U.S. Congressman To Tour & Visit VT Boarding School’s Ultra ‘Green’ Smart Gym

Putney, Vermont>>>U.S. Representative Peter Welch (D-Vt.) will take a tour of what promises to be the first net-zero, platinum LEED certified school building in the United States. The congressman, who is a member of the U.S. House Committee on Energy and Commerce, will visit The Putney School’s Field House, a building which promises to produce more energy than it consumes over the period of a year.

“This is just one more example of how green technology cuts emissions, creates jobs and saves money,” said Rep. Welch, who will hold a brief press conference immediately after the tour.

The 45-minute event, including tour and press conference, is scheduled for Saturday, January 23, 2010 from 10 a.m.-11 a.m. at The Putney School Field House.

Also on hand will be The Putney School’s director Emily Jones who said the ‘green’ gym is the latest chapter of what has long been a sustainable way of life for students and faculty alike at Putney.

“Our core curriculum dictates that every class we offer gives some attention to the importance of sustainability,” she said. “So, we’re training students to be responsible stewards of the environments in the classroom, on the farm, in the kitchen and now even where they play, whether it’s on the ski trails or the basketball court.”

Joining Rep. Welch will also be students, including members of the school’s sustainability committee. Among them will be Putney School student Jay Silbaugh ‘11 whose senior exhibition this spring will focus on solar power generated by the Field House and other green technology.

“We’re excited we students helped design that is more than creating a place to play,” said Silbaugh. “We helped build a living laboratory to train others about green technology and being a better friend to the environment.”

The ‘green’ Field House is the design of Maclay Architects of Waitfield, Vermont. Lead architect Bill Maclay will lead the tour and help field questions.

A delegation of faculty, staff and students from Dartmouth University also slated to tour and study the design of Putney’s Field House, January 22, 2010 on Friday afternoon. The delegation included Professor Benoit Cushman-Roisin, an environmental engineer, Professor Karol Kawiaka, an architect specializing in sustainable design and Dartmouth’s LEED energy engineer Steve Shadford.