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CASE STUDY

Jeffco's Facility Planning Specialist Gets Solutions – and More – at BuildingsXchange

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Kathryn Zeebs
Facility Planning Specialist
Jefferson County School District



Facility Planning Specialist Kathryn Zeebs is responsible for all the capital needs in Jeffco's 200-plus buildings, comprising 94 elementary schools, 19 middle schools, 18 high schools, seven option schools, and 12 charter schools; she is also responsible for maintaining such educational specifications as size and space requirements, equipment, and teaching tools. Jeffco is committed to making its schools “an investment and currently has a \$448 million bond devoted to new construction and extensive renovations as well additions to existing schools.

“In my position as keeper of our technical guidelines, I try to get much more of a global over-arching view of things,” says Zeebs. “I get a lot of input from all the different departments at Jeffco, but, in the past, fixing a problem hasn't necessarily involved finding a better solution. **I act as a conduit to bring information back to the district, which saves a huge amount of time for everyone else. BuildingsXchange presented the forum in which to start at a higher level [of interaction with building suppliers]...and get to the heart of [several of our issues].”**

Zeebs found the **BuildingsXchange** experience particularly valuable because of the extensive filtering, qualification, and preparation process that each attendee goes through.

The Challenge: To meet with the right people who could help change the standard protocol for the way things were maintained. Have the opportunity to explore new technologies for energy and water conservation that would ultimately save money.

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Energy Conservation: Zeebs knew that a retrofit application of window film would be an energy-conservation area that would benefit Jeffco but there were safety-related concerns as well due to broken glass resulting from students’ rough behavior and vandalism. **“Because of the great advance information and matching process at BuildingsXchange, I was able to identify Bekaert as a possible resource in window film for both energy reduction and security issues,”** she explains. **“Our pre-meeting conversations allowed us to exchange more information before the event;** the Bekaert executive in attendance obviously listened very well because he was really able to focus our on-site meeting to our specific needs, from discussions about possible solutions to actual samples of the products and how they could work for us.”

Water Conservation: Says Zeebs, “we were trying to move into some of the touchless technology, and BuildingsXchange offered us the opportunity to explore some of those options with Technical Concepts,” notes Zeebs. Pre-event discussions uncovered potential water-saving products. “If there’s a way to save water that directly impacts the general fund, we’re actually putting money back into a classroom rather than down a drain,” she says.

The Result: Follow-up discussions and meetings ensued post-event with Bekaert. “Previously, our maintenance division looked at window film as [more problematic than solutions-driven], particularly for windows that had been broken more than a couple of times,” says Zeebs. “By finding an alternative that’s pretty cost effective, it gives them another opportunity to solve that problem.”

As for the plumbing innovations, Zeebs says, “Surprisingly, I learned that several of our maintenance people had worked with the local rep for Technical Concepts, but had never discussed new product lines, etc. So, even with our familiarity and past experience with the company, **BuildingsXchange helped us learn more.**”