



## News Release

### An Electronic Communication of Floyd County Schools

December 8, 2004

#### Pepperell High Design Sets New Standard in School Construction

Floyd County Schools has broken new ground in the construction of a new Pepperell High School facility and it did not involve shoveling dirt. Pepperell High is drawing recognition for breaking new ground in school design even before the first brick has been laid for the new school. Floyd County Schools is incorporating new designs in environmentally friendly heating and air conditioning systems into plans for the new school that will result in major long term savings in energy costs, improve comfort and function. "I've been waiting 10 years to develop this type of environmentally sound building in the Rome area," exclaimed Ben Elkin, a consulting engineer on the project. "Our vision is to make this the most environmentally sound school possible - and that means indoor and outdoor environments."

What is so special about the new Pepperell High? It all begins with the design. The school's design uses more green space and less concrete and pavement to lower the temperature outside and the latest technology in mechanical systems to reduce energy costs and improve comfort inside. The ultimate goal is to provide a school atmosphere that will enhance the ability of children to learn. Adequate outside air intake has been shown to increase accuracy in task requiring concentration. Also, better humidity control has been shown to reduce illness from germs and viruses which would positively impact student and teacher attendance. When students and teachers are in the classroom, more effective teaching and learning is the result. "The bottom line is to have the most efficient learning environment possible," stated Kelly Henson, superintendent of Floyd County Schools.

Pepperell High's new two story facility, designed for 1500 students, will feature revolutionary new mechanical systems for heating and air designed by Semco, Inc. According to John Fischer of Semco, "the separate cooling and dehumidification components mean that cooling equipment can be up to 40% smaller, while providing better comfort and ensuring improved outside air supply to the students." Smaller equipment means lower energy use and less long term costs - which means that more money can be spent on the education of children.

"Our taxpayers are getting a great deal for their money," states Dennis Newby, facilities manager with Floyd Medical Center. The capital costs will be about the same for the new Pepperell High facility as they would be if designed conventionally, but the lifetime costs will show significant savings for the school system and local taxpayers. Dr. Bob Puckett, assistant superintendent for Floyd County Schools, commented, "our research has found great maintenance savings on existing schools currently using this type of technology, especially in the area of compressor failure rates."

Floyd County Schools has a strong history of energy conservation. The school system was one of the first in the country to have a system-wide recycling program, as well as, an energy management program. Jack Gresham, executive director of maintenance for Floyd County Schools, has seen the difference in dollars and cents. He said, "when I went to work for the school system we had 1.2 million square feet of space and an energy budget of \$3 million. Since that time we have almost doubled our square footage but our energy budget is still \$3 million."

Floyd County Schools will be eligible to pursue LEED certification for the new Pepperell High School. The LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System® is a voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings. Members of the U.S. Green Building Council representing all segments of the building industry developed the LEED standards and continue to contribute to its evolution. It is expected that Pepperell High's design will qualify for Platinum certification - LEED's highest rating. Guy Hall, construction project coordinator for Floyd County Schools, expects the Pepperell facility to set a new standard for school construction and draw considerable interest from other school systems. Hall said, "When completed in 2006, Pepperell High School will be a demonstration facility that will attract visitors from all over the United States."