



St. James Parish Schools Unveils Healthier Classrooms for Students with Thousands of Dollars in Energy Savings

St. James Parish, La. — Aug. 22, 2024 — St. James Parish Schools is proud to announce a successful collaboration with OxyChem to enhance energy efficiency across its schools to create a better place for students to learn and thrive. The partnership has led to significant cost savings and environmental benefits for the district, while promoting a healthier learning environment.

Facing the need to identify cost savings and boost energy efficiency, St. James Parish Schools reached out to the community for help. OxyChem stepped in to provide support and connected the school district with the U.S. Department of Energy Better Plants Industrial Assessment Center (IAC) at Louisiana State University (LSU) to provide a no-cost energy assessment at Paulina Elementary, Sixth Ward Elementary and Gramercy Elementary. The assessment resulted in several energy-saving upgrades, including the installation of occupancy sensors, LED light bulbs and fixtures, and new insulation for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems. Energy-efficient buildings can improve indoor air quality, reducing health problems, leading to fewer absences and a healthier student body. Proper lighting can reduce eye strain and fatigue, while efficient heating and cooling systems ensure optimal classroom temperatures for learning.

To help St. James Parish Schools achieve the necessary energy efficiency upgrades, OxyChem donated funds to replace the LED light bulbs and fixtures at all three elementary campuses.

“We are incredibly grateful to OxyChem for their generous contribution. This significant savings allows us to reallocate funds to purchase essential resources that directly benefit our students,” said St. James Parish Superintendent Chris M. Kimball. “Their contributions continue to make a tangible difference in our school community, and we look forward to continuing this valuable partnership.”

Through this partnership, the IAC at LSU has also completed energy assessments at Vacherie Elementary and St. James Parish Schools Career and College Center.

“Our dedicated OxyChem employees live and work within the St. James Parish community, and as neighbors, OxyChem is proud to support these energy efficiency upgrades to maintain a safe and comfortable learning environment for our students,” said OxyChem Convent Plant Manager Steve Welch. “OxyChem identified this project because it aligns perfectly with what we do every day in our business. The products we manufacture, such as low ozone-emitting refrigerants used in heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems to the wire coatings on electrical cords for computers, are integral to energy efficiency. Our chemistry is everywhere and underpins these vital energy resources.”

OxyChem has also committed to support energy efficiency upgrades at Vacherie Elementary and St. James Parish Schools Career and College Center.

St. James Parish Schools held a media event on Thursday, Aug. 22, from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. at Gramercy Elementary, located at 601 E 2nd Street, Gramercy, LA 70052. Attendees had the opportunity to take a guided tour of the lighting upgrades.

About St. James Parish Schools

St. James Parish School Board (SJPSB) is located between Baton Rouge and New Orleans and split by the Mississippi River. SJPSB serves a diverse population of 3,300 students in six schools and three programs with 559 employees.

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