



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JUNE 8, 2010

### **Green Happenings at Harford County Public Schools**

Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) has a long-standing tradition of environmental stewardship and resource conservation. In 1972, one of the first recycling centers on the east coast was established in this community by an HCPS science teacher and motivated group of volunteers. Since that time, the grassroots efforts have grown deep and strong. Today, we continue to focus on ways to improve our efforts to green our buildings and operations. The sustainability efforts of HCPS afford the school system the opportunity to practice what we teach our students. Here are just a few of the current initiatives underway at HCPS:

#### **Single-stream recycling**

- Through a partnership between HCPS and Waste Management Recycle America, it has never been easier to recycle in schools. Now, all recycling materials can be combined in one collection bin and placed in a recycling dumpster located on the school grounds.
- Schools are doing so well with this program that they have already voluntarily reduced their weekly trash dumpster collections. Their recycling efforts are paying off by lowering operational cost for the school system by approximately \$50,000 in the first year. In addition, they have diverted approximately 800 yards material traditionally hauled to landfills.
- Not only is HCPS reducing its carbon footprint by reducing the amount of waste in landfills, but this effort forges a strong partnership with local government agencies such as the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Operations Department.
- HCPS is currently piloting the Ball Fields Recycling Program in conjunction with the Dept. of Parks and Recreation at North Harford High School with the hopes of expanding this program to other schools in the future.

#### **Alternative Energy Sources/New Technology**

- The Board of Education recently awarded a contract to SunEdison, LLC, which includes the design, engineering, and installation of a photovoltaic array on the rooftop of Bel Air High School. The purpose of the solar panel installation is to generate electricity to be used by the school to offset their current electrical demands. In addition, the system will serve as an educational tool for the teachers and their students.
- The SunEdison project was subsidized by a \$452,000 grant from the MEA. This along with other grants total \$740,000 of funds directed toward sustainability projects.
- Solar hot water – panels are in use at one of our elementary schools to supplement the restroom and kitchen use.

- Occupancy sensors are being used in many of our classrooms to operate lighting and climate control.
- HCPS is also investigating the potential of wind generation and bio fuels.
- HCPS is utilizing new materials for sustainable construction such as geothermal heating, LED lighting, recycled content, foamed asphalt, low flow water fixtures, high efficiency lighting and many others.
- Automated building systems control allows the HCPS Facilities Department to remotely adjust and operate HVAC and lighting for great efficiency.

### **Energy Conservation**

- One of the goals of HCPS is to promote an environmentally conscientious education program while creating an atmosphere that is exciting and motivating for our students.
- HCPS hosts an annual Student Environmental Summit to encourage high school students to solve local environmental problems. This year, the theme was energy reduction and students from different high schools submitted proposals to reduce energy at their schools.
- HCPS has earned approximately \$200,000 in BGE rebate funds by participating in Smart Energy Program.
- Energy conservation strategies and initiatives are largely responsible for the approximate \$400,000 of funds that were redirected from Operations to assist the Special Education Program. These funds were available in spite of HCPS ever growing square footage and increase in the use of new energy consuming technologies.

For more information on any of these initiatives, please contact Assistant Supervisor of Resource Conservation Andrew P. Cassilly at 410-638-4089 or [Andrew.Cassilly@hcps.org](mailto:Andrew.Cassilly@hcps.org).