

# CASE STUDY: GLASS RAILINGS FOR A SAFER AND BRIGHTER LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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## CHALLENGE

During the renovation of an elementary school in Washington D.C., a client sought to replace an existing atrium space with a modern design that was more inviting. The atrium acts as an entry for students and facilitates movement to the second floor classrooms. The existing design featured a bulky half-wall that wound its way up a U-shaped staircase and around the second floor balcony. In addition to appearing outdated, this half-wall obstructed both light and visual connection from the entry. As the first thing the students would see in the morning, this was hardly an inspiring or inviting view.

## SOLUTION

After reaching out to Solar Innovations®, the client decided that the best course of action was to tear out the existing half wall and replace it with a sleek glass railing. The railing features aluminum top rails, offset aluminum handrails, and ½" clear tempered glazing. The existing skylight that capped the atrium was also replaced with a more efficient Solar Innovations® skylight.

Maximizing the natural light from the skylight was a top priority for the client. Studies have shown that students exposed to daylight during the course of the day attain higher test scores. With the new glass railing system, ample daylight is able to penetrate more deeply into the first floor rather than being blocked by solid walls. The transparency also provides a safer environment for students by offering greater visual connection between the floors for better teacher supervision and increased visual acuity on the stairs.

Solar Innovations®' precision aluminum craftsmanship and the visual weightlessness of the glass provides this atrium space with a modern, clean look. The end result is a much more inviting and inspiring view that greets the students as they enter the elementary school and provides a better and safer learning environment.



## PROJECT DETAILS

**SERIES:** SI9500 Glass Railing System with Offset Handrail and Top Rail

**FINISH:** Class 1 Clear Anodized

**GLAZING:** ½" Clear Tempered Glazing with Polished Vertical Edges

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