



# NEWS RELEASE

PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT • OFFICE: (513) 363-0020 • FAX: (513) 363-0025

**For Immediate Release ★ September 10, 2008**

Contacts:

Janet Walsh, CPS Public Affairs, (513) 363-0023, 207-8181 or [walshja@cps-k12.org](mailto:walshja@cps-k12.org)  
Dawn Grady, CPS Public Affairs, (513) 363-0022, 207-4599 or [gradyda@cps-k12.org](mailto:gradyda@cps-k12.org)

## **CPS, Community Partners Mark “Green Anniversary” Milestone Celebrated at First LEED Registered Public School in Ohio**

A year after committing to building schools according to sustainable design standards and enhancing energy conservation, Cincinnati Public Schools and its community partners celebrated their progress during a news conference Wednesday hosted by the first public elementary school in Ohio to be registered for LEED certification – Pleasant Ridge Montessori.

“As a former science teacher, I’m delighted about the opportunities that green schools provide as a living classroom to teach about energy efficiency, conservation and alternatives to fossil fuels – the kinds of issues that are attracting national attention right now,” said Interim Superintendent Mary Ronan. “I’m even more excited about the partnerships that are making these learning opportunities happen to a much greater extent than ever would be possible if CPS tried to accomplish this alone.”

The partnerships were highlighted on the first-year anniversary of a Cincinnati Board of Education resolution that positioned CPS to become a leader in sustainable design by calling for the remaining new or renovated schools in its building program to be built to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver standards. The resolution also encouraged the development of community partnerships to support these efforts.

“The Board understands that if we are to be as effective and cost-efficient as possible in creating green and healthy schools in our community, we need to develop and deepen public and private partnerships to help us do so,” said Board Member Catherine D. Ingram.

Partnerships featured at the news conference included:

- **Duke Energy**, which is donating photovoltaic arrays to Pleasant Ridge Montessori School. Photovoltaic arrays are modules made up of solar cells, which convert solar cells into electricity. The process will help provide electricity to the school and will provide a teaching tool for students, who will be able to monitor the electricity that is produced.
- **Big Fans and GE Lighting**, which are providing energy-efficient products as part of a renovation to create a high-performance gym at Midway School.
- **The Cincinnati Park Board and Hamilton County Solid Waste District**, which are using ash and other varieties of trees considered to be urban wood waste to be milled and reused as shelving and flooring in CPS schools.
- **The Cincinnati Health Department and ALLY (Alliance for Leadership and Interconnection)** which are working with CPS to set standards for optimum indoor air quality.

★★★

Mailing Address: Education Center, P.O. Box 5381, Cincinnati, Ohio 45201-5381  
Location: 2651 Burnet Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45219-2551

# Green Facts about Pleasant Ridge Montessori School

## ■ LEED

- LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, a Green Building Rating System created by the U.S. Green Building Council. This is the nationally accepted benchmark for design, construction and operation of high-performance green buildings.
- Pleasant Ridge Montessori is expected to be certified as LEED Silver, the first LEED-certified public elementary school in Ohio.
- After designing Pleasant Ridge to LEED standards, the architect, SHP Leading Design, was asked to create state standards for green schools.
- The engineering firm that worked on the project, Kleingers & Associates, is one of only 16 LEED-accredited civil engineers in Ohio.

## ■ HISTORY

- A school has been located on or near Pleasant Ridge Montessori's current home (5945 Montgomery Road, 45213) since 1811, when Pleasant Ridge Presbyterian Church paid \$20 to finish a one-room log school. The cornerstone from a school building that was erected in 1909 is in the entry way of the new school.
- Green design was the result of a community planning process. Ultimately, their work was instrumental in persuading Cincinnati Public Schools to adopt green building policies, becoming a model for green schools nationwide and earning a reputation as one of the greenest school districts in the United States.
- CPS' adoption of green policies led to state endorsement of similar policies and an agreement to co-fund implementation of green construction.

## ■ DAYLIGHTING

- Windows in rooms are large, allowing daylight to flow in.
- Each window has enclosed venetian blinds, which can be adjusted to allow maximum indirect lighting.
- Each classroom has 2 banks of lights, which are adjusted to automatically turn on or off depending on how much light is coming into the room and how far it penetrates.
- Rooms have glass windows high on interior walls to allow light to flow into the interior central work areas and hallways.
- The school building is angled on its site to have windows facing north and south to make maximum use of available light, while reducing cooling costs.
- Windows in the cafeteria allow soft natural light into the room even though its floor is below grade.

## ■ VENTILATION

- Warm air is delivered through floor vents, keeping floors warmer.
- Cool air is returned through the slanted ceilings, allowing for healthy air circulation.
- The ventilation system is particularly well suited to Montessori classrooms, where children spend time sitting on the floor as they work.

## ■ LIGHTING

- All hallway and bathroom lights are on motion sensors, which turn on lights only when a person enters the area.

*Continued*

## ■ WATER CONSERVATION

- The school lot has been graded to allow rainwater to be caught and reabsorbed into the ground in a pond-shaped basin, slowing and reducing the flow of rainwater into the sewer system, which is better for the environment.
- Low-flow toilets and faucet sensors use less water.
- The school community plans to add a rain garden, tree plantings and native plant gardening to enhance use of rainwater.

## ■ REFLECTIVE ROOF

- The flat roof of the school is covered with a white roofing material, rather than traditional asphalt, to better reflect heat.
- The roof is designed for solar panels. Solar modules called photovoltaic arrays are being donated to the school by Duke Energy.

## ■ REDUCING EMISSIONS

- Building materials were obtained within a 500-mile radius.
- Bicycle racks and special parking places for low-emission vehicles encourage earth-friendly transportation modes.

## ■ INDOOR AIR QUALITY

- Paints, adhesives and other materials used in the building are low in volatile organic compounds (VOC) for better indoor air quality.
- The carpet is non-toxic and installed using low-VOC adhesive.
- The floor tiles are made of linseed, a renewable resource that is more comfortable than traditional tile material.
- Cleaning and paper supplies are non-toxic, green products.
- The heating, ventilation and air conditioning system had a “blow-out” of any remaining toxins prior to occupancy.

## ■ LANDSCAPING

- Architects worked with Cincinnati Parks’ Division of Urban Forestry to save the mature trees on the site and not disturb new street trees planted as part of the Pleasant Ridge streetscape upgrade.
- New trees and bushes, visible from the cafeteria windows, have been planted around the school.
- Many classes look out on greenery, and students will have the opportunity to plant community gardens and native trees on the site.

## ■ ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

- The school is red brick to blend in with the church across the street and the general feel of Pleasant Ridge.
- The atrium is designed to create a focal point; it lets in light and symbolizes a beacon to the community. Design ideas are based on simple American architectural forms.
- The classrooms are designed especially for the Montessori program and are larger than usual.
- The extended learning area (ELA) near clusters of classrooms allows space for team activities, projects, or pullouts for more individualized instruction or tutoring.
- The history of the building is honored by the reinstallation of the Rookwood Fountain from the former building.