

Case Study

# Cornerstone Schools – K-12 District



**Cornerstone  
Schools –  
K-12 District,  
5 schools**



**Detroit,  
Michigan**



**3,400 students  
and ~350  
staff across  
6 buildings**



**6 Arc  
devices**



## The Challenge

Cornerstone Schools, a group of tuition-free charter schools serving K-12 across five campuses in Detroit, Michigan, began looking for new solutions to clean and sanitize their six school buildings as soon as the COVID pandemic hit. When COVID burst onto the scene in March 2020, Cornerstone implemented a layered approach for ensuring a cleaner learning environment for students and staff based on what they knew at the time to be effective. "We did everything we could think of according to guidance from the state and from the CDC at the time," says Grant Heugel, Director of Operations. "That included social distancing, mask-wearing, and an initial strong focus on wiping down hard surfaces and cleaning areas constantly. Wiping everything down took extra time and effort, and it wasn't a time-saver, but we considered it a worthwhile step." They purchased a fogger machine and used it to sanitize hard-to-reach areas in restrooms and classrooms, but continued to search for an additional layer of protection that wouldn't add too much time to their already rigorous disinfection regimen.

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Director of Operations, Cornerstone Schools*

## The Solution

Maggie Durrant, a colleague of Heugel's, introduced leaders in the school system to R-Zero's connected ecosystem of biosafety technologies that disinfects air and surfaces to mitigate risk in real time. The decision-makers at Cornerstone were intrigued by the possibilities of using UV-C light for disinfection and the impact that could have on their layered approach to healthier buildings. "It gave us great peace of mind going in to know there was this sophisticated machine that could be used nightly," said Heugel. As the Director of Operations for the six school buildings, Heugel led the charge on initial vetting. Heugel and his team focused on R-Zero's flagship device, Arc, knowing that this solution could be instrumental in keeping students and staff in school. Heugel enrolled executive leadership and finance in the solution selection process to help these district leaders understand the value of the UV-C disinfection system. Ultimately, his proposal for implementing Arc received approval from building leaders and principals.

## The Implementation

R-Zero representatives visited the Cornerstone campuses in January of 2021 to deliver and help with the initial set up of 6 Arc devices, one per building. "Implementation was seamless," Heugel said. The initial focus for Arc usage was on high-touch and high-traffic areas (classrooms in particular). Cornerstone and R-Zero worked together to hold training sessions for custodial staff, including instructional guides and materials that Heugel describes as "intuitive and not too difficult to understand." Heugel also noted, "The Arc has such a short turnaround to completely disinfect an area," which allows for smooth integration with existing janitorial protocols.

School leadership implemented email communication with parents to share the new, layered approach to disinfection. "We wanted our families to know that the safety of their children is our top priority, and to that end, disinfection is happening every night. This gives our families comfort, knowing that we are doing everything possible," said Ernestine Sanders, Principal at Cornerstone's Lincoln-King High School.



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*- Grant Heugel  
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## The Outcome

While the Arc devices were initially used in a more limited capacity because students were still remote, usage ramped up as soon as students returned in the fall. With the help of their Arc units, Cornerstone Schools were able to create cleaner, healthier buildings for their students and staff as classes resumed. These safer indoor environments provided reassurance and encouragement to students, staff, and other school community members even as the COVID pandemic continued in fall 2021.

COVID remains top of mind for Heugel and his colleagues, but he is confident that having Arc devices in Cornerstone Schools will prove beneficial beyond the current COVID crisis. Arc’s germicidal UV-C light can inactivate and destroy many harmful microorganisms, including E. coli, influenza, and norovirus. Heugel says having Arc in the Cornerstone arsenal adds a degree of reassurance, explaining, “We know ongoing concerns will continue, and viruses will appear for years to come—that’s one reason why we purchased these devices outright.” With Arc serving as a cornerstone of their layered mitigation and prevention strategy, Cornerstone Schools can continue to provide safer environments for their students and staff, regardless of what potential risks may emerge in the future.

## About Cornerstone Schools – K-12 District

Cornerstone schools is a group of tuition-free charter schools serving K-12 across five campuses in Detroit, Michigan. Serving 3400 students in total, Cornerstone prides itself on providing them with a well-rounded education that includes a foundation of strong character, meaningful relationships, and real-world experiences in preparation for careers and college.



### ABOUT R-ZERO

R-Zero’s disinfection ecosystem is an ideal solution for schools seeking to prioritize indoor environmental quality for students and staff. R-Zero’s suite of thoughtfully designed, hospital-grade technologies and science-backed protocols reduce the number of harmful microorganisms in schools.

Visit [rzero.com/education](https://rzero.com/education) to learn more about our hospital-grade disinfection technology for your school or district.

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