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DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. SCHOOL, DESIGNED BY PERKINS EASTMAN, ACHIEVES LEED PLATINUM CERTIFICATION BY USGBC

Perkins Eastman has designed the top two “greenest” new schools in the world

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Boston, MA (August 2, 2018) Perkins Eastman is proud to announce that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School in Cambridge, MA, has been certified LEED Platinum, the highest distinction, by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). Designed by international design and architecture firm Perkins Eastman, the 170,000 sf school achieved 89 points out of 110 base points possible for LEED—making it the second highest-scoring new school in the world certified under USGBC’s LEED for Schools-New Construction system.

“This result is a testament to the truly collaborative and integrated design and construction process on the part of all of the project’s stakeholders—from the Cambridge Public Schools, the City of Cambridge, the schools’ administrators, teachers, and students to the entire Cambridge community,” says Sean O’Donnell FAIA, LEED AP, Principal-in-Charge of the project and Perkins Eastman’s practice area leader for K-12 education.

Jana Silsby AIA, LEED AP, the project's Senior Designer, says: "Realizing their shared vision of a model sustainable, high-performance school design, Perkins Eastman is proud to have helped Cambridge create a school campus that not only conserves resources, it also provides an extraordinarily healthy and supportive place to learn and teach, and it excites and inspires the next generation of environmental stewards."

In support of the students' education and Cambridge's high-performance energy goals, Perkins Eastman designed a building that uses as little energy as possible while producing as much energy as possible, while every useable square foot of the building is utilized as a learning space. For example, cutouts in the school entrances reveal the insides of the super-insulated exterior walls, while internal corridor windows expose the building's mechanical system so students will understand how the building helps them conserve energy and water. Bold child-friendly graphics throughout the building explain these systems and processes.

"The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School sets a high bar for quality and environmental responsibility by achieving LEED Platinum," said Anisa Heming, director of the Center for Green Schools at the U.S. Green Building Council. "Any visitor to the school can tell the care and commitment that went into its design and construction, made visible by its rooftop garden, welcoming auditorium, public art, and daylit classrooms. We commend Cambridge Public Schools, Perkins Eastman, and all of their partners for bringing this healthy, inspiring learning environment to students and delivering a school the students, parents, and teachers can be proud of."

The MLK Jr. School was designed to use 60% less energy than typical educational buildings in New England. Included among its many sustainable design attributes are:

- 65 geothermal wells that support the heating/cooling system;
- 1,615 photovoltaic panels create a 796 kW array on the roof, which provided 56% of the school's required energy last year;
- two 10,000-gallon cisterns for stormwater reclamation (located under the parking garage);
- material selection, especially for materials exposed within the active student zone, prioritized no- or low-VOC emissions and many are recycled or regional; and
- proper orientation and plentiful daylight and views throughout.

The school was the test case for an award-winning research study conducted by Perkins Eastman ("[Measuring Up](#)") that analyzed pre- and post-occupancy design at the school. The study showed that the high-performance design strategies employed in the school's design had a significant and measurable impact on both occupant satisfaction and building performance.

The MLK Jr. School joins Dunbar Senior High School at the top of the LEED for Schools ranking. Dunbar, located in Washington, DC, achieved 91 out of 110 base points possible and has occupied the top ranking under USGBC's LEED for Schools-New Construction system since its Platinum certification in 2015. It was also designed by Perkins Eastman.

Perkins Eastman

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