

Resolution on Sustainability & the Design and Construction of High Performance Schools

State College Area School District Board of School Directors

Adopted 13-October-2008

WHEREAS, Students and staff are entitled to a safe and healthy school environment, and studies have indicated that student achievement is greater and attendance higher, and teacher and staff retention is improved, when the learning environment is naturally lit, comfortable and well maintained; and

WHEREAS, Schools should employ design, construction and operation strategies that minimize operating costs, in particular for energy and water use, as studies show that new facility energy costs can be reduced by 30 percent or more compared to traditional design and construction when high performance building practices are utilized; and

WHEREAS, Schools that follow sustainable design principles can contribute to our community by minimizing waste and air and water pollution and by encouraging the use of local materials and services; and

WHEREAS, The District-wide Master Planning Program to build new schools and/or renovate existing ones provides a unique opportunity to move beyond standard designs; and

WHEREAS, The United States Green Building Council (USGBC) has developed comprehensive third-party design criteria (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED) based on the latest available information on sustainable design, construction and operation; and

WHEREAS, the LEED rating system scores building projects objectively on sustainability: water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, indoor environmental quality, sustainable sites and innovation to produce ratings of "certified", "silver", "gold", and "platinum"; and, criteria specific to K-12 educational facilities were implemented by the USGBC in 2007; and

WHEREAS, schools designed using the LEED system incorporate features that provide a healthier physical environment and an enriched context for education; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Green Government Council and the Pennsylvania Department of Education acknowledge LEED for Schools, "as the *de facto* national standard for defining high-performance buildings"; and

WHEREAS, school facilities designed, renovated or built to meet the LEED criteria at a Silver Level or above become eligible for additional economic incentives during the planning and construction phases; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the State College Area School District Board of School Directors recognizes the progress already made by the District's staff and design teams to incorporate sustainable design criteria into the District's school construction program; and

RESOLVED further, that the Board directs the Superintendent and the District Architect to expand this effort to ensure that every new school, new building and major renovation project*, from the beginning of the design process, incorporate LEED for Schools design standards and best practices; that said construction projects minimally meet LEED certification criteria at the Silver Level; that the District seek LEED certification for said projects; and that the focus be on the following priority areas:

- 1) Student performance and staff health through measures such as natural lighting, the use of non toxic-emitting materials, and sound insulation or isolation to minimize noise and enhance classroom acoustical quality;
- 2) Operating cost minimization, through resource and energy efficiency;
- 3) Minimizing the impact of District operations on the environment;
- 4) Taking advantage of local, State and Federal financial incentive programs; and

RESOLVED further, that the Board directs the Superintendent to create a performance tracking system to ensure the complete, efficient, and effective implementation of the LEED criteria throughout design, construction and operation; and

RESOLVED further, that the Board endorses District participation in, and directs staff to pursue, partnerships that further the goal of high performance schools, including Federal, State and utility programs that provide sustainable design financial incentives; and

RESOLVED further, that the Board directs the Superintendent and the District Architect, during the planning and design phase of District projects, to require architects and staff to provide verification that projects have met or exceeded the minimum requirements for LEED Silver certification, and report the scores for all of the LEED categories; and

RESOLVED further, that the Board directs the Superintendent to report to the Board annually on the progress of this program, and other statistics useful in assessing the progress of this effort; and

RESOLVED further, that the Board directs the Superintendent to develop, expand and incorporate curricula related to environmental sustainability; and

RESOLVED further, that the Board directs the Superintendent to provide an initial report to the Board on the District's plan to comply with this Resolution.

* Major renovation project being defined as over 25% of the building's value, over 5000 square feet, and/or over \$1,000,000 estimated project cost.