



QUICK FACTS

The Challenge:

- Replace original linoleum flooring with a product that maintains the school's historic nature
- Specify a product that has longevity and maintains easily
- Design floors that reflect the original and new architecture

The Armstrong Solution:

- Our Living Colors of Linoleum collection includes classic marbled patterns
- Linoleum is noted for unparalleled performance and good maintenance characteristics
- A wide array of sophisticated, contemporary colors coordinate with practically any commercial space and finishes

MARMORETTE Specs:

- Sixty colors rooted in our natural world, with color-coordinated weld rods.
- Made with natural ingredients, linoleum is environmentally friendly and can contribute to LEED credits on projects.
- Three gauges for options in cost and performance. Rolls are 6 foot 7 inches wide; up to 98.4 feet long.

Highgate Elementary School

Seventy-five years ago, Highgate Elementary School opened its doors to students in Buffalo, New York. Even then, linoleum was already an established flooring product. A dark brown color of the venerable floor covering was installed in the school's hallways, performing admirably over the years. When the historic building underwent recent renovations, the original "battleship linoleum," which had seen thousands of kindergarten through eighth graders come and go, terminated its service life. Ironically, the school board and architects, looking for a new floor that would preserve the school's historic nature, again selected linoleum. This time around, however, the linoleum — Armstrong [MARMORETTE™](#) — was specified in ten contemporary colors and installed with innovative designs and insets. In addition to the school's hallways, linoleum is also

used in the classrooms and cafeteria.

Highgate Elementary School, aka Buffalo School #80, is located in one of the premier urban school systems in New York State. The renovated school, designated "eligible" for the National Register of Historic Places by the State Historic Preservation Office, was completed in the Spring of 2005. The 80,000 square foot building includes 7,000 square feet of new construction, over half of which is floored with Armstrong™ MARMORETTE™. MARMORETTE is the foundation of Armstrong's Living Colors of Linoleum collection, which features six totally color-and design integrated patterns. All Armstrong linoleum products are made from abundantly available and renewable raw materials, for low environmental impact and sustainable design. In addition, they are FloorScore™ certified for low VOC (volatile organic compound) emissions.

Flynn Battaglia Architects PC was chosen to work on this project by the Board of Education because of "our skills in historic preservation and our attention to detail," says designer Nancy Redeye. Of the flooring specification process, she says, "we wanted to renovate this school with a product that was durable, cleaned easily, and offered a lot of design flexibility without costing a fortune. We also were very keen on maintaining the same look as the original interior." Paul McDonnell, Buffalo school district architect and project manager, agrees. "We supported the use of linoleum wholeheartedly. It had already served us well for eighty years. What other product would last that long?" he jokes. As a publicly bid project, Armstrong was one of three manufacturers put into the specifications for linoleum flooring. Redeye says, "Armstrong was selected because MARMORETTE had the best design and colors of any of the manufacturers, and the best price for the contractor."

A new design using [MARMORETTE](#) vivid colors—sweet grass, goldenrod, firebird red, blue spa, fuchsia, caspian blue and mango; and neutral colors—gray birch, bamboo tan and silver gray, replaced the original brown linoleum. Redeye explains the integrated color scheme. "Bamboo tan is used in every classroom to preserve the original intent of the building. Neutral colors can be seen on all levels, with accent colors in geometric patterns highly visible at main corridor intersections on every floor level. The colors in the patterns on each floor are used as a means for identification. The floor designs are inspired by the architecture itself. For example, the eight colors and large arc in the cafeteria emphasize the space's exterior wall curve, while the corridor designs reflect the classic look of the building." Spectra Contract Flooring installed the linoleum using color coordinated linoleum weld rods for the larger seams, and adhesive seaming for the smaller pieces. McDonnell says, "Spectra used highly skilled labor for the custom work, and it shows."

The school board is delighted with the new floor and the innovative designs. "People are shocked at how beautiful linoleum looks when used in a highly creative way. Although the installer needed a lot of skill to custom cut and line up all the pieces, the result is outstanding!" she emphasizes. "Everyone thinks of linoleum as a long-lasting product, but the added bonuses are the beautiful colors and the design flexibility."

In addition to design, maintenance was also a key selection criterion. Redeye says, "maintenance is always an issue in schools." The custodial staff wanted a floor that cleaned well. Not only does

linoleum meet that need with surface smoothness, but the staff is already familiar with the costs, supplies and methods used to keep the floor looking great." The beautiful looks are expected to last a long time, too. The school is not planning on replacing any of these floors for the foreseeable future. McDonnell says, "We expect these floors to last a long, long time."