



Lake Mills Elementary School

Lake Mills, WI

**New Construction/
Addition**
Entire school/campus building

Eppstein Uhen Architects
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DESIGN TEAM

Miron Construction, Construction Management
Sustainable Engineering Group, LLC, Geotechnical Engineering
Arnold & O'Sheridan, Structural
Fredericksen Engineering, Inc., Mechanical Engineering
JSD Professional Services, Inc., Civil Engineering
Muermann Engineering LLC, Electrical Engineering

OWNER/CLIENT

Lake Mills School District
Lake Mills, WI
Dean Sanders, District Administrator
920/648-3002

KEY STATS

Grades Served: K-4 [[says K-12 in text]]
Capacity: 660 students
Size of Site: 8.4 acres
Building Area: 92,800 sq. ft.
Space per Student: 140 sq. ft.
Cost per Student: \$24,212
Square Foot Cost: \$172
Construction Cost: \$15,980,000
Project Cost: \$18,700,000
Completion Date: June 2014
Sustainability Rating System/Applied/Status/Level: LEED® v4 for Schools

PHOTOGRAPHY: C & N PHOTOGRAPHY

The way we communicate and work is changing drastically, and with this, the way we teach future generations must evolve. This understanding, along with Lake Mills Area School District's mission to "inspire students to be responsible citizens with integrity, and lifelong learners in an ever-changing world," was a cornerstone for the school's design.

When the design team began speaking with community and administration there was an overwhelming openness to embrace change. Teachers were challenged to think beyond traditional classrooms. Through a hands-on "Visionary Team" process with forward-thinking teachers, traditional classrooms transformed into collaborative learning neighborhoods featuring a variety of interconnected spaces for various learning functions, resulting in a state-of-the-art school. Lightweight, durable and mobile furniture solutions encourage student movement and allow for constant reconfiguration. Spaces underneath stairs are used as tiered seating alcoves for casual collaboration. Integrated reading nooks and child-scaled design elements encourage engagement for a personalized curriculum delivery. The building is designed to be an integral part of the community; from the large gym designed for recreational leagues to the "little free library" outside. The interior design resonates with geography of the area, featuring symbolism, landform elements and transparency to the outside creating a connection to local landscapes.

Transparency became a key, allowing students to move about the spaces freely with seamless supervi-



sion. Learning neighborhoods are light-filled, open and transparent, eliminating environments for bullying and harassment. Additional measures include a seamless entry sequence for increased safety and a design allowing neighborhoods to be sectioned off in a lockdown scenario without sacrificing transparency between the core learning spaces.

Having already renovated its middle school to achieve LEED® Platinum, this community is a leader for sustainable and innova-



tive education spaces. Only four years later, when faced with an overcrowded and aging elementary school; the “green community” opted away from modifying the existing building, deciding to create a new “sustainable teaching tool.” As the only K-12 school in the Midwest participating in the U.S.

Green Building Council’s LEED® v4 beta program, and achieving LEED® Gold (with credits still in review), the school is a positive example of leading change. The team focused on maximizing payback, vetting solutions against improved learning outcomes and responsible stewardship of community resources.