



Guide:

# Facing the Challenges of Aging and Expanding Facilities in Higher Education

A STRATEGIC AND BUDGET-CONSCIOUS  
APPROACH TO MAINTAINING FACILITIES  
THAT MEET THE DEMAND OF TODAY'S  
CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

PREPARED BY  
SaniGLAZE International

**SaniGLAZE**  
TILE & HARD SURFACE RESTORATION  
[saniglaze.com](http://saniglaze.com)



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## A New Era in Higher Education Facilities

As teaching methods continue to evolve, higher education facilities have adjusted to integrate new ideas and approaches. These efforts have ushered colleges and universities into a new era of adaptive design and sustainability when it comes to their facilities.

For decades SaniGLAZE has worked with colleges and universities who are finding creative, innovative ways to design learning spaces, attract and retain students, and prepare them for the future.

Not only are students changing, colleges and universities are changing with them. Institutions are evolving as a new generation of students enters higher education with different expectations of living, learning and the place of higher education facilities in environmental movements.





## THE SWINGING PENDULUM OF CAMPUS AMENITIES

Most colleges and universities are leveling out after a shift in the approach to building design in the last two decades.

In the early 2000s, colleges clamored to build amenities they believed would attract millennial students and boost enrollment. From climbing walls and lazy rivers to gaming lounges and food courts, higher education facilities poured their budgets into luxury housing and flashy amenities in the hopes of standing out from the competition.

But as enrollment costs rose, drawing some scrutiny, many schools scaled back. And given how prominent the national conversation around student loan debt is, it's hardly surprising that affordability has become a bigger factor for students than ever before.

Not wanting to just cut costs and reduce space, more often schools are putting

more consideration into which amenities align to what students care about, which are actually contributing to student outcomes, and what amenities simply aren't.

### A Look at New Balanced Approaches to Housing

More institutions have begun to take a deeper look at facilities spending and how that's truly impacting student enrollment and graduation rates. Many universities have extensive data showcasing that living on campus leads to students having higher graduation rates and a more positive opinion on their college experience.

However, for some, too high of rising costs hurts student outcomes. For instance, one university in the southeast found that when it increased housing costs after spending \$168 million on apartment-style student housing, it found a student was 12 percent less likely to graduate for every \$5,000 in unmet financial need.

Because of findings like this, there's been a return to smaller, more spartan campus housing – allowing schools to both maximize space and reduce housing costs for incoming students.



In some instances, schools are combining meal plans with lower-cost campus housing – at a price cheaper than luxury housing that doesn’t include meals. Administrators at many institutions have been astonished at how eagerly students rushed to embrace these more affordable options.

These attractive cost-reducing housing options can also lead to a better campus experience overall. Private kitchens and bathrooms may initially attract students, but it doesn’t give them the opportunity to connect and socialize with others, a factor shown to positively impact academic success.

Places like dining halls and rec centers may be less “shiny” on college admission brochures than a 24-hour climbing wall, but they remain integral spaces for developmental opportunities where students gain chances to build relationships, network, and resolve conflicts.



### **Student Experience and Affordability now Drivers in Facility Growth and Maintenance**

A sense of community and the lifestyle a college offers continues to be an important factor for incoming college students. A renewed focus on social spaces for students, combined with affordability, is now driving facility growth and maintenance in higher education.

Niche amenities and social spaces that meet the tastes of a college or university are often great ways for one school to stand out from the pack and advertise the campus experience. Colleges and universities are now providing perks of a more utilitarian nature, such as napping stations and laundry services.





Although a library napping station may sound like a luxury item for lazy students, it's actually a helpful time saver for students who must do hours and hours of research and study at the library. Being able to catch a quick nap where they are prevents them from having to return home to rest and journey back, adding valuable minutes to their study regimen.



Underground and “skyway” tunnels are a welcome perk to students braving northern winters and laundry services, while not glamorous, are incredible time savers for busy students.

Quirkier amenities – such as community kitchens with culinary classes or even campus fire pits – are attracting students through lifestyle appeal, switching the focus on amenities from escapism to engagement.





## AS TEACHING EVOLVES, SO DOES THE CONCEPT OF CLASSROOMS

As the education system has evolved, what we teach and how we teach it has also changed. How information is taught – how positive learning outcomes are achieved – goes beyond the teacher and his or her curriculum.

Research has shown learning outcomes can be impacted by everything from nutrition and exercise all the way to classroom design and furniture. Because of this, schools all over the nation are constantly asking themselves how to provide the best spaces for student learning.

When it comes to updating facilities in higher education, the issue is more complex than simply finding the space

to fit students in. Specialized technology or a desire for student collaboration is impossible to achieve in an outdated space without the tools and layout students need to succeed.

