

CASE IN POINT:

A. Chester Redshaw Elementary School, New Brunswick, N.J.



PS&S's involvement with the design and construction of the new A. Chester Redshaw Elementary School was something new for the firm – its maiden voyage on a school construction project authorized under the New Jersey Schools Development Authority's new design-build model.

"This was the first project out of the gate for the NJSDA design-build program in New Jersey," said PS&S Vice President Mary Acciani, PE, CEM, GBE, who directs the firm's Education Market group.

The NJSDA selected Hall Construction Company, Inc. as the design-builder of the facility, a pre-kindergarten through 5th grade school. PS&S partnered again with Hall Construction to win the new public school project. As lead A/E, the firm performed full architectural design, MEP and structural engineering services in bringing the much-anticipated school facility to completion.

The old Redshaw School had been demolished in 2006, with the promise of a more modern replacement that better met the needs of the district and its students. But a state moratorium on new school construction caused by funding shortages led to a protracted schedule of delays. In the interim, students had to attend classrooms located in trailers, makeshift schools without playgrounds.

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Redshaw was the first of 10 school construction projects funded by the NJSDA in 2011 once funding was available, and ground broke on the new school in early 2013. The new school is scheduled to open this fall.

Ron Weston, Senior Director-Architecture who spearheaded the project for the firm, noted that because of their successful development formula, Hall Construction and PS&S were awarded four of the first six design-build contracts, including Redshaw, that were issued by the NJSDA.

The facility is a two-story, 135,000-square-foot structure designed for 900 students, a community school that will include 46 classrooms, 12 additional classrooms for special education, basic skills and small group instruction, a cafeteria, a multi-purpose room with stage, gymnasium, media center, art room and a music room.

Because of new guidelines PS&S had to follow under the mandates of design-build, Acciani said the firm faced unique and challenging hurdles. "We had a huge learning curve on Redshaw," she said. "And there was a learning curve on their (the state's) part, too. It was more a question of refining the relationship and the work schedule than anything else."

"We look at it as a strong partnership with Hall Construction and the NJSDA," she said.



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