

Ocosta District Among Washington School Grants Announced

Local News

Posted by: David Haviland

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OLYMPIA, Wash. - Ocosta is among fourteen school districts statewide that have been awarded energy grants totaling \$5.9 million, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction announced today. Ocosta will use over \$851-thousand to update lighting, water, and HVAC systems. The grants are intended to produce long-term energy and operational savings for the districts, improve the indoor environmental qualities of our schools and help stimulate construction-industry jobs. These energy projects use utility incentives, energy savings, local money and the grant funds to make improvements that may otherwise not be affordable. The brick-and-mortar improvements and the savings from reduced long-term operating costs make this type of program one of the best kinds, we are seeing large and small districts compete for money to replace old boilers, add insulation and get rid of outdated lighting. It's all part of making the learning environment the best it can be.

- State Superintendent Randy Dorn

The districts receiving the awards are: Chehalis, Evaline, Issaquah, Kennewick, Marysville, Northshore, Ocosta, Pasco, Reardan-Edwall, South Kitsap, Spokane, Tahoma, Wenatchee, Yakima. In March, OSPI awarded \$20 million to 43 projects as part of the 2011-13 capital budget. The 14 districts awarded today also applied in March but did not receive grants at that time. Since then, the state Legislature allocated an additional \$40 million through the [2012 Jobs Now Act](#), to be awarded in three rounds by OSPI. The funds are specifically earmarked for energy operational cost savings. The awards announced today make up the first round. The second round - \$14 million - will be awarded at the end of November 2012; the remaining \$20 million will be awarded in February 2013. To qualify for these funds, school districts must conduct an investment-grade audit of their school facilities to determine what improvements will save the most energy and be most beneficial overall. School districts are using the Energy Savings Performance Contracting as well as the traditional design-bid-build contracting method for design and construction of these projects. Similar funding by the state Legislature for energy grants included \$16.9 million in 2009 and \$50 million in 2010. For more information on these energy grants, visit OSPI's [School Facilities Energy Grant Program Web site](#).