

## Endeavor Elementary seeks to save energy

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By Christin Runkle

Idaho Press-Tribune

NAMPA — When Endeavor Elementary School becomes the latest school to open in the Nampa School District this fall, it will include environmentally-friendly features and lots of natural light.

Two high-performance classrooms, which incorporate special lighting features and sustainable materials, will act as special demonstration classrooms. Throughout the coming year, the rooms will be compared for energy efficiency and student performance to two regular classrooms of the same configuration.

Jim Coles, president of Design West

Architects, the firm that designed the school, said the use of sustainable products and natural light in schools is “getting to be a real trend.”

Education: New Nampa elementary school uses high-performance design features to make most of sunlight

By Christin Runkle

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NAMPA — Architects used “daylighting,” the practice of placing windows strategically and maximizing the use of daylight in a room instead of relying on electric lights, in Endeavor Elementary’s two demonstration classrooms.

Even though both classrooms at the new Nampa school will have electric lights, lighting will come mainly from windows and skylights. The classrooms are aligned with windows on the north and south sides to maximize daylight.

Jim Coles, president of Design West Architects, said teachers could even opt not to use the electric lights at all because the natural light that streams into the rooms is so bright.

Among the features:

The classrooms are equipped with large, insulated skylights. Adjoining tutoring rooms also have skylights and are oriented so that the classrooms can “borrow” their daylight, as well.

The classrooms’ windows are glazed with a special substance that prevents the rooms from getting too hot by letting light, but not UV rays, pass through.

Light shelves in the windows bounce light onto the classrooms’ ceilings, providing illumination for the whole classroom.



Charlie Litchfield/IPT Jim Coles, President of Design West, points out a few of the sustainable features that were incorporated into the construction of Endeavor Elementary School off of Powerline Rd. in Nampa. Thursday March 22, 2007

The rooms' lighting fixtures sense the amount of light in the rooms and automatically dim or brighten accordingly.

The school's gymnasium and multi-purpose room/cafeteria have skylights, as well.

Monitoring will be performed comparing the two demonstration classrooms with the two regular classrooms. The school will also compare the desirability of the tutoring rooms with skylights to that of rooms without skylights.

In addition to cutting energy costs, designers expect the extra daylight will make teachers and students happier.

"You feel so much better in rooms where you have all the daylight," Coles said.

In addition to energy-saving lighting, the two high-performance classrooms will include such sustainable features as:

Marmoleum flooring, which is made of recycled wood products.

Cabinets made of wheatboard, made of recycled wheat chaff.

Bulletin boards made of jute, a soft vegetable fiber, rather than vinyl.

Partially-recycled ceiling tiles.

A grant covered the upgrades to the two classrooms, which cost a total of \$50,000.

Cost is one reason the district didn't have the features installed in all of Endeavor's classrooms, but after monitoring performance, builders could incorporate more of the features into future schools if the demonstration classrooms prove themselves.

Coles added that it's not just about money.

"Part of the whole issue is environment and quality of space," he said. "What value do you put on the quality of the environment you put your kids in?"

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