

# Bishop Smith leads the way with solar

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New green energy project makes school cutting edge in green tech

Posted By STEPHEN UHLER [SUHLER@THEDAILYOBSERVER.CA](mailto:SUHLER@THEDAILYOBSERVER.CA)



Let the sun shine in!

Bishop Smith Catholic High School has now officially entered the green energy revolution, as members of the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board joined school officials and project leaders on Friday to unveil the solar energy system installed this August.

Consisting of 40 large solar panels placed on the roof, and another 10 installed on the front wall of the building, the system can produce up to 10,000 watts of electricity which will be fed into the provincial energy grid, earning 80.2 cents per kilowatt hour for the local school board.

Paul Charbonneau, energy consultant and Solar 101 project director heading up this provincial program, said this is about creating a clean and green economy.

Its success is being compared to other similar projects across the province which is being used as a way to show solar power technology is viable as a commercial energy source.

"This is the perfect tenant on your roof," he said. "It doesn't smoke, doesn't make noise and makes you money."

Peter Adam, Bishop Smith's principal, said this has been a once in a lifetime opportunity, and admitted everyone who has been involved in the project is excited.

"We want to be the cutting edge school in Renfrew County," he said. "This is an initiative that will serve our students well, today and into the future."

"This puts us on the leading edge in the field of green energy technology."

The school is one of 11 throughout the province taking part in the Green Schools Pilot Initiative, in which solar energy systems were installed to both provide power and revenue to the building - excess power being sold to the province - and learning opportunities for the students.

The \$180,000 system has been funded by the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Research and Innovation. It is linked to 10 others across Ontario, and once activated in September, will stream live data onto a website monitoring all of the systems, allowing students to collect and compare energy output from the systems at the different sites.

The program is designed to provide school boards with the ability to purchase, test and showcase innovative technology while providing companies with real-world demonstrations which could lead to local or even global sales opportunities.

As a tie in, Bishop Smith CHS is also the site of the new Specialist High Skills Major in Energy being offered this fall. This is seen as offering a great opportunity for students as work on green energy as a way to go in the future, and a great career to boot.

Michele Arbour, RCCDSB's education director, said this has been a great opportunity for the board to lead by example as responsible stewards of the environment.

"We'll be maximizing our use of clean energy, and we'll also be enhancing our learning environment with a practical focus on sustainable technology," she said, thanking Wayne and Carol Campbell, who lead science workshops in the Hila Room at the school, for spearheading the drive to get the board involved in this project.

Bishop Smith is the first school in the RCCDSB to get this technology. It is hoped by next fall, solar energy systems will be installed at Pembroke's Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School, Our Lady Of Sorrows Catholic School in Petawawa and St. Joseph's Catholic High School in Renfrew.