

Interface®



MADE FOR LEARNING AND LASTING



Christa McAuliffe Elementary
A Case Study Over 10 Years in the Making

MADE FOR MORE™

Christa McAuliffe Elementary opened its doors in 2012 as part of the Concord School District's ambitious project to build three new elementary schools to replace the district's existing, aging facilities. It partnered with A&D firm HMFH Architects to create fun and functional environments that would support teachers and engage students in their learning.

The district wanted a modern design based on the latest in education research and engaged educators and community leaders to inform the desired outcomes for the space. While considering the latest developments in educational design, the district also took a closer look at the building materials, especially flooring.

Schools typically use VCT for flooring due to its low price point and decent durability.

However, the material has notable setbacks including higher maintenance needs and a short material lifespan, which contributes to higher costs over time. Instead, the Concord School took a long-term planning approach and went with nora® rubber for all three new schools, citing benefits around cost savings, durability, and lower maintenance.

Twelve years later, the decision has really paid off.

"They look like they were put in yesterday," says Matt Cashman, Director of Facilities and Planning for the Concord School District.

"It's fantastic," adds Principal Krista Gallo, who has been with Christa McAuliffe Elementary since its opening. "We still get the same compliments we've gotten since day one."



2012



2024

Neither Snow Nor Rain Nor Children's Feet

It's no secret that kids are incredibly tough on surfaces, and the students at Christa McAuliffe are no exception.

"The amount of times I have turned around and someone has filled in a tile with a Sharpie or made glitter glue mud pies—you'd never know from looking at these floors," says art teacher Silas Allard.

"These floors can take anything a kindergartner can throw at them—literally," adds Gallo.

And it's not just the kids the floors have to contend with, but also those famed Nor'easters. Winter storms wreak havoc on floors, tracking in mud, salt, and sand.

“

One thing people complain about with VCT is that the salt eats through the wax. It creates this kind of haze, and the floor dulls. But with the nora floors, you can tell the shine is underneath the salt, and when you run the machine over it, everything is nice and shiny again.”

Head Custodian Wayne Rourke





2016

Less Elbow Grease, Same Great Results

When it comes to maintenance, labor is always a concern. “Anyone in my position knows there are always a hundred different things you need to do and anything that minimizes your workload can help,” says Rourke.

Unlike VCT, which requires stripping and waxing every year, nora floors don’t require any protective coating. This significantly reduces the labor needed by the janitorial staff.



Summer cleaning is very intense. It’s basically top to bottom. But the fun thing about these floors is they basically come to life. We give them a scrub and a high-speed buff, and they look like new. It’s nice because you have these standards of what it’s supposed to look like—maybe others don’t notice, but when you’re in charge of it, you do.”

Head Custodian Wayne Rourke



2024

A Long-Term Look at Design

School districts have to be wise with their spending. The school board did not take the decision to pay a higher upfront price lightly, but the long-term savings convinced them in the end.



“We’re lucky that our school board does a nice job of looking at long-term planning. And that our administrators were able to paint a clear picture of those savings to the larger community.”

Principal Krista Gallo

“VCT tile is typically what people go with, and you’re lucky to get 14 years out of it. With all the wear and tear from students, you’re constantly replacing them. For rubber floors, the lifespan is upwards of 30 years!” says Cashman. “We haven’t had to replace any of the rubber flooring and it still looks brand new more than a decade later.”



2024

“We Do It for the Kids”

Finance and maintenance aside, the opinion that matters the most is that of the students.

“When the kids first walked in, I remember them saying, ‘Oh my gosh, this is for us?’” says Gallo. “And that stuck with me because, yes, that’s exactly why we did this. You deserve these spaces, this excitement. You belong here.”

“It’s a place that just feels good to be in. The colors really energize things. It’s a space they really love to go to,” explains Allard.

Project Details

Facility: Christa McAuliffe Elementary School

Location: Concord, NH

Photography: © 2012 Ed Wonek | © 2016 Gary Hall

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Architect/Design: HMFH Architects

Products: norament®grano™

Why nora by Interface? The Short Story

Design Flexibility – Available in multiple formats and complementary styles, nora rubber tiles allow for purpose driven design and can easily be reconfigured when needed.

Acoustics – nora by Interface rubber flooring offers an impact sound reduction of up to 20 dB.

Performance – nora rubber is built to last with a 15-year warranty.

Sustainability – Make progress toward sustainability goals with low-carbon flooring solutions while minimizing waste with end-of-life-recycling.