

**We Build Places You Want to Go™**

**From library to school: Cambridge Early Learning Center**

When the new **Southwest Branch Library** was opened in the Hickory Hollow Mall development, Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) acquired the old 11,000 square foot Library Branch building that was originally constructed in the 1990s.

MNPS designated this building as the new home of the **Cambridge Early Learning Center** and tasked Dowdle Construction Group (DCG) with its renovation.



**From the President**

I was very happy to attend the ribbon cutting for the Cambridge Early Learning Center. It was the culmination of six months of teamwork and dedication. The opening also signaled the beginning of the new school year which is followed by football, cooler weather, and beautiful fall days.



In order for DCG to transform this building into a fully functioning pre-school, the project included a full gut and remodel of the existing building and a 2,000+ square foot addition to house the school's kitchen. The Dowdle team also prepared the backyard area to install a playground.

In addition to a kitchen and playground, every school needs a gathering place. The central area of the building, with a vaulted ceiling, was transformed into a 'Common' area between the classrooms, designed to feel like an outdoor schoolyard.



One particular challenge Dowdle Construction Group faced was the need to match the aesthetics of the new building to that of the old. Numerous brick and mortar samples were assembled before a match was found, and the masons took special care to match the existing brick rowlock details of the former library.

The renovation took six months and was completed in August, just in time to welcome students into the brand new Cambridge Early Learning Center for the school year!

The Cambridge Early Learning Center is a pre-kindergarten school that utilizes a Creative Curriculum, a research-based preschool curriculum that uses exploration and discovery as a way of learning.



Ribbon Cutting (left to right): Councilperson Davette Blalock, Councilperson Terrika Vercher, Mayor Megan Barry, Representative Jim Cooper, school principal Dawnne Merritt, Board Member Tyshe Hunter, Councilperson Karen Johnson, and Director of Schools Dr. Shawn Joseph celebrate the opening of Cambridge Early Learning Center.

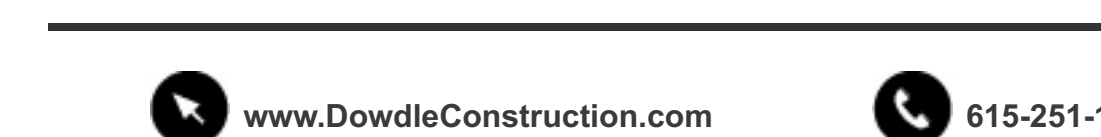
"Dowdle Construction was honored to work with Metro Nashville Public Schools on the project," says DCG Project Manager Eric Ahar. "LEED AP® means more than just a green building; it's a commitment to provide the best education for their children, so they take special interest in elements of the building like multimedia capabilities, design aesthetics, and indoor air quality. The owner was very engaged and involved with the project from the beginning, inspiring hard work amongst the project team and contractor alike."

Dowdle Construction Group has worked with MNPS before, but this was certainly their largest joint project to date.

The project is pursuing LEED Silver Certification.

Our friends at **Allard Ward Architects** provided the design work.

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