



Sachem school board OKs \$16M energy savings plan

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The Sachem school board has approved a sweeping \$16 million energy conservation project that will bring about enough savings to cover the cost of the project, officials said.

"I'm ecstatic," said Superintendent Charles Murphy. "Not only are we going to receive \$16 million in building upgrades, but we are thinking green and clean energy."

The district does not need to put the project up for a vote because there is no cost to residents, Murphy said.

The project, which the district calls the biggest energy conservation project on Long Island, will save an estimated \$858,378 annually, which will be put toward the project's cost. In addition, state aid will pay \$11 million of the cost.

At the school board meeting Wednesday, Johnson Controls, an energy conservation company and ECG Engineering, LLC, the district's energy consultant, gave a presentation. Murphy said Johnson Controls guarantees \$858,378 per year in savings through an insurance policy. If the savings are less, the insurance will pay the district the difference, Murphy said.

Some of the projects include:

A 10-kilowatt wind turbine-windmill at High School East. It will have about a \$1,543 annual savings.

The biggest savings comes from a districtwide lighting replacement of 27,148 bulbs and 9,841 lighting fixtures to energy-efficient ones in all the buildings, for an estimated \$340,499 in annual savings.

A new insulated exterior at Gatelot Elementary School for an annual savings of \$104,000. Gatelot is one of the district's oldest buildings and is drafty, said Murphy.

Six solar panel roof systems for generating electricity at each of the secondary schools, about a \$5,478 annual savings.

Wireless clocks at Sachem East and four middle schools, which would save about \$3,588 a year.

Automatic pool covers at both high schools, for an annual savings of \$10,503. The covers will keep heat in the pool when not in use.

Some other energy savings will be realized with boiler installations and a central control for heating systems throughout the district. Sachem passed a \$33 million construction bond last spring, which also was reimbursed by state building aid, said Murphy.

Sachem is one of the largest school districts on Long Island, with more than 15,000 students.