



# ODP Business Solutions™ Workspace Interiors helps district open a new school

Case Study | Little Rock Southwest Magnet High School





### Project Specs:

**Location:** Little Rock, Arkansas

**Space:** 400,000 sq. ft.

**Students:** 2,000

**Classrooms:** 65

In 2017, Arkansas' Little Rock School District chose to work with ODP Business Solutions™ Workspace Interiors to furnish a new, state-of-the-art high school for the city's growing community. Little Rock Southwest Magnet was the first high school to be built from the ground up in over 50 years.

After not building a new high school since 1968, the school district planned to combine the student bodies of two high schools at the new Little Rock Southwest Magnet High School. Administrators recognized the size of the undertaking and the extent of the coordination that would be required to furnish the 400,000-square-foot facility in time for back-to-school.

Since the project was so much bigger than previous ones, district staff knew that the way they had managed furnishing new facilities in the past wouldn't work for Southwest. With extensive experience in the education field, the team members at Workspace Interiors knew they could design and deliver a learning environment that would be worthy of the capital city's flagship high school.





# District and vendors banded together for students.

**The district needed its vendors and staff to work together to give students their new high school on time, especially through 2020's unexpected challenges.**

The new high school would be an advanced learning environment in 400,000 square feet of academic and athletic space. Home to 65 classrooms, it would host nearly 2,000 students. The district's timeline was specific and fixed: The high school would open in August 2020.

Work began in 2017 and the project was on track in early 2020, when everyone unexpectedly shifted to working from home. Communication on a project of this size would be tough under any circumstances. But without access to the site, it became even more critical. The Workspace Interiors team bridged the gaps by using their experience and communication skills from the project's start to its finish.







**Because of the size and scope of the project, Workspace Interiors took on a unique role by working as an extension of the district's own staff.**

Previously, the district's purchasing team managed furniture for the middle school. The \$4.4 million Little Rock Southwest Magnet High School project was much bigger, so the district chose Workspace Interiors to coordinate the furniture from order entry through delivery and installation.

With everyone working remotely for the last six months before school began, communication was key as the Workspace Interiors team drove the project toward the finish line. A dedicated Workspace Interiors project manager kept administrators updated as the team:

- Worked with the architect to specify and select the high school's furniture
- Checked for the proper standards, specifications, and finishes
- Managed the furniture purchase and installation
- Coordinated communication among stakeholders and vendors
- Provided project management and general coordination





**Working with a single entity improved efficiency, saved money, and streamlined processes, all of which contributed to the project's success.**

The Workspace Interiors team forged a solid relationship with the architect and used a phased approach — as each section of the school finished construction, the team managed the furniture installation. This process boosted efficiency, but it also required them to be more careful in ordering, monitoring, and managing the timeline to avoid incurring additional costs.

The team coordinated an agreement between the district and its supplier, enabling Workspace Interiors to act as the district's agent. The arrangement saved money and eased the burden on the district staff, who didn't have to coordinate multiple vendors and processes.







## Innovative new facility greets students and teachers.

**The learning environment reflects the teamwork between the district and Workspace Interiors, with flexible and collaborative spaces.**

The district welcomed Southwest students to the new facility on time. Workspace Interiors furnished these spaces and more:

- Classrooms
- Technical education classrooms
- Teachers lounges
- Administrative offices
- Common areas
- Art rooms
- Robotics center
- Gym and field house
- Skyboxes
- Cafeteria
- Band and choral classrooms
- Nurses area
- Laboratories
- Student store







# Experienced coordination delivers results.

**On-time, on-budget furnishings from Workspace Interiors helped create an advanced, welcoming environment for Little Rock high-schoolers.**

After careful consideration and review, administrators enabled Workspace Interiors to function as an extension of the district’s own staff and purchase furniture through a cooperative contract, which saved time and reduced costs. The process moved faster because the project didn’t go out for bids. Plus, the district saved money through the contract’s competitive pricing and by not having to hire more staff to handle a complex bid process.

The Workspace Interiors team took the pressure off the district. Before they ordered the high school’s furniture, the team discovered that some finish selections didn’t meet the manufacturer’s recommendations and would have voided warranties. The team offered suggestions to change the fabric specifications, keeping the integrity of the design and maintaining the warranties.





## Workspace Interiors is here to support you.

### We're broader than a furniture vendor.

Workspace Interiors provides total turnkey solutions that suit your unique requirements, and we can manage any or all parts of the process.

"The Workspace Interiors staff was very detailed in helping the district purchase furniture that was functional and durable for a school setting. The staff was professional and willing to listen to suggestion based on school design."

*Marvin Burton  
Executive Principal  
Little Rock Southwest Magnet High School*

## Learn more.

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