

# In K–12 School Design, Flooring Matters

No detail should be overlooked when investing in and building out new learning spaces — everything from light fixtures to floors contributes to a project's overall success.







**A**s Greeley-Evans School District 6 in Weld County, CO, planned a massive renovation project after passing a bond in 2019 — impacting every student-centered building within its sprawling system — flooring selection marked one of the more critical decision points facing district leaders.

Several factors played into the district's final criteria for flooring, including long-term performance, maintenance needs, installation, and warehousing preferences. "The contracted architectural firms had already landed on an elevated design aesthetic that would require similarly elevated flooring styles and performance potential," recounted Jeff Kirtley, director of facilities for the district.

The five-year, \$395 million revitalization project presented an opportunity to standardize architectural styling and design across numerous facilities, as well as through elevated finishes such as ceramic tile wainscoting and flooring. The facilities team also looked to standardize the custodial processes required to care for it all, district-wide.

Putting the flooring out in an RFP, the district detailed "the kinds of products and installation practices that were wanted," Kirtley said. "It was important to have a single [flooring] vendor. Obviously, we were also looking for — with maintenance and operations — products that our custodial folks would either be familiar with or willing to change their practices to achieve something more efficient than what they were using or doing at the time."

After reviewing sample products and interviewing several qualified vendors, the team ultimately selected Mannington Commercial, which installed approximately 1 million square feet of flooring in 28 buildings throughout District 6 over the span of the project.

### Inside the Project

District 6 leaders opted for modular carpet tiles for classrooms and hallways versus rolled broadloom carpeting due to installation preferences. In food and laboratory spaces, art rooms, and areas that need more frequent cleaning or disinfecting, the district selected luxury vinyl



"We really wanted something that would make our schools' educational and support spaces appear high quality, and provide an aesthetic to those spaces that was inviting — a place where people would want to work and learn."

— **Jeff Kirtley**,  
Director of Facilities,  
Greeley-Evans School District 6



tile (LVT) products to replace existing vinyl composition tile (VCT), which requires custodial teams to wax, strip, re wax, and polish on a semi-regular basis to ensure ongoing protection. LVT, instead, can be manufactured to look like wood or stone, offering more aesthetically pleasing options along with greater scratch resistance — without requiring as much maintenance as VCT. Given Colorado's snowy winters, flooring in the vestibule areas, in particular, must withstand a great deal of wear and moisture. In those high-traffic, high-wear areas, District 6 opted for purpose-built entryway carpet tiles, designed to trap dirt, soil, and moisture from shoes to help keep the rest of a building's floors cleaner.

"If a school needed something specific, we discussed their options and made sure their selections fit within the styling the architect had specified," said Julie Meseck, Mannington Commercial's district manager covering Colorado and Wyoming. "While each school has its own unique look and feel, everything was standardized, in the same quality and with the same overall look and feel."

The district's facilities team, contractors, and architectural firms all worked closely with Mannington Commercial

throughout the project, reviewing product samples and understanding what flooring types support specific educational uses. During one holiday break, Mannington Commercial sent a maintenance specialist to meet with the district's custodial team to demonstrate maintenance and care best practices, and discuss ways to keep all of the new flooring in optimal performance over the life of the products.

The project marked the first time the district worked with Mannington Commercial, and "we didn't know what to expect," Kirtley recalled. Meseck "was very attentive and familiar with all of the design teams we were working with, and the contractors and subcontractors, and very willing to work with us or through us more directly with those firms. Anytime there were any issues, she stepped right up and helped, and was very responsive."

"The overall attitude towards the learning spaces themselves, the public's perceptions — our facilities are receiving really high marks," Kirtley noted. "That's because of all of the things we've done aesthetically throughout the buildings, including the flooring. The flooring has made major contributions to that."



District 6 ultimately installed modular carpet tiles throughout its school buildings, instead of broadloom carpet, which is woven in wide rolls; however, both offer strong durability and protection over their lifespan within educational environments. Broadloom carpets tend to offer more seamless designs, while modular tiles offer opportunities to incorporate design options like checkerboards, or even fish, as District 6 now displays in one of its elementary buildings.

District 6 also selected carpet that features Type 6,6 nylon, which is known for its strength, resilience, and stain resistance. The material features tight molecular structure and stain-resistant technologies, making it highly suitable for high-traffic areas like hallways or classrooms.

In addition to carpet and LVT, Mannington Commercial also offers rubber and resilient sheet flooring, which are also suited well to educational uses. Rubber fits particularly well in areas where acoustics matter, such as music rooms or spaces where there's a lot of noise. Sheet vinyl works well in areas like cafeterias, where spills happen frequently, because it prevents moisture from getting below the flooring surface. The patterns and palettes across Mannington Commercial's entire portfolio are designed to work together seamlessly, allowing schools to readily select coherent designs while tailoring spaces to fit their functions.

## Crafted to Support Learning

Classrooms, stairways and hallways, libraries, and laboratories all have unique functional needs in K–12 and higher education learning environments. Mannington Commercial brings the industry's broadest portfolio of products, designed and engineered to support teachers, students, and faculty, and stand up to high-traffic wear and tear. Learn more about Mannington Commercial's coordinated solutions and all flooring products purpose-built to support learning.

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- [The Best Flooring for Educational Environments](#)
- [The Designer's Ultimate Guide to Specifying School Floor](#)



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