

SCHOOL NEWS



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Mankato Area Public Schools goes solar

Mankato Area Public Schools, in partnership with Xcel Energy, has gone solar after contracting with Geronimo Energy to provide solar energy to most of its school buildings. In the solar subscription, two of Geronimo's area solar gardens, Koppelman and Rengstorf, provide solar electricity to the district's buildings currently served by a local utilities company.

Scott Hogen, director of facilities for Mankato Area Public Schools, says the school district hopes to see big savings over 25 years.

"We are in a unique contract with Geronimo where we are into a locked purchase



Rengstorf solar garden, located near Courtland, Minn., is one of two gardens that supplies solar energy to Mankato Area Public Schools.

By Shelly Miller
price that won't increase for the next 15 years," Hogen says. "At year 14, we will review the subscription and evaluate the savings. If they meet expectations, we will review every five years until the 25-year contract is met. We believe that savings will be \$1 million plus."

Cost savings is not the only reason to go solar. "Saving money is an important part of adopting solar energy but we also took a look at our impact on the environment and what our carbon footprint would look like if we continued to solely use energy coming out of a power plant to supply the schools," Hogen says. "Going carbon free greatly reduces our impact on the environment. Sustainability is important to our future."

In the future, the school district hopes to extend solar electricity to their remaining school buildings. 🌱



Complimentary "VIP Gold Card" to experience Mankato Area Public Schools

By Shelly Schulz, public information

Mankato Area Public Schools' "VIP Gold Card" is exclusively for seniors—age 62 plus—who live within school district #77. It's a great way to enjoy no cost admission to enjoy concerts, athletic and academic events, plays and planetarium shows.

To obtain a "VIP Gold Card," simply contact Mankato Area Public Schools' central office at 507-387-1868; or the activity offices at East High School (507-387-5671) or West High School (507-387-3461).

Students benefit from audience attendance, intergenerational and community involvement. Quality schools positively influence quality of life, economic development and home values. 🌱

#EastofTaylor bound to make a difference

By Shelly Schulz, public information

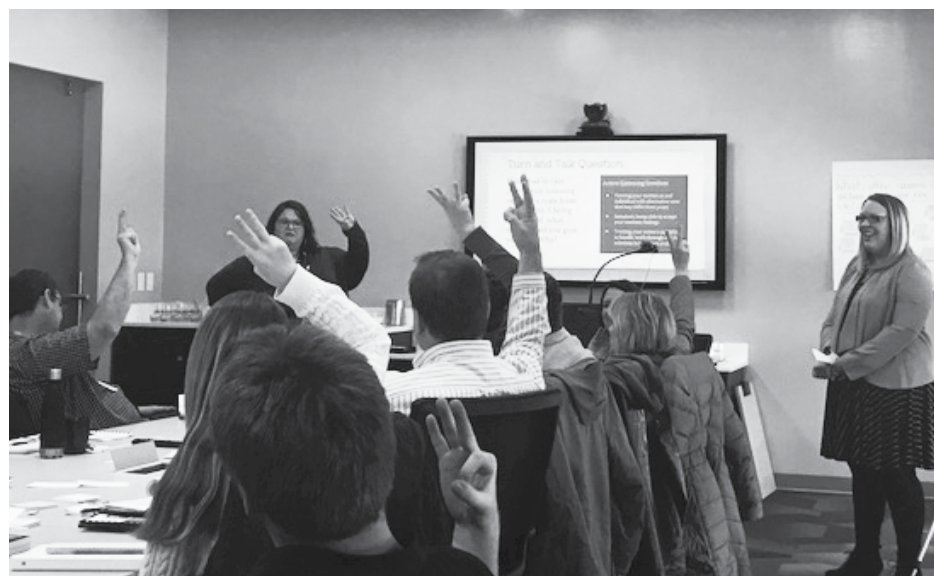
East High School is excited to partner with Taylor Corporation which is contributing time and resources to create positive life outcomes for students. Empowerment, relationship building and possibility-thinking are all part of the #EastofTaylor program. As part of this recent partnership, professionals with work and life experience are volunteer mentors to high-reaching East High School students.

"When education partners with the business community, breakthrough possibilities can occur with our students," says Superintendent of Mankato Area Public Schools Sheri Allen. "We're grateful to Taylor Corporation executives for stepping forward with their ideas and a desire to reduce barriers, sharing time and life experiences with students."

"Taylor mentors are excited to build relationships with some amazing high school students," says Suzanne Spellacy, Taylor Corporation's executive sponsor for this initiative. "We're humbled by the talented students we've met so

far and hope to support them in achieving their goals." Spellacy is Vice President and General Counsel for Taylor and serves as one of the mentors.

In addition to mentoring, important components of the partnership with Taylor include barrier-free neighborhood study nights, leadership meetings, tutoring, field trips and the basic gift of time – all designed to empower students to succeed and achieve their personal best. For Taylor, this new relationship provides opportunities for employees to give back to the community and enhance the educational opportunities for students. 🌱



Julie Larkin-Spies and Mari Considine (MAPS mentors) facilitating training with Taylor Corp mentors.

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