

# CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL SAN ANGELO, TEXAS

PROJECT CASE STUDY

**Wenger®**  
*Your Performance Partner*



VAE® REHEARSAL SYSTEM, ACOUSTICABINETS®, ACOUSTICAL PANELS, STUDENT CHAIRS AND FOLIO CABINETS

***“The VAE Rehearsal System really helps my day-to-day teaching.”***

– Joel Ashbrook  
Band Director



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## CHALLENGE

Improve acoustical environment in renovated band room.

## WENGER SOLUTION

Installing active acoustics system to provide supportive, variable acoustics. Programming custom settings to simulate specific performance environments. Planning and installing optimal arrangement of acoustical panels and cabinets.

## BENEFITS

- Technology simulates acoustics of various performance environments.
- Custom settings accelerate preparation for contests and concerts.
- Specialized panels and cabinets enhance room acoustics.
- Improves precision, balance and blend across ensembles.
- Record/playback capability enables self-critique, accelerates learning.
- Music posture chairs offer support, comfort and durability.

## HIGHLIGHTS

“The VAE Rehearsal System is outstanding – my students can actually experience playing in a performance environment: maintaining rhythm, tuning and pitch across the band,” explains Joel Ashbrook, Band Director at Central High School in San Angelo, Texas.

Ashbrook chooses different acoustic settings to work on improving balance and precision with his students, for example between the drum line and the brass in the marching band. He strongly believes the VAE technology is a great teaching tool.

Before Central’s band room was renovated, Ashbrook found it challenging to instruct students effectively about attacks, releases and articulation. Like most school rehearsal rooms, Central’s was acoustically dry, lacking any resonance or ambiance. The VAE Technology now provides alternatives.

“If I know our marching band is playing at a large football stadium, I’ll select the sports arena setting,” Ashbrook states. “It improves precision, balance and blend issues, such as from the percussion battery to the upper brass.”

Central High School and the larger San Angelo community both lack a good auditorium for performances. For the custom setting that comes with the nine standard VAE performance environments, Ashbrook requested the 985-seat Frenship High School Performing Arts Center near Lubbock, about 200 miles away. Central also purchased a second custom VAE setting – the 1,800-seat Wagner Noël Performing Arts Center in Midland, Texas, about 125 miles away.

Along with serving as Central’s closest performance venues, they are also where Ashbrook’s bands regularly travel for contests. “From a competition standpoint, we now have the opportunity to play every day in a hall that sounds like the stages we’ll compete on,” he notes. “That can’t help but give us an advantage.”

Ashbrook considers the VAE technology’s record-playback function extremely beneficial to learning. “When I record something I want my students to work on, it’s been an eye-opener for them. I may have explained it a thousand times, but hearing it makes the light bulb go on.”

He recalls rehearsing a long, technical woodwind lick with the band. Students were struggling with clarity: fingering and tonguing were not lining up precisely. Even after Ashbrook worked with them over several weeks, they still struggled.

Finally he asked them to play the lick in four different VAE settings, from a large arena to small, dry room. “Once students could hear themselves in the different room settings, the problem was immediately cleaned up!” he remarks.

“The VAE Rehearsal System really helps my day-to-day teaching,” explains Ashbrook. “Initially I thought the system was just a way to show students how they would sound onstage. But as soon as I was given a demo, I realized how I could use it as a teaching tool.”

Central’s remodeled band hall encompasses 19,000 square feet and features 24’ ceilings. Along with VAE technology, the room acoustics are also enhanced by AcoustiCabinets and acoustical panels on the walls and ceiling. Ashbrook believes these products made an immediate difference on rehearsals by improving the room’s clarity. For promoting good posture, he likes their Student Chairs; they are also durable, easy to stack and easy to transport.

Overall, he appreciates how Wenger products enhance and support music education. “Other look-alike products do nothing,” he concludes. “You get what you pay for with Wenger.”



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## PRODUCT LIST

VAE® Rehearsal System, AcoustiCabinets®, Acoustical Panels, Student Chairs and Folio Cabinets.



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