



Benld Elementary School - Gillespie, Illinois



Architectural Excellence:

Benld Elementary School was in desperate need of additional classroom and administrative space after the mine underneath the school collapsed, resulting in the building being condemned. When the school was no longer accessible the elementary school students and staff were relocated to the Gillespie Middle and High School Campus and the district was forced to finish the school year on a split-day schedule. The school district was originally looking for six new modular buildings to replace the condemned building. M Space, however, suggested the school use an existing building, currently in storage, that would meet all their needs under one roof. The school loved the fact that it would be safer and more secure for the students, as they would not need to go outside to travel from room to room. M Space provided the school with a classroom complex that included 26 classrooms, media center, band and choir room, cafeteria, offices and restroom space.

Technical Innovation:

The pre-leased building that M Space provided Benld Elementary was originally constructed for the state of Connecticut. In order for this particular building to go to Illinois a few modifications were needed. M Space worked with a local engineer and architect to get all the necessary local and state approvals for Illinois. In order to meet Illinois requirements, M Space added a site installed sprinkler system, site installed fire alarm system and a full data system with phones into the existing building. The sprinkler system met all the 2007 NFPA pamphlet #13 requirements for a wet type automatic sprinkler system. This included hydraulic calculations, control valves, drain valves and tamper switches.

Cost Effectiveness/Energy Efficiency:

By using an existing building the school district not only had their new school significantly faster, but also saved money. M Space provided a better solution than the school's original plan. Not only was everything under one roof, but the existing *M Space* building provided the school with an additional 8,000 square feet (6-8 additional classrooms) giving them more for their money. In addition, selecting an existing building also reduced the impact on the environment by avoiding unnecessary use of materials and energy that are required for a new building. M Space provided the school with a turnkey solution that included complete site management from start to finish. Other cost efficient features of this building are the aluminum decks, ramps and stairs. The school is leasing these items and by doing this they avoid paying installation fees. Thus, saving money.

Project History:

The building was originally constructed as additional classroom space for Amity Orange Middle School in Connecticut. The school district was issued a bond to remodel and upgrade their existing facility and the modular building was installed in the parking lot and used while construction was taking place. This particular building was recommended to Benld Elementary because it was in storage and available to be delivered to the school quickly. In addition, this particular building had all the specific rooms that Benld needed (i.e. cafeteria, office space, media center and band/choir room) under one roof. M Space installed an additional restroom and refurbished the walls, ceilings and floors before delivering the building.

