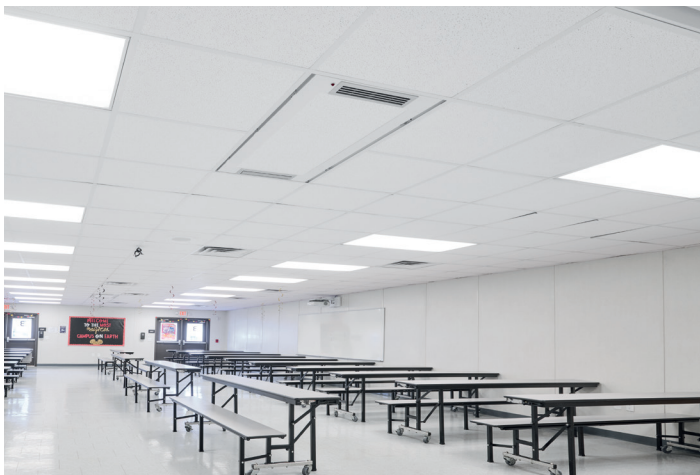


CASE STUDY



Project | BridgePrep Academy Charter Schools
Location | Florida
Contractor | Deaco Air
Product | VidaShield UV24™ Air Purification System,
School Zone® Fine Fissured™ Ceiling Panels



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BPCS-6867-822

the challenge:

When BridgePrep Academy Charter Schools reopened for in-person learning at the beginning of the 2021-22 school year, school administrators wanted to reassure students, teachers, and staff that they were returning to a safe, healthy indoor environment where they would be protected from the spread of COVID-19 and other airborne illnesses.

“Last year, the parents had the option of sending kids to school or keeping them at home,” says Lourdes Pena, director of Facilities & Operations with SMART Management, which manages operations for the 16 charter schools BridgePrep Academy operates throughout Florida. “But this year all the students are in school fulltime.”

With the passage of the American Rescue Plan Act in the spring of 2021, more than \$122 billion in Elementary and Secondary School Relief (ESSER) funds became available to state education agencies throughout the country to keep K-12 schools open and ensure their safe operation in the wake of COVID-19.

After learning that a portion of the funds could be used toward HVAC corrections and filtration systems, SMART Management applied for an ESSER grant that would enable the company to make the upgrades needed to improve indoor air quality at the schools.

the solution:

When the grant was awarded in June 2021, the management firm took advantage of the summer break to replace faulty air-conditioning units and install Armstrong VidaShield UV24™ air purification systems in ceilings throughout the schools.

The VidaShield units include shielded ultraviolet light and filtration which neutralizes 97 percent of bacteria, viruses, and allergens in the air. The 2" x 4" systems, which are paired unobtrusively with Armstrong® School Zone® Fine-Fissured™ ceiling panels, operate to draw air into a concealed chamber above the ceiling, treat it with patented, scientifically proven UV-C air-cleaning technology, and recirculate clean air back into the room.



“About 500 VidaShield units have been installed throughout the schools,” says Pena. “Most of the units are installed in classrooms because that’s where students spend most of their time. From there, we moved to common areas, such as the cafeteria, and from there, into hallways and offices.”

When parents visited the buildings prior to the first day of school in the fall, they were able to see the VidaShield UV24 systems in place and learn how the new air cleaning technology operates. “The VidaShield units add an extra layer of protection that helps parents feel more comfortable about sending their kids back to school,” says Pena. “It’s something they can actually see in place that is helping improve the quality of the air.”

The VidaShield systems have supplied teachers and staff with a sense of confidence knowing that a mechanism is in place to ensure their health and safety. Several BridgePrep Academy principals have noted that the VidaShield units are a key addition to their campuses. “We feel comfortable and safe in our school knowing that we are breathing clean air in an indoor environment,” says one of the principals.

SMART Management has applied for another ESSER grant that will enable it to install VidaShield units in three additional schools. “We would not have been able to make these improvements without the ESSER funds,” says Pena. “So, we are hopeful we will be able to get the funds for the three remaining schools.”

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