin Silver.

"I'm really impressed with the ceilings," added Hubbard. "The installation seemed to go well and they look great."

All of Rockfon's ceiling systems installed on the Cushing middle school and high school also enhance sustainable design goals. Rockfon's metal ceiling panels, suspension systems and trim contain recycled content and can be 100 percent recycled. Metal also contains no organic compounds to support mold and microbial growth, contributing to healthy and durable learning environments.

"Durability was important for this type of application, as well as the light reflectance," emphasized Boynton.

"The light reflection and diffusion of a ceiling should be as high as possible. Poor lighting can result in eye strain, fatigue and headaches, which can lead to decreased concentration and

ultimately, may affect students' performance and test scores," observed Frasca. Combined, these qualities optimize both artificial and natural light sources, which also can save energy."

Cushing Public Schools' superintendent Koln Knight shared his thoughts on the new and expanded schools: "This vision and new direction provides us with the opportunity to provide a quality education for our children, a more safe and secure learning environment for our children, and allows us to maximize the use of the resources that we have."

## Facts

- Rockfon Curvgrid perforated, aluminum ceiling panels used an Acoutex backer to achieve 0.70 NRC
- Custom Tiger Orange ceiling accents were used



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