



West Mifflin Area School District

Saving \$9.9 Million Needed for Budget Relief, Security, Infrastructure, and STEM for Students



CHALLENGE

In need of budgetary relief, West Mifflin Area School District also faced competing claims on community capital, including security needs, infrastructure issues, and STEM learning priorities.

With payments to cyber and charter schools coming out of the West Mifflin budget, and flat growth in their property tax base, district leaders needed a way to invest in their schools without increasing taxes or negative impacts on their capital budget.

Did You Know?

A 10% increase in per-pupil spending over 12 years of public education boosts graduation rates by 7% – increasing to 10% for children in low-income situations.

SOLUTION

An internal analysis revealed that cutting energy costs could help West Mifflin achieve budget relief, avoid additional debt, and invest in key priorities. ABM answered the call to help district leaders understand their energy use and savings opportunities. A technical audit then provided the data ABM needed to create projected savings of \$9.9 million in energy and operating costs over a 15-year period.

West Mifflin Area School District is a public school system in southwestern Pennsylvania.

- 2,793 students
- Facilities Improved:
- High School
- Middle School
- 2 Elementary Schools

"ABM's customized solution for West Mifflin Area School District will allow us to provide our students and staff with a safe, secure, and comfortable environment using energy and operational savings without affecting our budget," said Dave Marshall, West Mifflin Area School Board President. "It's also going to provide our students with additional STEM education opportunities, which will positively impact their educational experience."

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BENEFITS

ABM's Energy Performance Contracting Program upgraded lighting, building automation control systems, and water conservation across the district. By enabling large and sustained energy savings, funds that would have been locked into utility bills could be reallocated to district priorities or used for budgetary relief.

Conservation Across the Board

Mechanical and electrical equipment is often the focus of a plan to reduce energy, but both water conservation and control systems play big roles in a school's energy consumption. Water conservation systems at five of six facilities were installed, including low-flow fixtures and pedal valves. New or updated building automation controls provided administrators the ability to customize temperatures and lighting levels in each room, including energy-saving choices for unoccupied rooms.

Safety, Security, and STEM

With such robust savings across the district, West Mifflin Area School District was able to move forward on key projects for safer and more engaging learning spaces.

With new captive entrances, administrators and key staff could better monitor and control who enters and exits school buildings. Surveillance cameras were added to each building. A BluePoint Rapid Emergency Response System was installed to improve crisis communications and connect staff instantly to first responders.

Prior to the project, West Mifflin ASD had implemented a robotics STEM program to further emphasize technical skills and careers. With a new STEM lab funded by energy savings, the district was able to build on that curriculum with more hands-on learning in an interactive learning space. That created more opportunities for students to learn critical and analytical thinking skills needed for tomorrow's job marketplace.

More Than Upgrades

Training for in-house staff gave West Mifflin Area School District the ability to leverage new tools and equipment for savings right away. With controls in place to monitor data, inefficient energy use can be identified and addressed quickly, so the district can achieve the highest possible amount of savings.

How Does It Work?

In order to positively impact the budget and achieve upgrades without incurring upfront costs, ABM's Energy Performance Contracting Program enabled the school to fund improvements with guaranteed energy savings.

A detailed assessment of six district facilities looked at water use, lighting costs, structural issues, and building performance. Each facility's building envelope was reviewed to identify air infiltration issues, which often cause energy waste and humidity problems, leading to mold and allergen buildup.

¹ https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-06/documents/k-12_guide.pdf

ENERGY SAVING FACT:

Reducing water consumption can also lower energy spend by cutting water heating costs.¹





With a new option for overcoming financial barriers, West Mifflin ASD was able to achieve a safer, more secure, and engaging learning environment for students, including:

- Upgraded security systems with captive entrances, updated surveillance cameras, and a BluePoint Rapid Emergency Response System, which provides instant emergency response communication
- Installed water conservation systems, including low-flow fixtures and pedal valves to control water usage
- Added a STEM laboratory at West Mifflin Area Middle School
- Retrofitted lighting systems to energy-efficient LED lighting at six district facilities
- Updated building automation control systems to maximize energy and operational efficiency
- Sealed building envelopes at six facilities



About ABM

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