

Bids for New Erdenheim Elementary \$2 Million Lower Than Estimated Cost

The School District of Springfield Township is pleased to announce that bids received on September 17th, 2008 for the new 89,000 square foot Erdenheim Elementary School came in approximately 10% lower than the anticipated cost for the project. The low bidder was general contractor E.R. Stuebner, Inc. of Reading, PA at \$19,127,000. The cost for the new school had been estimated at \$ 21,500,000.

“This is very good news, particularly since the volatility in the commodity markets has created a bidding climate where it is not uncommon to see construction costs coming in 20 – 30% higher than expected,” remarked the District’s architect, James Thompson of Hayes Large Architects. “The lower cost will help to keep both the Erdenheim and Middle School projects within original budgetary parameters.”

Two factors in the planning and bidding of the new school contributed significantly to the lower cost. Hayes Large worked with the School District to seek a mandate waiver from the Pennsylvania Department of Education to allow the project to be bid by a single prime contractor. “In a highly inflationary period,” notes Thompson, “a single general contractor can accelerate the schedule to better control costs. Approximately half of the 10 % savings was achieved by going the single prime route.”

Creative site planning by the School District and its architects is credited with the additional \$1 million in cost reductions. The new plan allows for excess soil removed during the construction of the building to be incorporated into the site, saving the cost of hauling and disposing of the soil at another location.

The new Erdenheim Elementary School is expected to be completed in the fall of 2010. The earth-friendly building is designed to achieve LEED Gold certification under the green building standards established by the US Green Building Council. The School District is investing in systems that will save energy and reduce operating costs over the life of the building. The new school will utilize a ground-source geothermal mechanical system that typically uses 35% less energy than traditional heating and cooling systems. By incorporating water-less and low-flow fixtures, water usage at the new school is expected to be reduced by 40%.