



# LEARN HOW MINNESOTA STATE SAVED \$50M AND ELIMINATED 60,000 SQUARE FEET OF WASTED SPACE WITH EMS

## Industry

Higher Education

## Accruent Solution

EMS

## THE COMPANY

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities is a massive state college system, with seven universities and 30 state, community, and tech colleges. They currently use EMS at all their locations for events and academics, with Facilities Data Analyst Stacy Brown explaining, "We have pretty much everything in EMS. We have cars and computers and all of the resources, [as well as] connections with catering, so we're a moderately robust customer."

The software has replaced a patchwork of tools for the school system, including other software products and home-grown tools like spreadsheets, pen and paper, and even post-it notes.

**54**  
CAMPUSES

**14,400**  
STAFF & FACULTY  
MEMBERS

**4023**  
ACADEMIC  
PROGRAMS

## THE CHALLENGE

When it came to capital planning, Minnesota State needed concrete data to validate and inform financial decisions. More specifically, **the team needed actionable information to drive building repair, replace, or construction decisions**. And the stakes were – and continue to be – extremely high. As Brown explains, “Other than human beings, facilities are probably our most expensive resource. They take a long time to build, they take a lot to maintain. We need to be mindful of how we’re using that resource, and as a state entity, I have to be a good steward of the state resources that we’ve been given.”

Nowhere was this more apparent than at the Bemidji State University campus in Northern Minnesota. This campus included an **83,000 square foot** 1970s building that housed 70% of their classrooms – and the structure was crumbling where it stood. The legislators saw the structural issues and agreed to replace the building – but a consensus couldn’t be reached about what was needed instead.

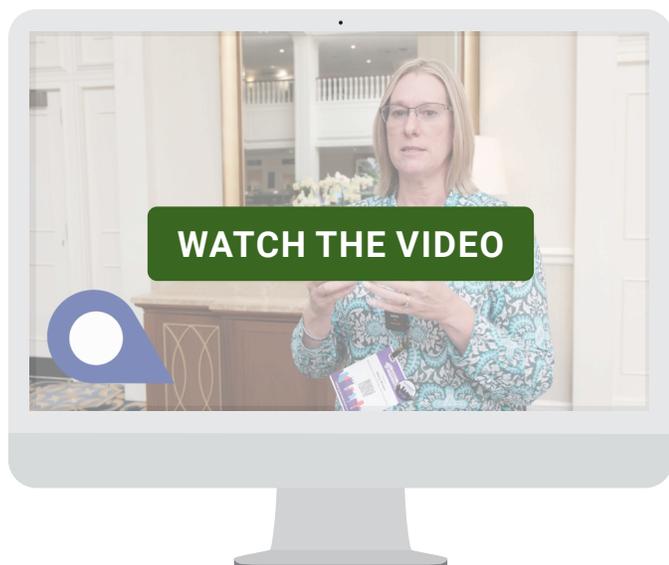
Bemidji State officials were initially convinced they would need to replace it with an even larger 100,000 square foot structure. This was not possible under the school system’s “No New Square Footage” directive - so they asked for the original 83,000 square feet to be rebuilt.

That’s where EMS’ reporting and validation tools came into play.

## THE SOLUTION

The Bemidji team embraced EMS reports to test the hypothesis that they still needed 83,000 with the broader team helping them run, validate, and optimize the reports. They used multiple EMS functionalities at this time, including:

- Time-block reporting to firm up time blocks
- Optimization to determine where else these courses could be taught should the building be removed
- Hourly room utilization reports to balance courses across the day and week
- Room and classroom utilization reports to measure balance on each room and seat fill



In her own words, Brown explains, "They started by removing the building that was supposed to be demolished, replaced, and figured out where all those classes would go.," Brown explains. "What they found, miraculously, is that they were able to place 100% of their courses. No courses had to be cancelled, and less than 12 courses had to shift time blocks [...]. Then, when we replaced the building, we were able to replace that 83,000 sq ft building with a 23,000 square foot building. We estimate the cost savings at about \$50,000,000 that we were able to save because we were able to validate the smaller building rather than the larger building."

And this wasn't a one-and-done solution. Now, the school system is in the process of replacing a 144,000 square foot 1964 building, and they is using plan to use the exact same process on other campuses to validate the replacement of failing facilities and remodels. The best part? The transparency and collaboration that this allows for everyone involved.

"When we present a report, we also present 'Here's how we gather that report, this is what this report means [...]' I'm going show you what it was 5 years ago, I'm going to show you 3 years ago, I'm going to show you today, I'm going to show you what you've estimated in the future so that you can [...] validate what's on the report. A lot of transparency, bringing anyone who wants to know. We have meetings with staff and faculty in addition to our C-level employees that are making those decisions to make sure that everyone's on board with what those new changes could possibly be, and what the possibilities are for that new space. Our architects do a great job of getting them excited for the new potential, and the data validates why we want to change."

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## CONTACT FOR A DEMO



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