



NEW COLUMBIA HIGH SCHOOL STAYS ON BUDGET WITH PERFORMANCE DRIVEN ASHLY AMPS AND DSP

COLUMBIA, MISSOURI: The population of Columbia, Missouri grew by over twenty-percent between 2000 and 2010 and is on pace to continue that growth in the current decade. Responding to the obvious need for increased classroom space in a school system designed for a smaller citizenry, the Columbia School District secured funds to build a fourth high school, which will relieve crowding in the existing high schools and middle schools. Muriel Williams Battle High School will open in fall 2013, but already many of its facilities are nearly completed, including band and music rooms that will help jumpstart new musical traditions for the fledgling school. An Ashly ne1600pe amplifier with onboard Protea DSP in each of those rooms will facilitate playback of instructional audio, including stereo recordings of the students themselves.

Lonnie Theer & Associates (Omaha, Nebraska) designed the modest band and music room audio playback systems with an eye toward performance, reliability, and transparent user control, all while meeting the school district's budget. Each system is an exact duplicate of the other so that faculty and staff need only learn one system to learn them both. "Including only the necessary controls within a robust design make these twin systems just the right speed for the new high school," said Paul Jonas, director of installations at Theatrical Media Services (Omaha, Nebraska), who installed the system.

A 16-channel mixer provides an intuitive user interface in each room. A handful of microphones, a CD player, and a solid-state recorder form a manageable and flexible input set that's useful for benchmarking students' performances against both professional performances and against the students' earlier performances. One Ashly ne1600pe amplifier with onboard DSP resides in each room, providing equalization, limiting protection, and power for a pair of full-range loudspeakers that deliver full stereo playback.

"The ease and simplicity of the Ashly ne Series with optional onboard DSP is a real benefit in a job like this," said Jonas. "Having Ashly's flexible Protea™ software inside the amp lets us install the system with less wiring and with less time spent wiring. Moreover, there's a cost savings to having the DSP housed within the amplifier. A separate unit would add significantly to the expense. Ashly's reputation for building reliable equipment also factors into the benefits."

The school district will take possession of the new building in the summer, on schedule and on budget.