To remedy this, many colleges and universities are building or restoring spaces with adaptability and communal use in mind.

Furniture and flooring are often chosen to serve a variety of functions and larger, collaborative spaces—like student learning labs—maximize limited space by serving multiple purposes.

Facility managers looking to minimize budget expenditures but still provide contemporary spaces for learning, would be wise to focus on adaptability and collaboration when building or restoring student learning spaces.





## HIGHER EDUCATION FACILITIES AS LEADERS IN ENVIRONMENTAL INNOVATION

When the Environmental Protection Agency launched a program in the late 1990s to crack down on repeat environmental violations, a large number of colleges and universities were targeted for not complying with regulations generally applied to the industry sector.

Receiving fines from the EPA for environmental noncompliance is a costly matter – a fine on the low end is around \$11,000 and colleges and universities can't afford to lose budget dollars to noncompliance.

Regulation or not, many institutions have proactively stepped up their efforts to reduce pollution and promote environmental sustainability because it aligns with the spirit of higher education: Providing instruction on how students can make the world a better place.

Colleges and universities are in direct control of a very small amount of the facilities and practices that can

make a difference when it comes to environmental sustainability in the world, but their indirect reach is large. In a 2019 Times Higher Education article, Cameron Hepburn, a professor of environmental economics and director of the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment at the University of Oxford, said, “Mass education [is required] – a university like Oxford needs to be educating the world. Our impact on the world

*“Mass education [is required] – a university like Oxford needs to be educating the world. Our impact on the world through our knowledge and teaching is just so much greater than what's happening on campus.”*

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Pollution, climate change and their impact on the environment affect a multitude of industries, as well as society as a whole.

As purveyors of knowledge and education, colleges and universities play a critical role in guiding students of all disciplines to sustainable and environmentally friendly thinking and practices.

It doesn't hurt when it comes to recruitment either. Today's incoming students tend to care deeply about environmental sustainability and ask questions about carbon footprints and green initiatives.



The background of the entire page is a blurred photograph of a graduation ceremony. In the foreground, several black graduation caps with red tassels are visible. The background shows a large crowd of graduates in similar attire, with a warm, golden light suggesting an outdoor setting with trees.

## **Maintaining a High Caliber Facility to Attract High Caliber Students**





## STUDENTS ARE PAYING ATTENTION TO THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT A SCHOOL OFFERS

### Campus visits still drive choice in higher education

A campus visit is a make it or break it moment when it comes to turning prospective students into enrolled students.

A 2020 EAB firm briefing states, “More so than academic reputation (12.9%) and cost (11.5%), it’s the campus environment (13.6%) that drives students away—or draws them in,” writes Associate Director for EAB Research Lisa Berglund.

High school students rely heavily on visits to college campuses when selecting a school because it’s a moment for the prospective student to see for themselves what their experience might be like if they attended.

According to a U.S. News and World Report surveying more than 200,000 students, 41 percent listed “a visit to this campus” as a “very important” factor influencing their choice. Information gathered online was only an important factor in 21 percent of cases.

Although the bounds of the digital realm have expanded to include 360-degree panoramic views, as well as live video tours, it’s no substitute for the emotional connection that can happen with real-world experiences.

### School environment can act as a tipping point for college selection

If prospective students were only concerned with academics and affordability, college brochures wouldn’t need any pictures. The simple fact is, when students choose their education, they’re also choosing their home for the next several years. It should come as no surprise they want one that’s appealing and well-maintained.



Research conducted by the EAB firm, which surveyed over 200,000 students in 2017, determined that “campus environment is the number one reason students chose to enroll at a different institution.”

With the environment and experience being such strong drivers in school selection, facility managers would be wise to capitalize on showcasing student spaces that are both appealing and useful to prospective students.

*“Campus environment is the number one reason students chose to enroll at a different institution.”*

The Student Research Foundation reported students are paying close attention to a school’s campus appearance and comparing it to their other school choices.

A 2017 study reported 89 percent of students rated their number-one college choice as good or excellent “regarding the quality of the school’s physical environment.” Only 72 percent rated their number-two choice as good or excellent in this area. When trying to boost student enrollment, campus appeal, restoration and solid facilities maintenance will be an integral part of success.



Enrollment experts and administrators urge prospective students to use campus visits as a kind of litmus test, studiously collecting critical data that will inform their college choice. Students say it’s less about the details and more about the atmosphere – about making a connection.

Many will choose a school for the campus and lifestyle that best appeals to them over a college with a distinguished reputation. When surveying students who got into their top choice university only to not attend, EAB data revealed that 9 percent cited the campus environment as a reason for their decision.





## AGING FACILITIES CAN JEOPARDIZE RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING

As Boomers began going to college, educational facilities had to expand with the significantly larger size of the cohort. Because of that, 75 percent of American campus buildings were constructed between 1960 and 1985.

