

New Century International Elementary School Breaks Ground in Cumberland County

The **Sustainable Sandhills High Performance Schools Symposium** was held on October 23, 2006. Over 100 attendees from school boards, superintendents, engineers, architects and green building advocates heard presentations from nationally renowned Green School architects and school superintendents about the benefits of high performance school buildings.

Because of the long lead time involved in the land acquisition, design and financing of a public school, we were prepared for a long wait to see the fruits of the Symposium.... And now, more than 2½ years later, a true High Performance School is under construction in the Sandhills! And just as exciting, the school design is integrated with a new public library branch, and the design and construction of a Recreation Center on the same site is a real possibility.

On April 21 a group of Cumberland County Commissioners, School Board members, Friends of the Library Board members, and county staff broke ground on an integrated elementary school and branch library in western Cumberland County. The **New Century International Elementary School** and **West Regional Branch Library** are projected to be open in the fall of 2010.



The 800 student capacity school has been designed to LEED Platinum standards and is one of only 11 schools in the nation that earn an Energy Star Rating of 99 or better. A typical classroom in the new school will set new standards for acoustics, technology, daylighting, energy efficiency and classroom layout.



- Acoustics – every student deserves to hear their teacher’s voice without the distractions of outside traffic, aircraft, adjacent classrooms or noisy HVAC systems.

- Technology – teachers will be able to remotely control and monitor information technology, sound, lighting, projection and HVAC systems.
- Daylighting – vertical sunshades will keep heat out while allowing natural light to filter in, resulting in better student behavior and performance.
- Energy Efficiency – estimated at \$0.49/SF/year.
- Layout –flexibility to reconfigure classrooms for collaborative group works, simulations, virtual field trips, debates and role playing exercises.

The 109,758 square foot facility will cost just under \$17M to construct.

Congratulations to the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners, the Cumberland County Schools and School Board, the Public Library System and their Board, and the Design Team, led by SfL+a Architects!