

## Case Study

### nex+Gen Academy High School

The students at nex+Gen Academy High School can be sure they're not getting the same education their parents—or even their older siblings—got. This magnet high school, part of the Albuquerque public school system, is committed to offering the next generation in learning. Students have access all through the day to laptop computers and the very latest in technology, and learning is organized around projects taken on by a small group of peers.



#### **nex+Gen Academy High School**

**Location** Albuquerque, New Mexico

**Number of People Served** 400 students

**izzy+ Sales Representative** Jeff Riley, Source Four, Denver, CO

**Dealer / Designer** Jennifer Jones, Contract Associates of New Mexico



### The need

If you hear “public high school” and are picturing a typical school setting, it’s time for a paradigm shift.

“This is a completely different way to go about creating a learning environment,” said Jennifer Jones, an interior designer with izzy+ dealer Contract Associates. “The client went to see other schools around the country that are set up like this, but this is the first school of its kind that was built from the ground up, so it’s really special.”

The clients’ objectives, Jones said, were centered around a unique group learning model—large, open classrooms (what they call “Learning Studios) with two teachers and 60 students working together on project-based topics in groups of four or six.

“They needed the classrooms to be very versatile, flexible and mobile, because there’s lots of moving students and furniture around during the day,” Jones said.

Jeff Riley, the region’s izzy+ representative, said schools everywhere are trying to move in a similar direction, even if they can’t start from scratch with a new building.

“The message we hear everywhere we go is that schools are broken and need to be fixed—they need to change how they’re doing things,” said Riley. “The furniture is a part of that shift.”



### The izzy+ solution

The entire installation was built around the functionality of Jack tables by izzy, Jones said. Because they’re on casters, Jack tables can easily be pushed together for larger groups or rolled to the side, providing the level of versatility the school needed. The Jack tabletops also flip, a feature that is typically chosen for its space-saving storage capacity, but at nex+ Generation serve double duty as project boards. Students sit around them and brainstorm with Post-it notes, sharing and organizing their ideas.

For seating, Jones specified Hannah chairs, also on casters. Dewey Bookcases hold in-class libraries for the students, who aren’t issued their own textbooks but instead use laptops and classroom books. The project was rounded out with Dewey Lecterns, Audrey storage, and custom Dewey pentagon table shapes that are super-mobile and flexible, thanks to casters and flip-top mechanisms.

“The custom table shape just gave us a really nice, different look, and allows them to bring two tables together into one big hexagon shape if they want, for larger groups,” said Jones.



The commons areas, equipped with Clara diamond tables and orange Hannah chairs, inspire students to relax, study and talk, as do the abundance of Dewey benches in the hallways and other open spaces. In the science lab, Jones specified epoxy-topped tables surrounded by Hannah stools on a five-star base, for a look she calls “sleek and science-y.” For the teachers’ lounge, Jones created a space that is both comfortable and functional—Audrey Storage with Two-Sided Collaboration tops and HAG Wing stools allow teachers to organize, work and meet.

“We just wanted a very clean look to go with the building design,” Jones said. “Everything is gray, black and white, with touches of orange—the finishes we chose could be used in a seamless way on every piece, no matter what izzy+ brand it was. In general, this whole design is a pretty big departure from most high schools around here, which have smaller classrooms filled with desks with attached chairs.”

“This install is a good example of not having to break the budget in order to do something creative and really functional,” added Riley. “It looks great and does what the client needed it to do. When a school has an opportunity to move away from a cookie cutter approach and do something really different, like nex+Gen did, the outcome is impressive.”