Now, colleges and universities across the country are facing serious issues as 40 percent of the space on campuses is being taken up by aging, maladapted buildings.

Some institutions now face a catch 22 problem: Dated buildings can deter students who find them unappealing. However, if all old buildings are torn down and replaced, those institutions will never appear rooted in tradition and history like many prestigious universities, an aesthetic that students do find appealing.

Lots of prospective students want to live, eat or study in 200 year old buildings — far fewer want to live in 60 year old buildings. But if you tear down all your buildings once they're 60 years old, you'll never have one reach 200.

To ensure that aging facilities don't jeopardize their recruitment, many universities have taken steps to ensure their residential halls, dining facilities and athletic facilities are adapted to the wants and needs of prospective students.

### Yesterday's "Dorms" become Today's Residence Halls

Residential halls that balance quality of life and affordability can be critical to attracting students, but administrators know that ensuring their buildings strike that balance is a challenge.

And that's because many residence halls are part of that population of aging maladapted buildings. As



enrollment swelled in the 1950s and '60s and schools were forced to build housing facilities to house them in, and many of those are the buildings used today.

When they were new, these dorms were typically spartan, even at prestigious schools, and it was common to have as many as three students share a small room. Communal restrooms could serve as many as 30 students and even in the deep South, air conditioning was often not included.

As the way of living has changed, many colleges and universities have changed directions. Students today still learn conflict prevention and resolution through shared rooms and bathrooms, however most modern residential halls now have air conditioning and communal studying spaces.



*In this institution, SaniGLAZE was able to help perform restoration much quicker and for much less money than replacement.*

As it turns out, prospective students seem much more willing to compromise on room space and amenities in exchange for a more affordable education, surprising some administrators and college experts. “Triples” or three students to a room isn’t unheard of, albeit typically reserved for incoming freshmen.

Rather than tearing down these residential halls, many schools are opting instead to restore them. Some schools take a moderate approach and replace rooms with larger communal rooms, and some are taking buildings down to the studs and rebuilding from the inside out.



### How dining facilities and flexible menus enhance student lifestyle and recruitment

Times have also changed when it comes to on campus dining options, and prospective students are paying more attention to it than ever before.

Food service is now a critical part of campus life and students are basing their college decisions, in part, on who has the best nosh and dining facilities. A USA Today article stated higher education food service was an estimated \$18 billion industry in 2018 – up from \$12.4 billion about 12 years ago and close to \$1.89 billion in 1972.

But the expansion in higher education food service isn't just a result of catering to changing tastes or demand for variety. Although Millennials and Generation Z may be accustomed to and crave a variety of ethnic foods – dietary, religious, moral and environmental concerns are also strong drivers of students' eating habits.



*This college worked with SaniGLAZE to ensure its facility was as modern as its updated menu offerings.*



Schools are working with vendors to cater to a variety of dietary trends or requirements. And strategic planning of how those facilities are able to accommodate those needs and trends is critical. For food allergies that means surfaces that are kept separate and cleaned separately. For vegetarians or those keeping halal it may mean separate serving utensils and sections.

It's not just the dangers posed by food allergies or the nutritional needs of vegetarians either. The International Food Information Council Foundation says one out of three Americans follows a specific lifestyle diet, and that the number is even higher among those ages 18 to 34.

For today's students, sustainable, locally sourced foods may elevate one college's dining plan over others. In addition, when spiritual or moral beliefs impact or shape a student's diet, campus dining options and the facilities that provide them can become a critical factor in selecting one college over another. Facilities that appear modern and clearly showcase that they're responding to those needs and trends put themselves ahead of the competition.







## **BOLSTERING SCHOOL PRIDE, STUDENT HEALTH AND RECRUITMENT WITH FACILITIES RESTORATION AND MAINTENANCE**

Sports—and the athletic facilities that come with them—have played a major role in student recruitment for decades.

Sports not only represent athleticism and school spirit for players, students and fans, they can also provide opportunities for scholarships, sometimes funding students' education they might not otherwise be able to afford.

Because of this, American colleges and universities have a history of investing big on athletic facilities, from huge football stadiums to small student gyms.

Whether they were built in the 1960s or early 2000s, athletic facilities from college building booms now require updating or restoration. Athletic recruitment is still a major factor for some students when choosing colleges, and facility managers face an uphill battle in transforming these heavily used, and often dated facilities into well-maintained spaces with modern appeal.

With health and fitness playing a central role in the lifestyle of many students, the need for clean, attractive athletic facilities isn't going away anytime soon.



## **Impact of Tile and Hard Surfaces at Higher Education Facilities**

Whether a building was built in 1950 or 2005, it likely features tile and grout surfaces in its restrooms, locker rooms and athletic spaces.

