



Situation: In June 2017 the town of Holbrook, MA brought online a new consolidated PK-12 campus, replacing three existing schools. Their bond issue included purchase of all new furniture, so nearly all of the furnishings in the old buildings were made excess. Holbrook identified IRN and reuse as the best option for managing the surplus furnishings.

Material Composition & Quantity: >4,200 items, including all furnishings from 3 schools serving pre-kindergarten through 12th grade.

Setting: Suburban streets, approximately 15 miles south of Boston.

Overview

The town of Holbrook, MA (pop 11,000) approved construction of a new education campus serving students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade, replacing two existing elementary schools and a middle-high school. Taxpayers approved purchase of nearly all new furnishings, leaving the three existing schools filled with surplus furniture. After evaluating all options, Owner’s Project Manager Symmes, Maini & McKee identified reuse through IRN as the most cost-effective disposition option for these furnishings. IRN is the one authorized provider of surplus furnishing management under competitive contracts issued by the Mass. Operational Services Division and Massachusetts Higher Education Consortium (MHEC), which eliminated the need for a new bid process, and greatly streamlined the town’s procurement.

After identifying nonprofit recipients for the furnishings, IRN worked with frequent partner Diamond Relocation to remove and pack them into shipping containers destined for communities in four countries. The project was carried out in three phases separated by a few weeks: one in late June emptying the middle-high school, two more in July and August to clean out the elementary schools.

Composition

Composition of Reused Furnishings, Three Holbrook (MA) Schools			
Item	Pieces	Item	Pieces
Desk, Student Open Face	776	Table, Classroom	347
Desk, Student Combo	604	Table, Science Lab	176
Chair, Student	1,096	Table, Cafeteria	120
Desk, Teacher	139	Art, Music & Phys Ed Equip't	120
Other Seating	521	File Cabinet	120
Storage Cabinet or Bookcase	157	Other	67
TOTAL			4,243

Implementation

The outstanding feature of this project was its size. The inventory filled a total of sixteen shipping containers: eleven containers (2,697 pieces) from the middle-high school, plus five containers (total 1,546 pieces) from the two elementary schools.

IRN – The Reuse Network

Three Schools, Holbrook, Massachusetts



Implementation (Ctd) With an 8-10 man crew, IRN completed the first (middle-high school) phase of the project in four days, removing furnishings from the school and packing two or three containers each day. Typical for a project like this, two or sometimes three men remained in the trailer packing the furnishings floor-to-ceiling, while the majority of the crew removed the inventory from hallways and classrooms and brought it outside to the trailer. IRN returned a month and then another month later, and repeated the process at the two elementary schools.

Destinations The high school furnishings were accepted by IRN's longtime charitable partner Food For The Poor and transported to FFP's central warehouse in Jamaica. The furnishings are now being distributed to countries and territories hard hit by major hurricanes in 2017, including Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Dominica, and others.

Furnishings from Holbrook's South Elementary School were shipped to Haiti. The poorest country in the Americas, Haiti is slowly recovering from hurricanes that devastated the country's southwest in 2016 and north shore in 2017.

Furnishings from the JFK Elementary School were shipped to Guyana (on the north coast of South America) and Nicaragua. Forgotten amidst stories of storms in the eastern Caribbean, parts of Nicaragua were ravaged by floods from Tropical Storm Nate. There as elsewhere, Holbrook's school furnishings are already having a significant impact in rebuilding the country's education infrastructure.

“Reuse was the right thing for the District to do – financially, environmentally, and in terms of social benefit. This year of storms has reminded us how fortunate we are, and how we can use that good fortune to help others.”

Patricia Lally, Superintendent, Holbrook Public School District



Holbrook school furniture staged in hallways and ready to be loaded for shipment.



Loading. Packing as tight as possible gets as much furniture as possible to needy students.



Loaded and ready to lock and ship from Holbrook middle-high school to Jamaica.