

## **Huntingdon Area School District is First in Pennsylvania To Leverage Federal Tax Credits for Solar Energy**

Huntingdon, PA – October 28, 2024 – Huntingdon Area School District is blazing a trail as the first school district in Pennsylvania to qualify for federal tax credits for solar energy using Elective Pay (or Direct Pay), a process for tax-exempt entities to access clean energy tax credits as a refund payment from the Internal Revenue Service. The milestone is a key component of the district's comprehensive Guaranteed Energy Savings Act (GESA) project in partnership with Schneider Electric, promising significant financial savings and enhanced learning environments.

The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) of 2022 presents a substantial opportunity for local governments, school districts, and nonprofit organizations to utilize federal funds effectively, reducing the costs associated with clean energy projects through the Investment Tax Credit. Huntingdon Area Middle School's installation consists of a nominal 375 kW solar array, anticipated to cover approximately 69% of the school's post-project electrical energy needs. Standing Stone Elementary School's solar array, at 325 kW, is projected to generate around 59% of its energy requirements. Meanwhile, Southside Elementary School is deploying a ground-mounted, nominal 285 kW solar array, expected to meet nearly 100% of its post-project energy usage, significantly lowering the electricity bill. Upon project completion, Huntingdon Area School District is anticipated to receive an IRS tax credit payment of over \$1 million, representing approximately 37% of the total solar project costs.

"Huntingdon Area School District is leading the way as the first school district in the state to take advantage of the uncapped federal funds currently available as tax credits to lower the cost of clean energy projects. This innovative district is showing the way forward for other Pennsylvania schools to take advantage of this historic financial incentive to install clean energy projects that lower electricity bills, improve the health of our communities, and enrich educational outcomes," commented Shannon Crooker, Generation 180 Pennsylvania Director.

Under Superintendent Mitchell's leadership, the district embarked on a transformative journey to address budget deficits and enhance learning environments. By integrating energy efficiency measures and solar solutions, the district has averted the risk of school closures due to HVAC challenges. The district is exploring additional solar installations at the High School, aiming to achieve a 100% energy cost offset through the Solar for Schools grant.

"The strides we have made in energy efficiency secure our financial stability and enrich our students' learning experiences. Our collaboration with Schneider Electric has been crucial in driving these advancements," stated Superintendent Mitchell.

Financially, the district anticipates savings of \$5.8 million over the next 20 years, supported by a \$9.3 million investment. The district's comprehensive upgrades are carried out under the Guaranteed Energy Savings Act (GESA) program, encompassing solar installations, advanced LED lighting, controls, and HVAC improvements across vital facilities such as the High School, Middle School, Standing Stone Elementary, Southside Elementary, and the athletic field.

A key highlight of this transformation is the enhancement of STEM education across all grade levels. Over 450 elementary students participated in Remake Learning Days, engaging in activities like calculating their carbon footprint and creating an upcycled garden, fostering environmental awareness and sustainability skills. At the high school level, students explore new technologies with drones donated by Schneider Electric, gaining hands-on experience in modern technology applications. Additionally, in collaboration with Schneider Electric's Marketing Manager, high school students developed a comprehensive website to showcase the district's modernization initiatives, equipping them with valuable digital content creation and project management skills.

For more information about Huntingdon Area School District, please visit <https://huntsd.org/>. For more information about Schneider Electric, please visit <https://perspectives.se.com/k12education>.

### **About Schneider Electric**

Schneider Electric's purpose is to create Impact by empowering all to make the most of our energy and resources, bridging progress and sustainability for all. At Schneider, we call this Life Is On. Our mission is to be a trusted partner in Sustainability and Efficiency. We are a global industrial technology leader bringing world-leading expertise in electrification, automation, and digitization to innovative industries, resilient infrastructure, future-proof data centers, intelligent buildings, and intuitive homes. Anchored by our deep domain expertise, we provide integrated end-to-end lifecycle AI-enabled Industrial IoT solutions with connected products, automation, software, and services, delivering digital twins to enable profitable growth for our customers.

We are a people company with an ecosystem of 150,000 colleagues and more than a million partners operating in over 100 countries to ensure proximity to our customers and stakeholders. We embrace diversity and inclusion in everything we do, guided by our meaningful purpose of a sustainable future for all.

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