Summer Construction: Effectively Plan and Execute Your K-12 Projects
The summer months are a marathon of construction, repairs and maintenance for owners, contractors and other stakeholders managing facilities and infrastructure components. The summertime offers longer days, warmer weather and fewer scheduling challenges for decision-makers in all sectors, especially for K-12 facilities whose student populations drop dramatically. School officials must capitalize on these ideal conditions in order to stay on top of their responsibilities and make the most of these opportunities while they last.

To maximize their productivity potential, campus leaders must take a highly coordinated approach to planning and procurement as they gear up for summer. With temperatures and daylight hours on the rise, K-12 facilities must carefully prepare for a major spike in construction activity by identifying top-priority projects and ensuring sufficient funding and support across all key contracts.

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<th>$99 billion</th>
<th>$145 billion</th>
<th>$46 billion</th>
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<td>Average spending &amp; investments per year on K-12 facilities</td>
<td>Average projected spending per year need for 21st century facilities</td>
<td>Expected annual shortfall for K-12 facilities</td>
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The Unique Construction Challenges of Education

Work for education facilities is different than any other type of construction, and subsequently it comes with its own unique set of challenges.

Most projects are concentrated during summer break. During this condensed timeline, it’s a juggling act dealing with so many diverse campus projects. On top of which, all must be completed on time, within budget and with the highest quality. Proper planning is essential.

Further, campus projects are never ending. From the larger projects such as gym floor replacements, cafeteria renovations, library upgrades, etc., to the smaller maintenance, repairs and replacement projects, there’s always something on the horizon. Traditional competitive bidding for all projects is extremely time-consuming and costly. And for those smaller projects, there can be an extreme disproportionate procurement burden relative to job size and scope.

Another challenge is access to qualified contractors. K-12 institutions are all on the same cycle, so having access to qualified contractors can be difficult in peak construction seasons. Additionally, it can be challenging to find contractors that are familiar with working in the K-12 environment.

Also critical is safety for both construction workers and the many faculty and staff frequently passing active work sites.
Addressing Deferred Maintenance and Facility Upkeep

The success of summer construction initiatives is dependent on proper planning and rigorous scheduling and forecasting, especially in the face of deadline challenges and budgetary limitations.

While large projects are important, when it comes to utilizing available funding such as capital, grants, bonds or gifts, schools should not forget to address the less glamorous deferred maintenance and general facility upkeep. To successfully maintain your campus buildings, you need a firm understanding of a facility's state. For example, do you know which buildings on your campus have passed key age thresholds and need to be renewed? Or maybe you have an older building that has yet to be updated, and summer break could be a great opportunity to put forth an insulation project which could increase energy savings and the facility's sustainability.

Summer is the perfect time to address minor maintenance issues and large facility lifecycle replacements and upgrades that were put off while students were still on campus. Deferred maintenance backlogs continue to grow on most campuses, and it is key to address these issues before a minor problem turns into a major issue.

* http://kapost-files-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/published/56f02c3d626415b792000008/2016-state-of-our-schools-report.pdf?kui=wo7vkgV0wWOLGjxeKON5A
75% of school buildings in use today have outlived their predicted useful life. On top of which, 74% of the nation’s education facilities are in need of immediate repair and replacement.

Compound this with American Society of Civil Engineers' (ASCE) 2013 Report Card, which gave our nation’s schools a grade of a D.

Getting ready for students means more than ordering enough books and planning class schedules. Our schools have to make sure their facilities and campuses are ready for this year’s student enrollment. This could mean repairing roofs, renovating academic buildings or dormitories and making sure classrooms and laboratories can accommodate the latest technology.

As each new class starts its journey, students will bring with them the latest technology, in the form of tablets, computers and digital resources. Facilities must be modernized to accommodate the newest technological advancements. This can include installing classrooms with smartboards or making sure computer labs are up-to-date to accommodate student needs.

* American Association of School Administrators survey
Construction Procurement Burden

Traditional bidding methods are significantly more time consuming. As is often the case, especially if the proper staff is not in place, the bidding process will typically take longer than the actual construction.

Many schools are required to choose the lowest responsive, responsible bidder and sometimes are challenged with:

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<th>Question of Quality</th>
<th>Price Disputes</th>
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<tr>
<td>As the saying goes, &quot;you get what you pay for&quot;</td>
<td>An unrealistically low bid will lead to pricing problems down the line</td>
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<th>Strained Relationships</th>
<th>Increased Delays</th>
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<td>Pricing disputes and dissatisfaction with quality equal friction</td>
<td>Work stops for price negotiations and quality inspections</td>
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A Nimble Solution

Some of the issues mentioned previously can cause serious tension between facility owner and contractor. When you’re working in a condensed timeline, you can’t afford to experience delays and back and forth negotiations.

Enter Job Order Contracting, a unique indefinite quantity procurement process.

The Job Order Contracting process is best for small to medium-sized, straightforward repairs and renovations. Typical projects range from emergency plumbing repairs, energy-efficient lighting and HVAC upgrades to classroom, lab and residence hall renovations.

Unlike traditional bidding, Job Order Contracting establishes competitively bid prices up front and eliminates the need to separately bid each project. This procurement method can relieve the burden placed on administrators to have projects designed and bid individually.