Throughout the years, tile and grout has remained a dependable choice in building thanks to its durability, longevity and moisture resistance.





## UNCLEAN BATHROOMS REFLECT ON STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF SCHOOLS AND ITS LEADERS

When it comes to attracting prospective students through campus tours, colleges and universities tend to focus on student housing, campus life and helpful amenities. Student ambassadors often hype a school's social scene, computer labs or coffee houses – but not its flowering hedges or restrooms.

Yet, studies suggest the little things do matter. Turns out even landscaping and the appearance of school grounds are strong influencers when students decide on a college – even if they don't know it.

According to a survey conducted by admissions directors, around 62 percent of prospective college students reported basing their college decision on the appearance

of the buildings and landscape. Within 10 minutes of being on a campus, most students decide whether that school is staying on their list for consideration.

While it may not be a logical or even conscious decision, environmental appeal matters to modern students, and their standards – as consumers – are fairly high. Phillip S. Waite, assistant professor in the Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture at Washington State University, said, “Having a nice-looking campus communicates to students that we care about them and value them as customers.”

The landscape is a medium of communication, he said. It's always sending messages.

*Within 10 minutes of being on a campus, most students decide whether that school is staying on their list for consideration.*

And it turns out, high school students today are fairly serious about the messages being sent by campus restrooms too.

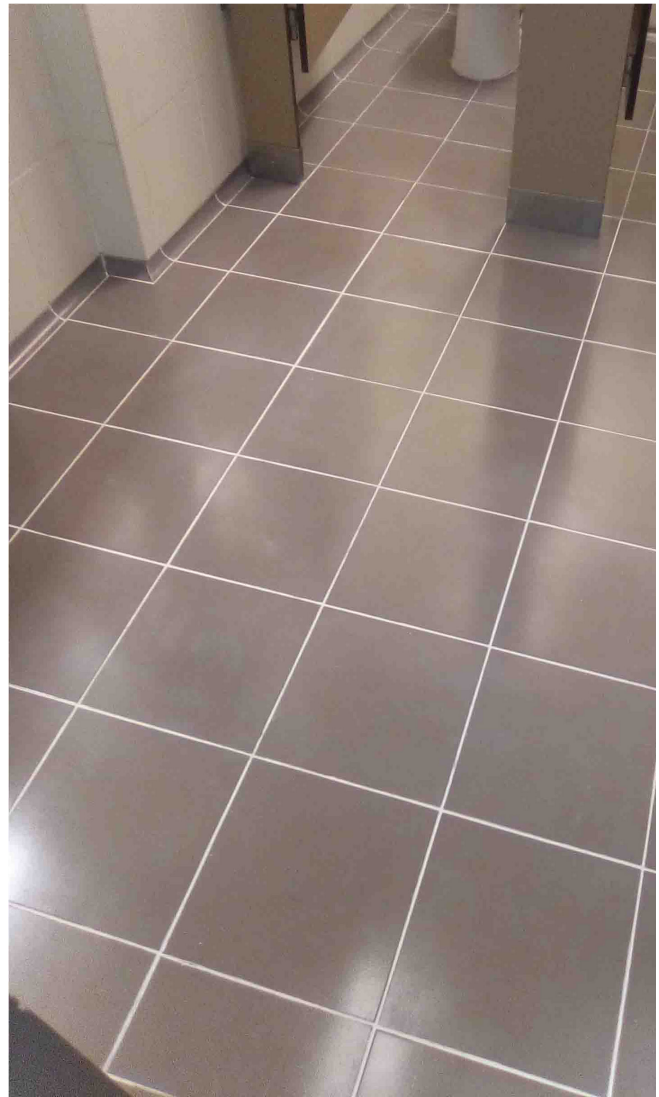
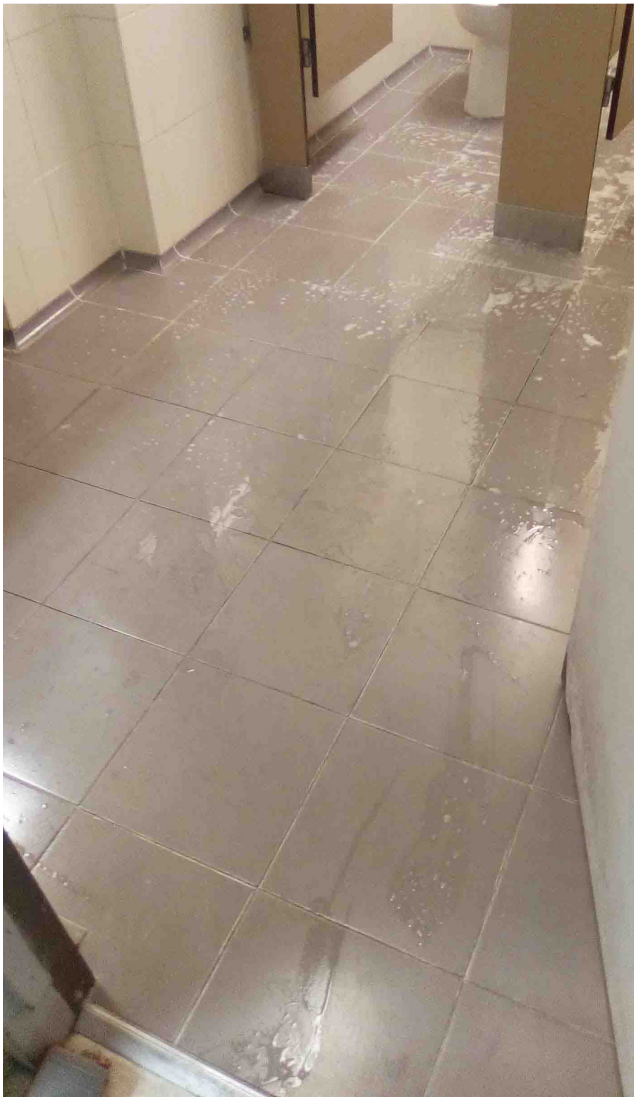


