

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## PERKINS EASTMAN CELEBRATES TOPPING OUT AT CHARTER OAK INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY IN WEST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

### New School Embodies International Baccalaureate Learning Principles in Its Design

Stamford, CT (October 1, 2015) The Stamford office of top international design and architecture firm Perkins Eastman congratulates the Town of West Hartford, Connecticut, and West Hartford Public Schools on the recent topping out of its new elementary school, Charter Oak International Academy. Designed by Perkins Eastman, the 86,800 sf building will accommodate 560 students in grades Pre-K to 5. The building is expected to be complete in time for the 2016-2017 school year.

Perkins Eastman's Joseph Costa AIA, Principal-in-Charge of the project, says: "Our approach to the design of this new school has been influenced largely by the input we received from the school community during our planning workshops. The idea of promoting global inclusion and cooperation for the common good is a theme we heard over and over." He continues, "We are pleased that the Town encouraged a creative design approach that reflects the IB program within the architecture."

An intra-district magnet school that delivers the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (PYP), Charter Oak International Academy's curriculum is centered on inquiry-based learning, where all concepts are examined through the investigation of current world issues. The school's distinctive circular design addresses this method of learning through four distinct quadrants that organize the students' activity and progression through the day, radiating outward from a central exterior courtyard. At the same time, the building itself is a teaching tool—much of the building systems will be left exposed to view with energy performance displayed on interactive monitors. The central interior courtyard includes an amphitheater, where the back of the auditorium stage opens up to allow for exterior or interior performances.

The design recalls the current 1929 building in its use of brick materials, its scale, and in retaining the historic entry off of Oakwood Avenue, which ties it to its neighborhood. With large glass facades that let in ample natural light, the school is envisioned as a pavilion in a park-like setting. Other features of the design include separate playscapes for pre-kindergarten, grades K-2, and grades 3-5, and an earth mound and space for a learning garden.

Utilizing heat pumps, a geothermal well field, and a roof-mounted 100kW photovoltaic array, the new Charter Oak International Academy is anticipated to receive LEED-Gold

certification. This is the first entirely new school West Hartford Public Schools has constructed in a generation.

## About Perkins Eastman

Perkins Eastman is among the top design and architecture firms in the world. With 950 employees in 14 locations around the globe, Perkins Eastman practices at every scale of the built environment. From niche buildings to complex projects that enrich whole communities, the firm's portfolio reflects a dedication to progressive and inventive design that enhances the quality of the human experience. With work in 46 states and more than 40 countries, the firm's portfolio includes high-end residential, commercial, hotels, retail, office buildings, corporate interiors, schools, hospitals, museums, senior living, and public sector facilities. Perkins Eastman provides award-winning design through its offices in North America (New York, NY; Boston, MA; Charlotte, NC; Chicago, IL; Los Angeles, CA; Pittsburgh, PA; San Francisco, CA; Stamford, CT; Toronto, Canada; and Washington, DC); South America (Guayaquil, Ecuador); North Africa and Middle East (Dubai, UAE); and Asia (Mumbai, India, and Shanghai, China).

Renderings available.

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