How Does It Work?

› Job Order Contracts provide K-12 facilities the ability to accomplish a substantial number of individual construction projects with a single, competitively-awarded contract.

› Contractors bid an adjustment factor to be applied to a catalog of tasks with preset unit prices developed using local labor, material and equipment rates.

› Job Order Contracts are generally awarded to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder. Once a contract is awarded, the school can have the contractor perform a variety of projects.

› The contractor is paid the preset unit price X the quantity ordered X the competitively bid adjustment factor. No negotiation required.

Job Order Contracting is a powerful ally in navigating the construction procurement journey for campuses during the peak summer construction months.
Immediate Contractor Access

When tension arises between the facility owner and contractor on top of working in a condensed timeline, delays and back and forth negotiations cannot be afforded.

Ideally, contractors working on a project are engaged and motivated to provide high quality work. The Job Order Contracting process can help in this case, since contractors are driven to provide quality projects because their performance is tied to the opportunity for future work. The Job Order Contracting process also allows for the development of relationships between owners and trusted Job Order Contracting contractors, who will grow to understand the school's methods, campuses and preferred materials as they continue to accomplish more work.

By establishing upfront contracts with contractors readily available to perform work, prequalified contractors will be ready to begin once the students leave campus. With a more collaborative relationship, tasks including planning, scoping and pricing jobs can be performed before it is time to begin, expediting the start time.
Case Study

Dover Public Schools Hallway Renovation

**Project Scope**
- Removal of existing wall
- Installation of new wall
- Removal of ceiling and floor finishes
- Installation of new ceiling and floor finishes

**Project Cost:** $231,202

A frequented hallway at Dover High School felt outdated. The space did not fit the look and feel of the more collegiate atmosphere the school sought to provide its students. With the start of the impending school year fast approaching, the school district faced a tight deadline, all while needing to stay on budget.

Dover Public Schools found the ezIQC® process, available through Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission (MRESC), more cost-efficient than the traditional design-bid-build procurement process. Subsequently, through the diligent work of Lighton Industries in collaboration with the ezIQC field representative and school representatives, the project was completed on budget and in time for the new school year along with the incoming students, the improvement heralded a great success.

Case Study

Riverside Elementary School Addition

**Project Scope**
- Seven new classrooms
- New boys’ and girls’ bathrooms, as well as bathrooms in two classrooms
- A teachers’ lounge with attached bathroom

**Project Cost:** $2,000,000

Due to a sudden influx of students, Riverside Elementary School in Brainerd, Minnesota found itself in dire need of an expansion. It had reached the point that students were attending classes in an abandoned shower room. Faced with the pressing deadline of an impending new school year, the district looked to ezIQC® for a fast solution.

At the onset of the project, the school laid out three stipulations:
- Make the budget work
- Complete the project by the start of the school year
- Use as many local subcontractors, suppliers and workers as possible

By accessing the competitively bid ezIQC contract with Hy Tec Construction, available through National Joint Powers Alliance, the project was accelerated and the school district's three main goals were achieved. The project was completed within the budget, on time, and 93 percent of the subcontractors and suppliers were located within a 20-mile radius of the work site.
Summer Success

Job Order Contracting easily adapts to the unique scheduling demands of the academic calendar. With Job Order Contracting, K-12 facilities can tackle their campus projects within their short timeframes because the prequalified, readily available contractors are able to get started immediately. Schools can identify and prioritize projects before students leave for the summer, and the Job Order Contracting contractors will meet at the project site to discuss the work to be done. This process, called a Joint Scope Meeting, is unique to the Job Order Contracting process and allows the contractor to ask the facility owner questions and clarify confusion before any work begins. That way, as campuses clear out, the contractor is ready to work.

Job Order Contracting helps facility and infrastructure owners control and expedite their repairs, renovations, upgrades and straightforward new construction by putting prequalified, ready to perform contractors in place to complete a substantial number of projects with a single, competitively-bid contract. Job Order Contracting eliminates the time and expense of bidding each project separately, which enables owners to begin construction faster, improve quality and save money.

In addition to implementing a Job Order Contracting program specifically designed for your school's projects, you can take advantage of cooperative volume discounts from contracts that have already been competitively awarded. With the power and speed of group buying through your preferred cooperative, you'll have access to local contractors that are able to start on your projects immediately.
About Gordian

Gordian is the world’s leading provider of construction cost data, software, and services for all phases of the construction lifecycle. From planning to design, procurement, construction and operations, Gordian delivers groundbreaking solutions to contractors, architects, engineers, educational institution stakeholders, facility owners and managers in the local, state and federal government, education, healthcare, manufacturing, insurance, legal, retail and other industries. With our proprietary data, along with our RSMeans and Sightlines data, we offer the largest collection of labor, material and equipment data and associated costs in the world with over 275,000 construction tasks with costs for all areas of construction. Gordian also offers the most widely used construction procurement information management software available anywhere and cutting-edge facilities intelligence and life cycle costing software to assess initial installed costs versus long-term facility costs and improve long-term asset performance. For more information, visit www.gordian.com.