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FACT SHEET

About LEED® for Schools

What is LEED for Schools?

The LEED for Schools Rating System recognizes the unique nature of the design and construction of K-12 schools. Based on LEED for New Construction, it addresses issues such as classroom acoustics, master planning, mold prevention, and environmental site assessment. By addressing the uniqueness of school spaces and children's health issues, LEED for Schools provides a unique, comprehensive tool for schools that wish to build green, with measurable results. LEED for Schools is the recognized third-party standard for high performance schools that are healthy for students, comfortable for teachers, and cost-effective.

What makes schools different from other building types?

- **Children's Health Issues** - Schools play the crucial role of providing healthy, safe environments for children to learn. Because children breathe more air in proportion to their bodies than adults, environments for children must be carefully designed to minimize indoor pollutant exposure.
- **Educational Mission** - As learning environments, schools can demonstrate the importance of efficiency and conservation. LEED for Schools offers a way to integrate environmental issues into the curriculum, allowing the built environment to become an interactive teaching tool.
- **Complex Programmatic Spaces** - Schools combine many functions into a relatively small space; from classrooms to gymnasiums, cafeterias to machine shops, the job of school designers is particularly complex. LEED for Schools gives project teams guidance on the specific needs of unique space types.

How does LEED for Schools work?

Designed for use in the design and construction phases of a building, LEED for Schools facilitates and encourages project teams to use an integrated design approach from start to finish bringing down overall costs and delivering project goals. Using this integrated approach, LEED promotes improved practices in:

- Site selection and development
- Water and energy use
- Environmentally preferred materials, finishes, and furnishings
- Waste stream management
- Indoor air quality and comfort
- Innovation in sustainable design and construction

To become certified, projects must meet all prerequisites and a minimum number of points within the credit areas listed above. The number of points the project earns determines the level of LEED certification the project receives.

How can I convince the school in my community to get a LEED certification?

We have a number of resources to help you make the case to your school or school district. First, you can check out our Press Kit for our Green Schools Talking Points sheet, which will help you learn some of the benefits of green schools. Also, encourage administrators to check out our free online tutorial, which covers the basics of green design in schools, including sections on financing, case studies, and more. It's also useful to engage your local USGBC chapter in working with the school district; the green building professional community can be very effective at helping schools understand the process of building green with LEED.

Fact Sheet

About LEED for Schools

How do I register my project?

Project registration is the first step toward earning LEED certification for your building and is best done at the project outset. Once you register, you'll have access to **LEED-Online** and the **LEED credit interpretations database**. USGBC encourages you to keep your project profile up-to-date in LEED-Online. LEED-Online provides your team with an interactive project management tool, and the information you supply will help us track your project, answer credit interpretation requests, and prepare project case studies upon certification. Aggregate data for all registered projects will be used to expand the growing knowledge base of green building operations costs and trends.

How much does it cost to register a project?

The project registration fee is \$450 for USGBC members and \$600 for non-members.

Can I use LEED for New Construction if I can get more points in that system?

If you are a K-12 educational building undergoing either major renovations or building new, you will need to use LEED for Schools. This is because LEED for Schools is more appropriate for these spaces than LEED for New Construction, especially due to the protective nature of the system for children's health. Other projects, such as university educational buildings, K-12 athletic facilities, or interpretive centers, may choose to use LEED for Schools if they wish.

Where can I learn more about LEED for Schools?

USGBC has a variety of resources for you to get started with LEED for Schools:

- **Visit the Web site:** Go to www.usgbc.org/leed to learn more about LEED for Schools, download case studies and more. The Schools web pages contain links to relevant research, other useful websites, lists of currently LEED certified schools and more.
- **Take the free online introductory course:** This quick online tutorial is a great introduction to green schools and LEED. Community members, administrators, and others can use this to learn about the benefits of green schools and how they can get one in their community.
- **Attend a LEED workshop:** LEED workshops provide a detailed exploration of the rating system, case studies and effective strategies for designing and building a green school. A complete schedule of LEED workshops and other educational programs can be found at www.usgbc.org/education.
- **Purchase the LEED for Schools Reference Guide:** This is the user's manual for teams that wish to pursue a LEED certification. It contains supporting resources, calculation methodologies, approach and implementation strategies, and more. It is \$150 for members, and \$200 for non-members.
- **Become a member:** Encourage your company to join USGBC. USGBC members are not only recognized leaders in supporting a better built environment; member company employees have access to USGBC resources, can participate in committees and member circles, and enjoy a wide array of discounts on USGBC publications, programs and services.
- **Get involved with your local chapter:** USGBC chapters routinely host informative presentations and are a great way to connect with other professionals in your region who have experience implementing LEED. Find the USGBC chapter nearest you at www.usgbc.org/chapters.
- **Contact USGBC:** For questions related to LEED for Schools, e-mail schools@committees.usgbc.org or call 202-742-3780.