A 2019 survey conducted by the Bradley Corp., which polled 630 students in grades 9-12, revealed that dirty, unsanitary restrooms deeply affected student perceptions of the school and morale.

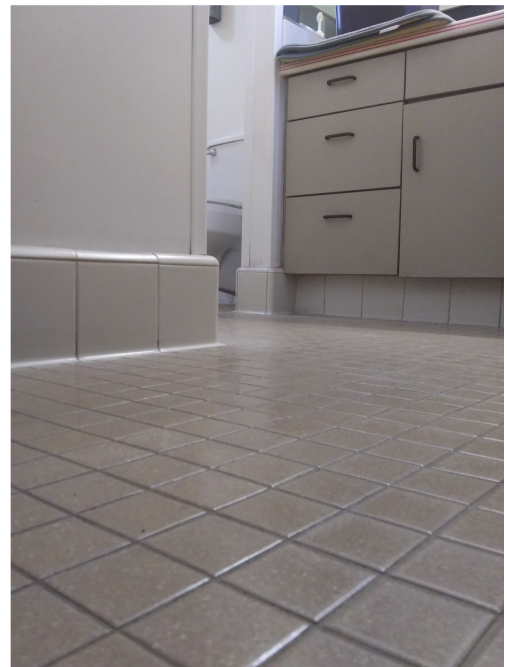
Dingy, sticky floors, foul odors, dirty sinks and lack of sanitary supplies all work to create a negative impression students must confront daily. Out of the students polled, 68 percent said poorly maintained or unclean restrooms showed the school didn't care for the well-being of its students. It also reflected poor management, in their eyes, and lowered their overall opinion of the school's quality.

The restroom may not be the first stop on the campus tour, but a clean, attractive restroom is still a make it or break it moment. It's not just a facility to provide a service, it's an opportunity to send a message.

That means the stakes are high when it comes to the restrooms on campus. As the nation's universities prepare to attract and welcome the next wave of incoming high school graduates, facility managers should make sure restrooms are renovated and well-maintained.







## IN RESIDENCE HALLS, STUDENT NEGLIGENCE REQUIRES STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS

When it comes to Student Housing, although attractive, sanitary restrooms are often considered very important by students, that doesn't necessarily mean students will do a good job maintaining them.

Many colleges have moved away from communal restrooms that serve large numbers, replacing them with small restrooms often shared by just two or three students. While this may

help boost enrollment, it leaves routine maintenance in the hands of students who may or may not be up to the challenge.

This can mean restrooms aren't getting deep cleaned until semester breaks, when maintenance crews can access them without disturbing students. By this time, moisture, dirt and contaminants are usually deeply embedded within the grout joints, contributing to dingy, unsanitary conditions and unpleasant odors.

