

FINDING THE *ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY*  
IN UNDERPERFORMING BUILDINGS

CASE STUDY: PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS



PROJECT OVERVIEW – 9 SCHOOLS

Gerding Edlen Sustainable Solutions (GESS) was hired by Portland Public Schools to manage the construction of over half a million square feet of roofing, and the financing and installation of a 757kW solar array across nine schools. Through the creation of unique financing and project management structures that created economies of scale, GESS was able to leverage the initial PPS capital budget 1.5 times. Additionally, the project was completed on an accelerated ten-week schedule in the Summer of 2009. As part of the project, GESS secured a third-party investor to finance the solar installation, secured all the tax credits and utility incentives, and provided Portland Public Schools the opportunity to own the solar array in eight years. The project was one of the largest and most complex infrastructure projects undertaken by Portland Public Schools in the last 20 years.

FAST FACTS	
Project Cost:	\$17 Million
Project Size:	9 Schools
Roofing Area:	.5 Million Square Feet
Solar Array:	757 kW Panel
Type:	AGT/UniSolar Thin Film
Inverter Type:	PV Powered
Energy Production:	695,214 kWh Annually (18% of consumption across all nine schools)

PROJECT OUTCOME

Portland Public Schools completed nine roofing and solar projects in Summer 2009. The solar array generates 695,214 kWh annually, enough to offset 18% of the electrical consumption across the nine schools and 50% in two of the individual schools.

UNIQUE FACT

GESS worked with two Oregon utilities – Portland General Electric and Pacific Power – to support the installation of educational kiosks to display the energy being generated by the solar arrays in each of the 9 schools. This real-time information, provided by Bonneville Environmental Foundation’s Solar 4R Schools Program, is combined with curriculum and educational tool kits, funded by the Energy Trust of Oregon, to engage students in a comprehensive solar educational experience.

*“Gerding Edlen was an exceptional partner with the school district in implementing nine solar roofing projects in 2009. They were smart, collaborative, efficient and effective. Our schools are improved as a result of their efforts and this very productive public-private partnership.”*

- C.J. Sylvester, Chief Operating Officer

