



March 13, 2009

## Plymouth-Canton schools: 47 green projects need aid

*BY PEGGY WALSH-SARNECKI  
FREE PRESS EDUCATION WRITER*

Plymouth-Canton Community Schools wants to be a leader in schools going green.

The district is applying for state grants and federal economic stimulus money to fund about \$13 million in projects it says it can start within 60 days.

The work would create 140 to 170 jobs, school officials say, and the improvements would save an estimated \$2.1 to \$2.2 million per year in energy costs.

"We're trying to look at all the available funds to put a package together," Superintendent Craig Fiegel said Thursday. "We can save some money here and help the environment while we're at it."

The plans also could make Plymouth-Canton the first school district to meet Gov. Jennifer Granholm's goal for Michigan to run on at least 10% renewable energy by 2015.

"We want to be her poster child," Fiegel said.

The district has plans for 47 projects using solar, thermal heat recovery, wind, natural cooling strategies and high-efficiency lighting.

One project involves covering the 2,300 feet of walkway between Plymouth, Canton and Salem high schools with solar panels. The panels would provide heat for students as they walk between the schools, with power left over for other uses in the schools. Plus, covering the walkways would reduce the need for shoveling and salting.

Another project calls for cooling Plymouth High School's gymnasium with natural methods. Plymouth's gym is equipped with the ductwork and other necessary infrastructure for air-conditioning, but the air-conditioning was never installed.

But the district could let cool nighttime air into the gym, which would effectively cool it without using fossil fuels. Well water, which is about 50 degrees, would be sprinkled on the roof and piped into the ductwork to aid in the cooling.

Contact **PEGGY WALSH-SARNECKI** at 586-826-7262 or [mmwalsh@freepress.com](mailto:mmwalsh@freepress.com).

---