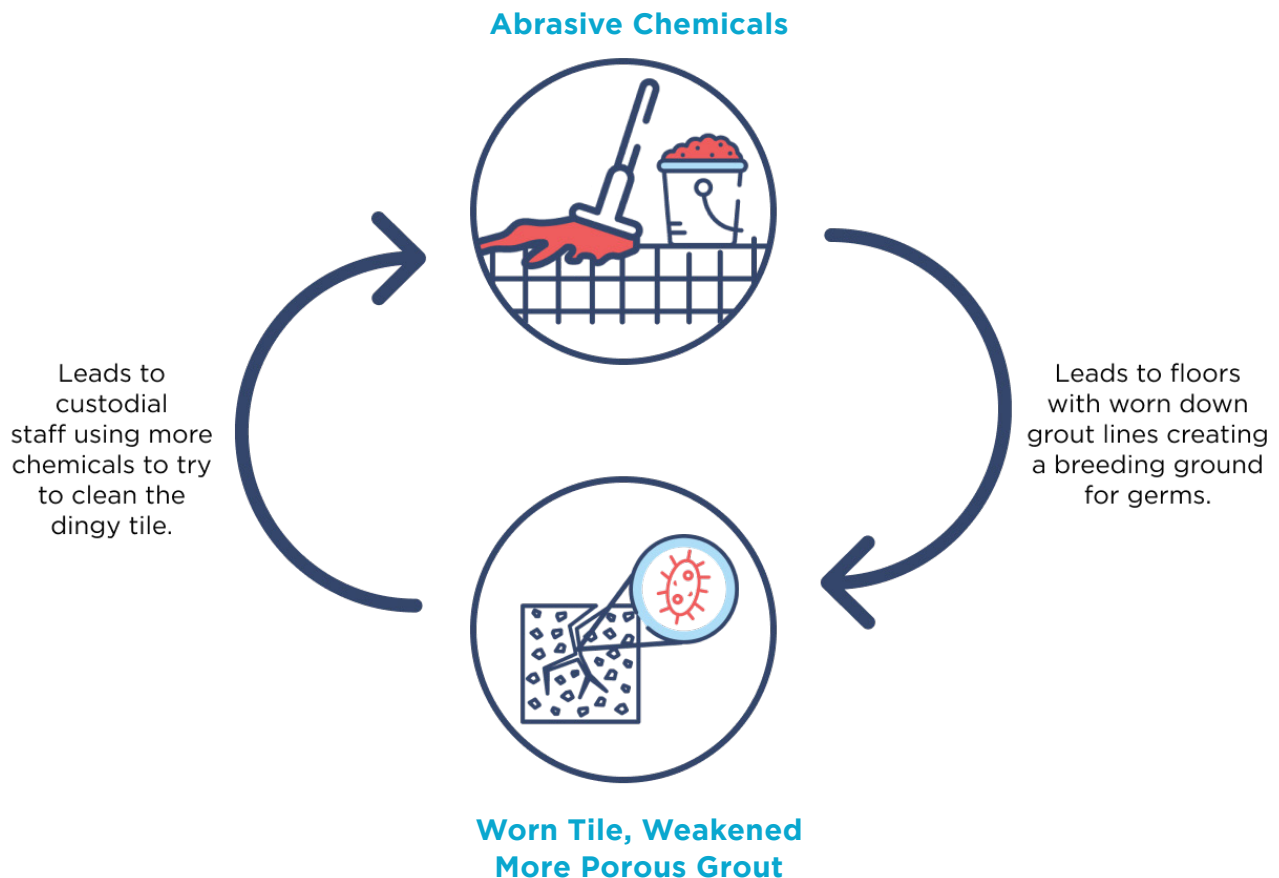


If the tile and grout surfaces are unsealed, custodial efforts to transform a student restroom to an attractive, clean state typically require harsh chemicals and abrasion or agitation. Both can deal long-term damage to tile and grout surfaces.

Grout in its natural state is porous. When strong chemicals are applied to it, they can penetrate the surface, eventually causing the grout to break down and erode. As erosion occurs, more cracks and holes appear, creating new spaces for bacteria and debris to hide in. Harsh agitation may temporarily remove staining or soiling, but it also hastens the breakdown of compromised grout – and the cycle continues.

New products and services offer a variety of flooring solutions to guard against this. Advanced tile and grout sealers or floor shields are a good way to protect the integrity and longevity of restroom floors and walls. They not only seal out moisture and reduce the burden of cleaning, they help maintain another valuable school asset: Student satisfaction.

