

why rate your school

If you're about to embark on a major school construction project, more than likely the question of green or high-performance has come up. But what those mean exactly depends on each individual client. At SHW Group, we like to begin a more focused conversation on a client's energy goals—including community needs, curriculum, budget and long-term cost savings.

Many times during the discussion, the client asks about rating systems. LEED® is probably the best known, but CHPS® (The Collaborative for High Performance Schools) is becoming recognized as an alternative. Whichever way you go, SHW recommends third-party verification.

Rating systems are a worthwhile investment because they:

- Assist in decision making and clearly specify what stakeholders want and how that correlates to educational and architectural programs
- Promote accountability during design and construction
- Show the community a strong commitment to stewardship
- Teach students about protecting our natural resources
- Offer flexible point systems with options to meet varied goals
- Create a baseline to monitor and track ongoing facility operations
- Provide benchmarks developed by leading industry experts

“It has been exciting to work with a group [SHW] that sees the need to conserve the environment all through the process—the recycling of materials, seeking out materials that were made of recycled materials, and establishing a LEED campus. We're proud that we're the first [public] campus in the state of Texas to receive the certification.”

- Dr. Carol Bertholf, superintendent,
Columbia-Brazoria ISD,
on West Brazos Junior High School

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