



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, SEPTEMBER 27, 2007

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**STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND NYSERDA ANNOUNCE
GUIDELINES FOR ENERGY EFFICIENT SCHOOL BUILDINGS**

The State Education Department (SED) and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) today announced new guidelines to encourage the use of energy efficient design when building and renovating schools.

The State will pay out more than \$1.7 billion in building aid this year. Building aid can be used to help fund the construction and renovation of “green” schools. And, depending on the wealth of the district, the State can reimburse up to 98 percent of those costs.

The voluntary guidelines, known as the “Collaborative for High Performance Schools” (NY-CHPS), were created through a joint effort of SED and NYSERDA. NY-CHPS will help schools develop and maintain learning environments that contribute to improved academic achievement while reducing operating costs and protecting and conserving our natural resources.

Schools built according to the NY-CHPS guidelines are durable, easy to maintain, healthy, energy efficient, and comfortable. These improvements contribute to a better learning environment that has been shown to contribute to reduced absenteeism and better teacher and staff retention.

State Education Commissioner Richard Mills said, “Everyone wins when schools are designed and built using these guidelines – students and teachers get a better learning environment, districts save money, and we all benefit from a cleaner environment.”

Paul D. Tonko, President and CEO of NYSERDA said, “A school district that implements NY-CHPS guidelines will reduce its energy consumption, shrink its carbon footprint and lower its electric demand, thereby doing its part in helping New York State reach Governor Spitzer’s 15x15 goal of decreasing statewide power consumption 15% by 2015.”

“We know that green buildings use less energy, require less material costs, use less natural resources and emit less pollution - including greenhouse gases,” said Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Pete Grannis. “Initiatives such as these encourage schools across the state to move toward green buildings, helping to create smarter, cleaner, healthier communities and a stronger environment.”

Some have argued that building energy efficient schools is too costly. But recent studies show that those arguments no longer hold up. The Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (www.mtpc.org), for example, studied 30 high performance schools nationwide and showed that although additional upfront costs ranged between 1.5%-2.5% more than conventional schools, these “green” schools provided significant long term financial benefits, saving the district many times that amount over the long-term. Savings can accrue from reduced energy use, reduced water and sewer use, reduced equipment maintenance and replacement costs, reduced site maintenance, reduced liability costs, and even reduced costs due to lower teacher absenteeism.

The East Hampton Union Free School District was the first school district to submit a project to SED using the NY-CHPS guidelines. Dr. Raymond Gualtieri, East Hampton’s Superintendent, said, "We are proud that the East Hampton School District is the first to adhere to green building standards. This process sends a powerful message to our community and our students. Reinvigorating our high school using the NY-CHIPS guidelines will provide clear-cut cost savings for our taxpayers while at the same time correlating to a standard for a greatly improved school environmental quality for our staff and students."

Building sustainable facilities also provides schools with a unique opportunity to teach students about the efficient use of natural resources and the need to preserve our environment. The schools, themselves, can serve as learning laboratories, teaching children how “green” design and construction conserves raw materials, water, and energy.

SED and NYSERDA established an Advisory Council to help guide the creation of the NY-CHPS guidelines. That Advisory Council consisted of members of the following groups: the Council of School Superintendents, the Association of School Business Officials, the Association of Educational Safety and Health Professionals, the Superintendents of Buildings and Grounds Association, the New York State Department of Health, the Healthy Schools Network, the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers, the Association of Energy Engineers, and the American Institute of Architects.

The NY-CHPS guidelines, coupled with expert assistance from SED and NYSERDA, will help school districts accomplish their educational goals in an energy-efficient, environmentally-responsible, cost-effective, and sustainable manner, and we encourage all districts to use them.

A paperless copy of the NY-CHPS guidelines can be accessed at the following web address: http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/facplan/NYSERDA/NY-CHPS_Ver_1-1_Feb_07.html