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NEWS RELEASE

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Houston County Schools Save Millions of Dollars through Energy Conservation Effort

HOUSTON COUNTY, GA – The Houston County School System partnered with Energy Education, Inc. (EEI) in 1999 to design and implement a systemwide energy conservation plan. Since implementation, the initiative has saved **\$9,436,827.39**, about one million dollars a year. The annual savings equate to 22 to 25 percent of the system's total utilities budget and to date averages 24.6 percent a year over the 1998 baseline.

For example, the most recent audit figures from August 2008 to July 2009 revealed that the annual savings totaled **\$1,125,105,80**. The most conservative school for the annual demand charge month audit this school year was Huntington Middle School.

The people-based energy conservation program is managed by Cliff Hutto, who serves as the system's energy manager. The main goals of the program are: to ensure faculty and staff work in comfort; to minimize energy waste; and to save dollars and put the savings back into the system. Hutto aggressively communicates the energy management program to administrators, teachers, staff, workers and students and heighten energy management and conservation awareness. He conducts school audits randomly throughout the year to ensure energy management guidelines are met and to reward the best performers.

After establishing a baseline of utility history of the system's energy usage, a data tracking program is used to monitor monthly utility bills and consumption for all facilities, reporting unusual trends or questionable billings to the immediate supervisor. Schools with the best track record are entered into a drawing for cash, courtesy of Flint Energies. Flint contributes more that \$25,000 annually in incentives to include cash and breakfast awards for faculty and staff conservation winners.

Hutto remarked, "Our energy conservation program establishes accountability for energy usage at each school with shutdown guidelines for end of the day, weekends, and long shutdown periods. Such accountability is in a very positive spirit that motivates principals and staff to contribute to the success of the program. Flint Energies is a wonderful partner of this initiative, awarding monetary prizes and breakfast to our conservation winners for each of our four major shutdowns."

MORE

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As the system adds facilities, energy efficiency is a factor. New schools are equipped with energy manager controls (e.g., remote cutoffs); energy-efficient lighting; and building materials that conserve energy, such as double-paned windows and insulated doors.

In 2003, EEI presented the Houston County School System with its **Energy Leadership Award**. The award recognized the schools' reduction in energy consumption, energy costs savings, environmental impact and leadership in setting new standards for the stewardship of educational and tax dollars. These savings also represent a significant contribution to environmental protection on the part of the Houston County School System. In the first four years, this district prevented the emission of more than 26,000 tons of greenhouse warming gases into the community's atmosphere. According to formulas made available by the Environmental Protection Agency, the conservation resulted in a reduction of greenhouse warming gases equivalent to removing the exhaust from 800 cars for one year or planting 1,600 acres of trees. The system saved enough kilowatt hours of electricity to provide lighting for 2,700 households for one year.

Another conservation initiative is the solar panel at Huntington Middle School. Flint Energies installed a solar panel at Huntington in the fall of 2006. Online computer information tracks how much solar power the panel captures and thus saves the school. Part of Flint's Green Power ongoing initiative, "Sun Power for Schools," this project educates students about renewable energy and its impact on the environment. Huntington Middle was the seventh school across Georgia to participate. Three Huntington science teachers have attended a Flint workshop to learn classroom activities and lessons to teach the children the relationship of conservation of energy, specifically electricity.

For more information, contact Hutto at clifton.hutto@hcbe.net or call (478) 988-6200. The EEI Web site address is www.energyeducation.com.

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