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Trane award recognizes district for saving ¹²⁷ \$90Gs in operations, maintenance

A Press Release from TRANE

Oxford Unified School District leaders have incorporated a “boiler room to classroom” approach to green building. The district recently completed infrastructure improvements expected to save more than \$90,000 a year in operations and maintenance costs while incorporating an energy efficiency curriculum in the classroom.

District buildings required improvements to address approximately \$2 million in backlogged maintenance, to increase building

comfort and to reduce high energy consumption. The upgrades represent initial steps in transforming district facilities into high performance buildings.

The retrofits improved the learning and teaching environment in the elementary school; the junior/senior high school; the administration building, the gym and auditorium buildings; and the maintenance building. An automated bus route optimization program was also added.

In recognition of their commit-

ment to sustainability, leaders will receive an “Energy Efficiency Leader in Education Award” from Trane, a leading global provider of indoor comfort systems and solutions and a brand of Ingersoll Rand.

The award was presented last week by education facilities consultant Chad Remboldt to superintendent Deborah Hamm at an awards presentation for academics and athletics last Wednesday.

School leaders used a perform-

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ance contract to pay for the improvements which allowed them to fund the upgrades at no additional

cost to taxpayers. Performance contracting is part of a facilities improvement impetus advocated by the governor and the state legislature.

A performance contract allows schools to use future energy and operational savings to finance infrastructure improvement projects. It is an option for funding energy-saving improvements in buildings that provides measurable business results. By managing and optimizing energy use, schools can leverage operational savings to support strategic educational objectives.

"These improvements make good financial and environmental sense for our district," said Dr. Deborah Hamm, superintendent. "We're able to finance much needed infrastructure improvements without burdening taxpayers—all while incorporating an energy efficiency curriculum that teaches our young people about energy efficiency. It's truly a win-win."

Prior to initiating the improvements, district leaders surveyed building principals, students and the community about district needs. This research uncovered a strong desire to improve energy efficiency and to update district

buildings. An audit of district buildings confirmed the potential benefits to the district.

Based on the results of the audit, district leaders selected customized energy conservation

measures that best met their needs. These included installing high efficiency heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems to improve indoor air quality and to increase ventilation and classroom comfort. Energy efficient lighting upgrades were completed to provide optimal lighting throughout the district. Other upgrades which increased energy efficiency included window and roof upgrades and boiler replacement.

The district also added low-flow water fixtures to conserve water and reduce sewage. A district-wide building automation system was installed which enables operations staff to centrally control the HVAC systems to optimize energy and operational efficiencies while improving classroom com-

fort.

As part of their sustainability focus, administrators also committed to educating students about the importance of high performance buildings by incorporating the Trane BTU Crew™ curriculum into sixth-grade classes and several high school science classes. The curriculum is an interactive educational program on energy use and conservation in buildings. It teaches students ways to reduce energy use at school and at home to make a positive contribution to the environment today, and it encourages students to consider careers in potential science, technology, engineering and math where talent is needed.

After all the improvements were completed, middle school social science students conducted an energy audit to demonstrate how the gains achieved. The students then presented their findings to the district's board of education.