

RIVER OAKS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA



"There are numerous South Carolina standards that students are to learn during their elementary education, and teachers are able to capture those in the many special features in the building. It is virtually impossible to visit the school without understanding that River Oaks is a campus that teaches."

— CINDY ELSBERRY, HORRY COUNTY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT



In an attempt to match the rapid population growth of the area in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the Horry County School District's construction projects had limited budgets, which resulted in buildings with a low initial construction cost, an emphasis on maintaining project schedules, low maintenance and user-friendly components.

The recent decline in the population growth in recent months has enabled the district to focus more on efficiency and life-cycle costs of building systems.

This elementary school was based on a design previously constructed in the district, but during this project, more consideration was given to higher-efficiency HVAC and electrical systems, reduced water usage, a high-performance thermal envelope, low-VOC-emitting materials and recycled content. This school also uses a "green thinking" teaching curriculum, which educates students about solar energy and other energy consumption, water gardening, low-emitting fuel automobiles and waste recycling. The project is pursuing

a minimum LEED silver certification, with the following design approach:

- Themed interior decor supporting the green curriculum, divided into four pods, with emphasis on solar power and energy conservation, water conservation, air quality and preservation of natural resources.
- Colorful interiors promoting a lively experience.
- Sensitivity to appropriate lighting in educational spaces.
- Centralized media center and administration.
- Conscientiousness to supervision while minimizing travel distance for staff along the corridor.
- Multipurpose room situated to provide minimal distraction to educational spaces and to promote after-hours use.
- For curriculum support, interactive digital information boards were installed creatively along the main gallery/corridor for student and staff interaction and understanding of the building's energy and other resource consumption.

Pike - McFarland - Hall Associates, Inc.

Design team

Kyzer & Timmerman Engineers, Structural Engineer; DN Engineering, Inc., Civil Engineer; Owens & Associates, Inc., MEP Engineer; Foodesign Associates, Inc., Food-Service Consultant; Robert J. Cook Consultants, Acoustics Consultant

Client

Horry County Schools; Cindy Elsberry, Superintendent

Area
104,000 sq. ft. **Total cost**
\$16 million

Cost/square foot
\$153.88 **Capacity**
965

Space/student
107.8 sq. ft. **Completion**
August 2012

Photographer
Robert E. Mikrut Photography

