Ft. Wayne Community Schools Improved Project Owner Visibility With Procore

Heather Krebs' Intense Summer Vacation

Since 1857, Ft. Wayne Community Schools (FWCS) has been an educational district on the move. Serving a diverse and energized population of some 32,000 students, FWCS throws itself at the mission across all fronts. Scrambling for funds (like most public school systems), FWCS nevertheless ranks near the top of the "Funneling Dollars into the Classroom" metric in their state, pouring 70.1% of their resources directly into the academic mission in 2016-2017. FWCS has no choice but to work with maximum efficiency to fulfill the district's structural needs, earning the EPA's coveted ENERGY STAR certification on five recent projects while coming in on budget.

LOCATION:
FT. WAYNE, INDIANA

ANNUAL CONSTRUCTION VOLUME:
$60 MILLION

PRIMARY INDUSTRY:
EDUCATION

PROJECT SIZE:
1,000 SQUARE MILES

PROJECT COST:
$1 MILLION

Budget-Focused Transparency

FWCS is taxpayer-funded and answerable to the public. This inspires constant focus on budget. Seamless, real-time info-sharing between the project "owners," their contractors, and architects minimizes waste—of both time and resources.

Remote and Informed

FWCS' Heather Krebs and her minimalist team are stretched thin, and managing the 20-some active project sites scattered throughout the district is a tall order, to say the very least. Procore's cloud-based visibility empowers FWCS—the project owner—to dive into and out of active construction projects from afar, checking in on every aspect of the build and providing a holistic, actionable snapshot of the state of each project, and of the projects in aggregate.

Centralized Data Management. And You Own It.

Putting all real-time project data in one digital location consolidates it for ease of use in the field. Significantly, Procore gives the owner… ownership; of both the data and access to it. Today and forever. Drawings, floor plans, RFIs—once the project wraps, all the building data is beautifully archived and eternally retrievable for future maintenance.

> "There's an expense to any software you're going to adopt, but for us, the efficiencies that we get in the project communication, Procore pays for itself."

HEATHER KREBS
COORDINATOR OF
PROGRAM CONTROLS,
FORT WAYNE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

The Challenge

Ft. Wayne Community Schools has a lot to do, and not a lot of time to do it. As the kids are sprinting out of the classroom and into summer vacation, Heather Krebs and the FWCS Facilities strike team are making preparations for eight weeks of intensive, heavily scheduled construction management, typically encompassing some 25 buildings strewn all over the district. This varied range of projects is overseen by a scant handful of people. Public funds and inflexible timelines leave no room for waste. None.

> "With 60 buildings in our district, we had a lot of our information scattered throughout our servers. Now, if our facilities team is getting in and working on a system, they can go into Procore and access any drawings and reports."

HEATHER KREBS
COORDINATOR OF PROGRAM CONTROLS,
FORT WAYNE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

The Solution

Cloud-Covered Clarity

Procore's cloud-based transparency allows FWCS' Coordinator of Program Controls to view real-time progress across all her far-flung projects—without ever leaving the room.

SOP Unity

Procore standardizes and simplifies field processes. However distinct the builds, a dozen GCs unanimously working the same project protocols is a raging river of efficiency.

Data for Keeps

Procore confers complete ownership of the data, and all the analytical riches buried there. Every intricate detail of the build is beautifully archived and eternally retrievable for future reference and use.

PROCORE®

Doing a Lot with a Little

In 2012 and 2016, bond-funded building projects were approved by public referendum, and Indiana's previously resource-starved Ft. Wayne Community Schools (FWCS) came into $250M. It fell to Heather Krebs and the FWCS Facilities team to wrangle the long-delayed projects and neatly oversee them to budget-friendly completion––making her the owner of all the newly-funded projects. No big deal. "I do the program budgeting, scheduling, and inter-department coordination with our security, technology, and purchasing curriculum departments." Heather's support staff is an exercise in Lean. "In our department there are eight people. Four of us are directly assigned to these projects—two architects, a contractor, and an engineer."

Complete Owner Visibility

Can four people really have eyes on 25 simultaneous projects? Yep. By design, Procore gives Heather and the Facilities team detailed, real-time views deep inside the build(s). "It's about the flow of information," Krebs says, "It's about having the information at your fingertips. It's not stored on a server somewhere or in multiple locations." This real-time xray into project status means sticking to schedules. "We have about eight weeks in the summer when we can really tear into a building and get a whole lot done. So yeah, schedule and phasing coordination I would say are our biggest challenges that we solve with Procore."

Communication is Power

Procore empowers the project owner with remote visibility into the project—allowing complete project oversight to a degree of the owner's choosing. The transparency and mobility inherent in the Procore platform likewise allows field teams to anticipate missteps and budget-wrecking wrong turns. "I know a lot of us use the mobile app a lot, and that is handy when you're doing inspections and observations, to just to be able to snap the photo, send it off with a description of what's going on, and do that all really quickly." Working with public funds means taking seriously the return on investment.

"We look at the advantages and the time savings that the software can provide," says Heather Krebs. "I mean, there's an expense to any software you're going to adopt, but for us, the efficiencies that we get in the project communication, Procore pays for itself."