



Contact: John McIsaac
503-481-9621
john@mcisaacpr.com

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CoreFirst™ launches revolutionary seismic-upgrade retrofit system for schools and commercial buildings

Portland, Ore. – [CoreFirst LLC](#) today announced the launch of a proprietary new seismic-upgrade retrofit system that can be installed in schools and commercial buildings for a fraction of the cost of a full upgrade while providing all the same safety benefits, according to CoreFirst principal Ben Kaiser.

Kaiser, a Portland-based registered architect and design/build contractor, developed the patent-pending CoreFirst™ system in conjunction with a respected West Coast engineering firm to provide a cost-effective solution to the funding challenges related to seismically upgrading aging school buildings.

“We know that school district budgets up and down the entire west coast have been hit hard by the economy,” Kaiser said. “Seismic upgrades have been shoved down the list of priorities because they’re extremely costly and require an entire school to be displaced for a year to complete. Our idea was to develop a system that could be installed over a summer and cost about 25 percent of a conventional upgrade.”

In the [CoreFirst system](#), modular, steel-constructed, cartridge-style "sanctuaries" are built offsite and inserted through the roof of an existing school building. The [sanctuaries](#), which are located adjacent to classrooms and common areas, provide complete protection in the event of a structural collapse of the building. Within the sanctuaries are robust communication devices (shortwave radio) as well as first aid.

In tandem with the CoreFirst installation, all exit ways are strengthened (brickwork, soffits, cornices) to prevent injury while exiting the building.

“CoreFirst enables a school district to upgrade up to four schools for the price of one,” Kaiser said. “And it can be done over a summer break without disrupting school operations.”

Currently, CoreFirst LLC has been working with Portland Public Schools to study a potential pilot project at [Boise-Eliot School](#), a progressive, ethnically diverse elementary school in North Portland.

CoreFirst was created to provide a viable, lasting seismic protection solution for existing buildings. CoreFirst principals developed this system around a simple mission: To *protect human lives an unforeseen seismic event*.

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