## THE DANGEROUS CYCLE OF USING THE WRONG CLEANING METHODS ON TILE AND GROUT.

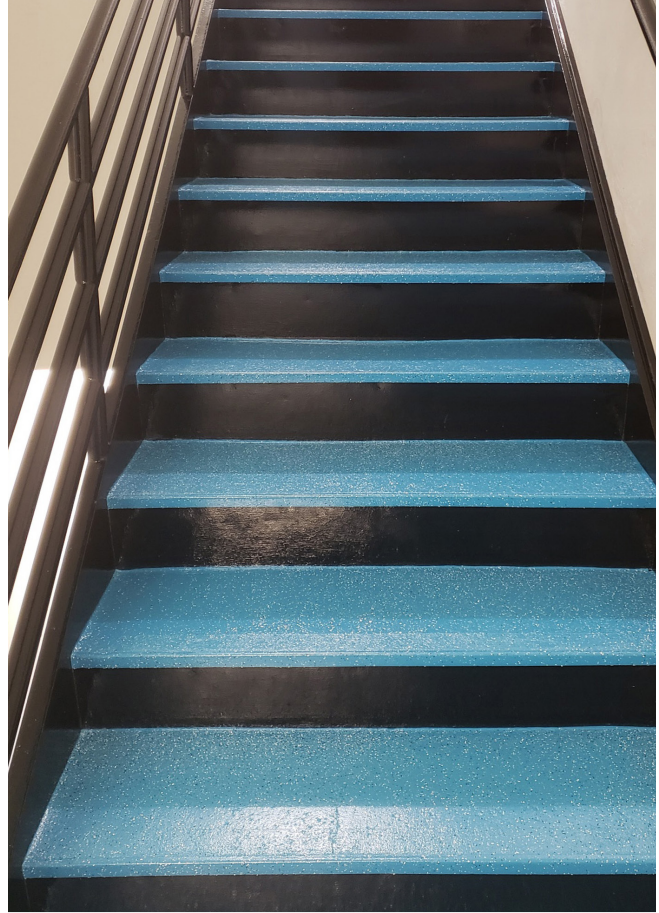




## **SaniGLAZE for Higher Education Facilities**

Aging infrastructure, tight budgets, busy schedules and the high expectations of today's students can make facility maintenance and restoration time-consuming and expensive. Thankfully, SaniGLAZE has a variety of proprietary products and processes that make tile and grout restoration effective, fast and affordable.





*SaniGLAZE took this stairwell from run down to striking, all while adding additional grip for safety.*

## A DEEPER CLEAN THAT LASTS AND INSPIRES

The SaniGLAZE process breaks the never-ending cycle of contamination and harsh cleaning, which results in the breakdown of tile and grout surfaces and increases the rate of soiling.

By combining a deep extraction process with a specially formulated Grout Glazing Compound and proprietary protective coatings, a SaniGLAZE solution returns tile and grout surfaces to like-new condition while sealing away future contamination.

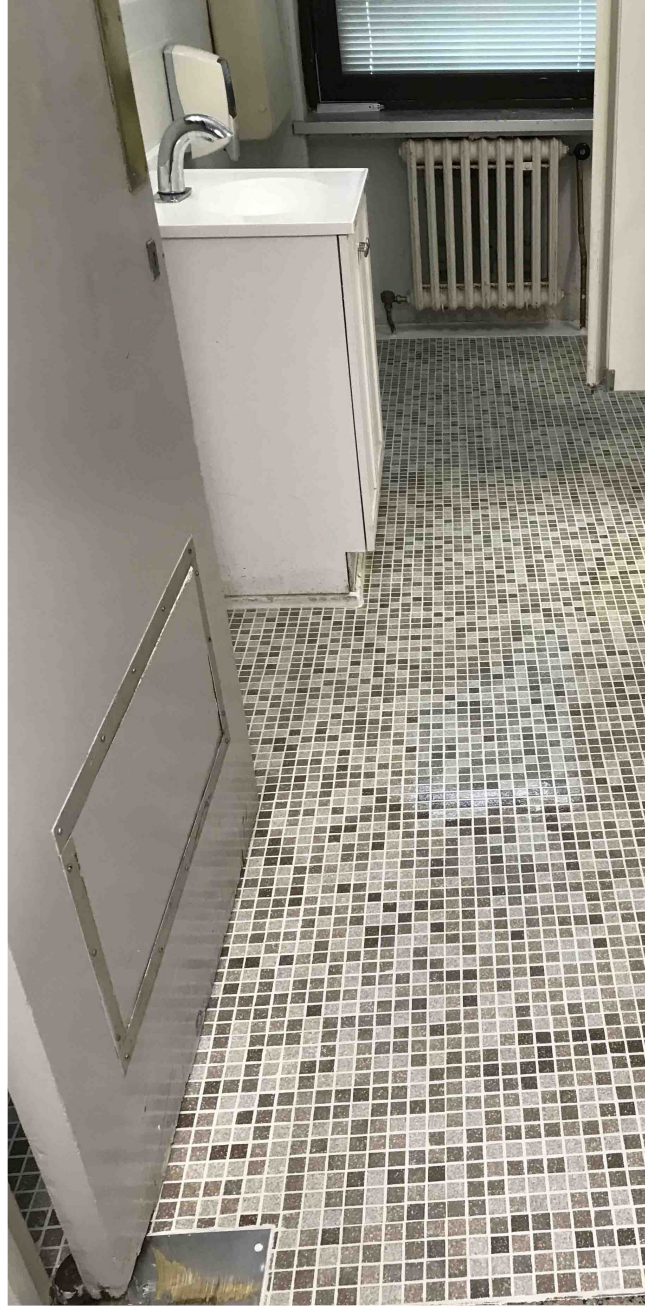
Restoring and sealing student restrooms – whether private or communal – not only reduces the cleaning burden for students, it allows maintenance staff or contractors to quickly return restrooms to an attractive, pristine state without requiring harsh chemicals and extensive labor.

