

## Press Release: Fulton County Schools honored for protecting environment with superior energy efficiency

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Fulton County Schools' nationally recognized efforts to become more green and efficient in its energy recently netted it a \$28,170 rebate check from Georgia Power for the installation of energy efficient equipment in two new high schools. That current recognition is on the heels of two major awards received this year by the school system for strategically managing and improving the energy efficiency of its entire building portfolio. The U.S. Green Building Council's Georgia chapter recently recognized the district for Leadership in Energy Efficiency for a School System after being impressed with Fulton's current performance rating that reflects a 16% improvement from 2008 to 2012. The district also was nominated for Leadership in Water Efficiency.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency also named Fulton County Schools as an Energy Star "Top Performer," making it the third time Fulton has been recognized by the EPA. The EPA's national energy performance rating system provides a 1-100 scale that helps organizations assess how efficiently their buildings use energy relative to similar buildings nationwide. A building that scores a rating of 75 or higher is eligible for the Energy Star designation. Fulton County Schools currently has an average Energy Star performance score of 87, and Energy Star certification has been earned for 57 of 58 elementary schools, 17 of 19 middle schools, and 13 of 14 high schools that have been opened for at least one year.

"Fulton County Schools is committed to reducing its consumption of natural resources while offering quality educational programs," said Joseph Clements, executive director of Facility Services. "We participate in the Energy Star program so we can benchmark our energy performance with other schools in the county, region, and nation, and this helps us conserve energy, which means savings for taxpayers."

On average, Energy Star labeled buildings cost 40 cents less per square foot per year to operate than the average school, so the district's 15,000,000 square feet of facilities translates into more than \$6 million per year in reduced energy costs.

A participant in the Energy Star program since 2008, this focus on conservation has helped Fulton County Schools improve its energy performance, save money and protect the environment for future generations. Since that time, Fulton County Schools has increased awareness of utility conservation efforts, recognized individual schools for superior performance through Energy Star certification, and focused attention on facilities with the greatest potential for energy performance improvement. In addition, Fulton's new prototype schools are designed to be efficient and qualify for the Energy Star label, and HVAC systems, which often are a drain of energy consumption, have an incredibly efficient design.

The school system also engages building occupants to ensure that they play an active role in conserving resources. Students and staff are reminded to turn off lights, computers and other equipment when not in use, and the district's Instructional Technology Department has helped reduce idle computer operation through technological solutions and by working with school-based technology staff.

Energy Star was introduced by EPA in 1992 as a voluntary, market-based partnership to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficiency. Today, the Energy Star label can be found on more than 50 different kinds of products, new homes and commercial and industrial buildings. Products and buildings that have earned the Energy Star designation prevent greenhouse gas emissions by meeting strict energy-efficiency specifications set by the government.