

# METEA VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL, AURORA, IL

## PROJECT CASE STUDY



*“Buying Wenger is worth the cost long-term – it really is.”*

– Don Devany  
Fine Arts Chair

ULTRASTOR™ STORAGE CABINETS

## CHALLENGE

Supply furnishings and equipment for music suite and auditorium in new high school.

## WENGER SOLUTION

Assisting music faculty with facility planning and evaluating product specifications. Designing most efficient arrangement of instrument storage cabinets and offering mobile storage solutions. Providing flexible risers and acoustical shell used for a variety of events.

## BENEFITS

- Planning Guide offers helpful guidelines and checklists
- Storage cabinets provide security and reduce congestion
- Music stands deliver reliable performance
- Seated risers offer flexibility and durability
- Long-term product quality justifies investment
- Mobile storage solutions protect valuable instruments
- Music chairs support correct posture
- Acoustical shell enhances sound projection and aesthetics



STUDENT MUSIC POSTURE CHAIRS, CLASSIC 50® MUSIC STANDS AND CONDUCTOR'S PODIUM

## HIGHLIGHTS

“I’ve known Wenger products for years; I never hear about any issues with Wenger quality,” says Don Devany, Fine Arts Chair at Metea Valley High School in Aurora, IL.

When Devany joined the staff toward the end of 2009, planning for the new high school was almost complete; final product selections were underway.

“I was very involved in selecting furnishings and equipment,” Devany recalls, adding that he made a chart of each room’s needs – band, choir, orchestra, music lab, black box theater, practice rooms and auditorium. He reviewed the equipment lists of the other two district high schools, along with consulting the Wenger catalog and Planning Guide for Secondary School Music Facilities.

“The Guide was a really nice checklist,” he states. “As someone doing this for the first time, it walked me through the process and gave me lots to think about.”

For music equipment, Devany wanted Wenger; he also knew the district had a history purchasing from Wenger. “I’ve visited other schools with non-Wenger equipment – whether instrument cabinets, chairs or music stands – and you can immediately see the difference in quality,” comments Devany.

He believes non-Wenger products look good at first, but after a couple of years the doors start falling off, the hinges break and the chairs come apart. “Buying Wenger is worth the cost long-term – it really is,” he states.

## STORAGE SOLUTIONS

When selecting instrument storage cabinets, Devany believes features like hinges, locking mechanisms and materials are important. “Our cabinets needed to last a long time,” he explains. “We definitely wanted Wenger cabinets for their quality, durability and appearance.”

Once Devany obtained product documentation from different cabinet manufacturers, his Wenger representative helped decipher them so Devany could explain the quality differences to the decision-makers.

To aid traffic flow and minimize congestion, the instrument storage room is adjacent to the band room, with doors on each end. Students can easily walk in through the hallway to get their instrument and walk right to the band room. Devany appreciates the ability to lock the band room door while still allowing students to access their instruments after hours.

When the school opened, sousaphones were stored on carpeted shelving that was too high for many shorter students to reach. Devany contacted Wenger and learned about several possible options, including wall-mounted brackets or sousaphone racks.

“We ordered three sousaphone racks and they’re working out great,” he comments, adding that they can also be adjusted to hold tubas. Students can easily access instruments and move them between the storage room and the band room, such as during marching camp.

Another mobile storage solution benefiting Metea Valley is the OnBoard Timpani Cart. “It’s a great invention – we love it!” Devany exclaims, who says the cart held four brand-new timpani during the entire marching band season. “Not a single timpani was damaged – protecting them was a key goal,” he states.

The timpani stay secure on the cart during transport and performance, instead of constantly being picked up and removed, and the cart pulls easily behind a golf cart. “When preparing for a festival, we just roll the Timpani Cart right up into the truck, strap it down and away we go,” he notes.



SOUSAPHONE MOBILE STORAGE RACKS



INSTRUMENT STORAGE CABINETS AND CELLO CHAIRS

## SUPPORTING MUSICIANS

For rehearsal and performance equipment, Metea Valley personnel evaluated several different music stands before selecting Classic 50s. “They’re light-weight, easy to move around and also very durable,” states Devany, adding that he also appreciates how the desk stays in the proper position without requiring frequent tightening.

They ordered Student Chairs, which were already in use at other district schools. “We liked the design – they’re a good-looking chair,” states Devany. “Students will find ways to slouch, but the Student Chairs make it more comfortable to sit up properly.”

The auditorium has Musician Chairs, which coordinate visually with the Student Chairs during larger combined ensembles. Twelve Cello Chairs were purchased at the request of Orchestra Director Mark Liu, who plays cello professionally and also gives private lessons.

“I really like the Cello Chair and strongly believe it is very good for posture – helping students lean forward while keeping their backs tall,” Liu explains. “I want my students to have the best equipment, because otherwise they struggle with slouching or back pain. The chairs help students keep more engaged in their playing and they also look great.”

When evaluating Versalite seated risers for the choir room, concerns were raised about the carpet’s long-term durability. “Other Versalite customers we contacted confirmed that the risers stayed looking nice for a long time,” recalls Devany.

Carpeted Versalite risers were ordered for the choir room; non-carpeted Versalite risers were selected for the auditorium and black box theater. In the black box, the risers serve as audience seating and also make various stage arrangements. If needed, Devany says these platforms can be used for staging elsewhere in the building. The auditorium’s Versalite risers are used for band, orchestra, jazz and steel band.



INSTRUMENT STORAGE CABINETS AND ONBOARD® TIMPANI CART

## ENHANCING EVENTS

The auditorium’s centerpiece is a Diva acoustical shell, which Devany says they wanted for aesthetic and acoustical reasons. Another high school in the district already had a Diva shell, which had proven popular.

“The Diva creates a really nice, formal atmosphere for the performing ensembles and the acoustics are great,” he notes. Devany appreciates how the shell’s towers and ceiling panels fit closely together to contain the sound onstage and help project it to the audience.

“We don’t have to worry about ensuring our students are positioned in a certain area – there’s a lot of flexibility with it,” he says.

The Diva shell is used for a variety of concerts and events, in a number of different configurations. “It’s remarkably easy to set up – we got the hang of it quickly,” recalls Devany, who adds that the built-in lighting and access doors are both nice features. When several minor issues came up with the lighting, Devany says Wenger came out and fixed them.

“Whenever we’ve had any issue or question, Wenger has taken care of it,” Devany concludes. “Their service has been great.”



STUDENT MUSIC POSTURE CHAIRS, CLASSIC 50® MUSIC STANDS, CONDUCTOR'S PODIUM, WHITEBOARD AND ONBOARD® TIMPANI CART

## PRODUCT LIST

Instrument Storage Cabinets, Diva® Acoustical Shell, Signature® Choral Risers, Versalite® Seated Risers and Sound-Isolating Music Practice Rooms, Sousaphone Mobile Storage Racks, String Bass Racks, Musician and Student Music Posture Chairs, Cello Chairs, Acoustical Shields, Classic 50® Music Stands, Conductor’s Podium, Music Lab Workstations, Whiteboards and OnBoard® Timpani Cart.