

Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools is a Leader in Energy Efficiency

Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools (PLSAS) is getting high marks for low energy consumption throughout the district. At its February 28 Study Session, School Board members heard from Mechanical Engineer, Margaret Bishop who presented an analysis of the district's energy use.

According to Bishop, the district's energy use has been on a downward trend, reducing energy consumption by nearly 19% since the 2012/13 school year. "Clearly there is a significant reduction in energy consumption which means you are saving energy and, in turn, dollars," Bishop said. "I work with a lot of school districts and these are truly amazing numbers. Staff have done a wonderful job."

In addition, all of PLSAS' schools have earned an Energy Star® score of 75 or higher on the Environmental Protection Agency's 1-100 scale, which indicates that they perform better than at least 75 percent of similar buildings nationwide. Our average district score is 89.4, with eight buildings rated 90 or above. PLSAS' oldest building has become our most energy efficient building rated at 96. La ola del lago at Grainwood can largely attribute its energy efficiencies to the 2020 construction and mechanical upgrades. Our buildings save energy, save money and help protect the environment by generating fewer greenhouse gas emissions.

PLSAS is also an energy-saving leader statewide. According to the State of Minnesota's B3 Benchmarking for public buildings, PLSAS is one of the most energy efficient districts in the state. According to Bishop, PLSAS' energy use is substantially lower than districts of comparable size.

"We are able to contain costs by carefully controlling our energy use," said PLSAS Director of Operations, Transportation, Health and Safety, Jim Dellwo. "Replacing aging mechanical equipment, adjusting building automation controls to avoid peak demand and turning off lights when not in use are just a few of the ways we have contributed to lower energy costs for the district."