

CASE STUDY



Project | Polytech High School
Location | Woodside, DE
Architect | BSA+A, Wilmington, DE
Product | WoodWorks® Canopies



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the challenge:

Polytech High School recently completed a number of construction projects to update the aging facility. Included among them were an extensive renovation of the cafeteria and the re-purposing of an adjacent locker area into a learning commons. Among the design challenges was the desire to create a much more open feeling in both spaces and to impart a sense of movement and motion in them.

the solution:

To create more open space in the cafeteria, Maureen Rozanski, Director of Interiors for BSA+A, explains, "We kept the existing skylights, but essentially gutted everything else, from tearing down perimeter walls to removing the existing ceiling. We wanted to create a space that was active, engaging, and would impart more life."

To visually achieve that goal in the new exposed structure, the design team created ribbons of wood comprised of WoodWorks® Canopies from Armstrong Ceiling Solutions in a Natural Variations™ Light Cherry finish. Available in hills and valleys, the wood veneer ceiling canopies are adjustable to different heights and angles. "By connecting the hills and valleys, we were able to form flowing ribbons of wood that also add warmth to the space," Rozanski notes.

The architect also notes the ribbons were installed in a basket weave pattern that winds its way through the light fixtures. "By designing ribbons that run perpendicular to each other, we were able to create even more visual interest," she says. The ribbons were installed in two layers, one above the other. In order to suspend the lower level canopies without hanger wires penetrating the upper level canopies, a suspension subsystem was installed where needed.

The new collaborative learning area is adjacent to the cafeteria and separated by a movable glass partition wall. "Once again, we essentially gutted everything to open up the space, extend the ceiling height as much as possible, and create as much visual interest as possible," Rozanski says.

To provide a connection with the adjacent cafeteria, ribbons of wood canopies were also installed, although not in a basket weave pattern. "Ceiling height limited any possibility of a weave," she says. "The structure just didn't allow it."

The canopies in the cafeteria and collaborative learning area are all standard products even though they impart a custom look. All are 72" x 36" in size. 74 panels are installed in the cafeteria and 29 in the learning area. The longest ribbon in the cafeteria is eight canopies long. The longest in the learning area is five canopies. The canopies in each ribbon are connected by means of field-applied metal strapping on the back side.

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