Appealing, well-maintained facilities – such as dining halls and locker rooms – not only boosts student morale and appreciation, it can inspire students to take more pride in their “home” and contribute more to its daily maintenance.



*No replacement needed. This floor got a second life after a SaniGLAZE restorative transformation.*





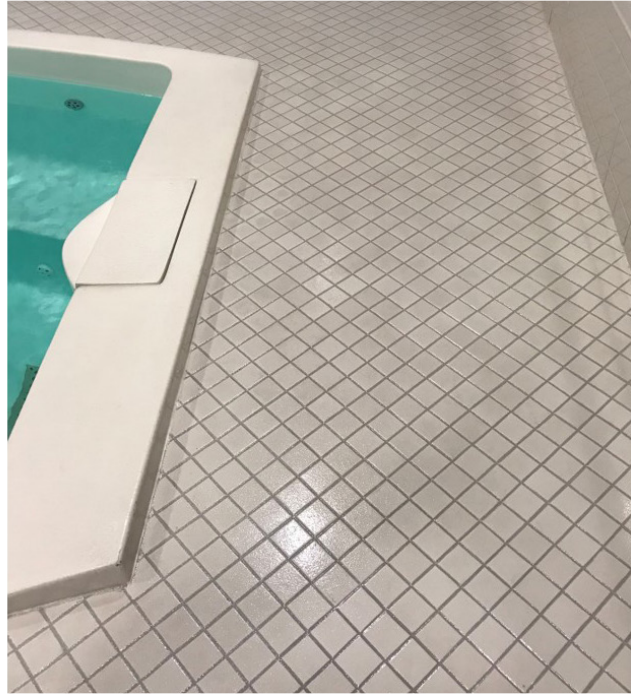
## ENHANCE DESIGN APPEAL WHILE PROTECTING VALUE

There are a variety of SaniGLAZE products and processes that can be used to clean and protect higher education facilities, while delivering beauty at the same time.

Durable floor coatings can showcase beautiful stone tile in common areas and protect against the constant abuse sustained from high levels of foot traffic.







Athletic facilities can use SaniGLAZE products to add a dash of school spirit to tile and grout surfaces by incorporating school colors and designs, as well as sealing away moisture, dirt and odors.



Residential halls showing their age can get a fresh design makeover, as well as deep cleaning, to make them more appealing to today's students. Whether it's changing the color of tile and grout from the 1950s or enhancing coatings with reflective, metallic chips to make surfaces pop and shine, a SaniGLAZE solution provides style as well as sanitation.





## REDUCING DOWNTIME WITH A HIGH-SPEED SOLUTION

Many colleges and universities facing severe issues from outdated or dilapidated tile and grout surfaces believe replacing it is the only solution. Breaking up and disposing of tile, prepping the surface for a new installation, curing time and the need to temporarily protect it from foot traffic can all add up to a substantial amount of time to perform installations. Because of this, many schools delay necessary work until school is not in session.

Schools no longer have to delay critical fixes to maintain school schedules and student privacy. For colleges and universities needing to restore or enhance tile and grout surfaces in a hurry, **SaniGLAZE provides a sustainable solution that can be implemented and completed significantly faster than replacement, sometimes as quickly as a single weekend.**



## Cost Savings Compared to Replacement

SaniGLAZE isn't just faster than replacing tile and grout: It's also more affordable.

If sealed and well-maintained, tile and grout can offer tremendous value simply through its durability and life cycle. Yet, many schools will cut the life cycle of these surfaces short and opt for replacement, simply because they can't keep it clean and appealing.

This decision not only impacts value, it introduces new costs. Disposal fees, equipment and procedures to protect against airborne particulates resulting from demolition, the price of new materials and issues or income loss from the resulting downtime can all inflate the cost of replacement.

By maintaining the tile and grout, SaniGLAZE bypasses many of these costs and disruptions while preserving the value and longevity of the original installation. In many cases, new SaniGLAZE products and processes can update and enhance design appeal – making a SaniGLAZE solution as attractive to the eyes as it is to the budget.



**Contact saniGLAZE via email, phone or online to learn how our flooring solutions can improve your learning environment today.**

**Visit [www.saniglaze.com](http://www.saniglaze.com) or give us a call 1-800-874-5554**