

Accelerating our Green Building Efforts

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Written by [Chris Pyke](#)

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It was a big day in Ohio this week when professionals from across the region were convened by USGBC's [Central Ohio Chapter](#) for [Design Columbus](#). Set in the Center of Science and Industry (COSI) Center, the conference featured examples of ambitious green practices and efforts to improve project design and delivery.

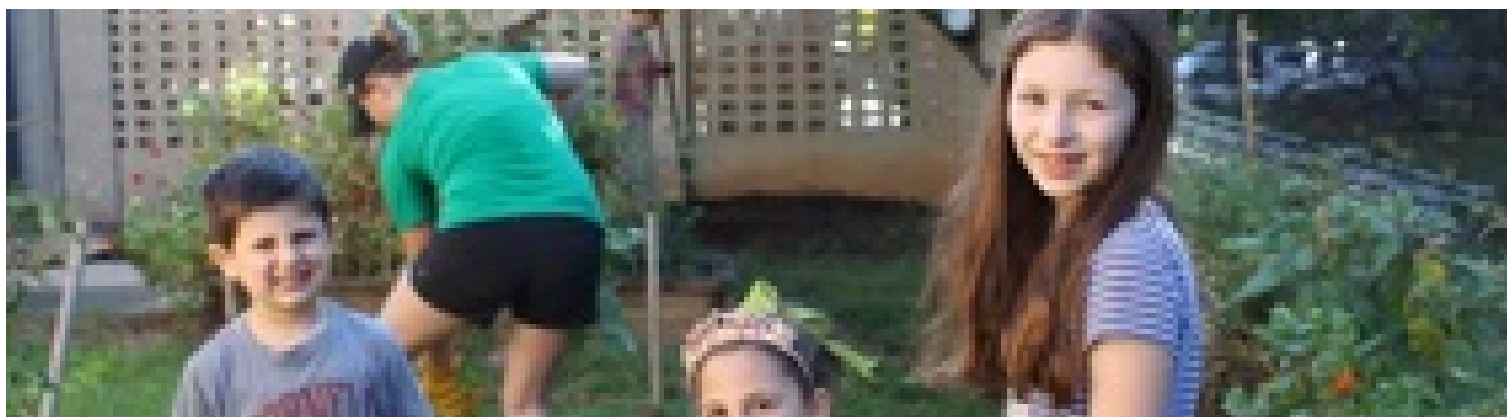
I was honored to be on hand to give the day's keynote address titled 'Green Building in an Emerging Era of Big Data.' I shared with the audience some thoughts about the on-going evolution of our industry toward an experimental, data-driven, outcome-oriented style of practice. We discussed the role of emerging tools, such as the [Green Building Information Gateway](#) (GBIG) to provide transparency and context for the actions and outcomes that make LEED projects green.

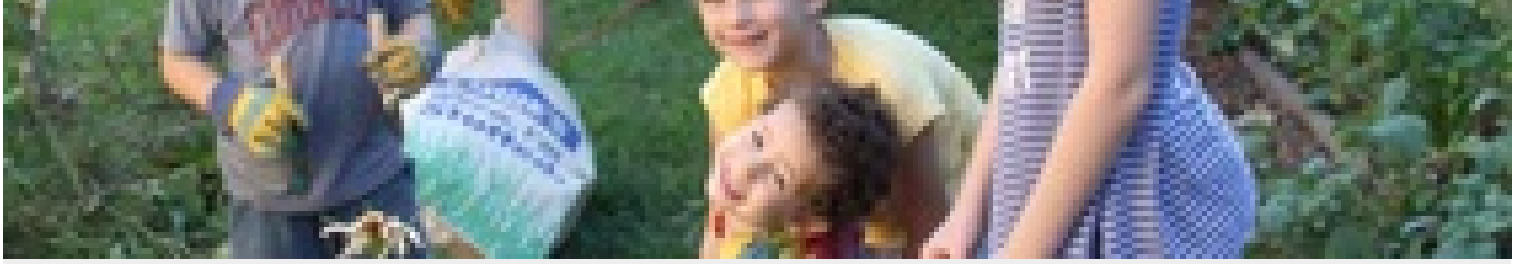
The big news of the day was the recognition of the [Ohio Facilities Construction Commission](#) (OFCC) for the completion of 50 LEED certified schools with 300 registered. [Lisa Laney](#) received a plaque commemorating their accomplishment, and she reflected on their on-going efforts to provide superior learning environments for Ohio's kids. This recognition is particularly timely following the recent release of a comprehensive report from McGraw-Hill Construction detailing the health and productivity benefits of green schools. This included [survey results](#) showing that 91% of green K-12 schools self-report improved health and well-being for their students with 70% reporting higher test scores.

The benefits of green schools policies extend beyond the classroom. Last year, Harvard Business School researchers Timothy Simcoe and Michael Toffel published [a paper](#) analyzing the role of public sector green building leadership on the private sector. They found that government policies encourage private-sector investment in complementary services which can reduce green building costs to private developers. This means that public policies can accelerate private sector adoption and reduce costs.

I was privileged to honor Lisa Laney and her colleagues at OFCC. I'm inspired by their leadership, and I hope we can share their success and inspire others to expand and accelerate efforts to create green schools that benefit kids, teachers, and the environment.

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