

## Customer Spotlight

# Carroll County Schools Chalks up Savings With Energy Efficiency Upgrades

About 50 miles west of Atlanta, along the Alabama border, lies Carroll County, Georgia. Covering nearly 500 square miles, the county is among the largest in the state. The job of educating the county's nearly 14,500 geographically dispersed students is the responsibility of Carroll County Schools. The school system is the top employer in the area, with a staff of 1,066 operating out of 23 schools.

According to Mike Beers, director of facilities at Carroll County Schools, each school is the center of its community. The average pupil-teacher ratio is 16-to-1, he says. It's the kind of place where the teachers not only know all the kids, but also know all their parents by their first names.

It's also the kind of place where strategic investments in energy efficiency are yielding big returns in energy savings. Projects in 11 buildings to upgrade to high-efficiency lighting and kitchen equipment and install energy management systems are helping Carroll County Schools save on energy costs. And, incentives totaling \$65,000 from Georgia Power's Commercial Energy Efficiency Program made those upgrades an affordable option to rein in operating costs.

## The Opportunity

Carroll County Schools manages nearly 4 million square feet of space, including classrooms, gymnasiums, cafeterias and administrative offices. Each elementary, middle and high school has 50,000 to 500,000 square feet of conditioned space. Many of the schools are more than 35 years old and showing their age. "We had lighting issues," Beers says. "Some buildings still had the old T12 lamps and magnetic ballasts, which aren't manufactured anymore."

He continues: "When the economy tanked in 2008, operations and maintenance took a hit. One of the first things that went away was our preventative maintenance budget. We wanted better lighting in our schools but didn't have it in our budget."

After hearing about financial incentives available from Georgia Power's Commercial Energy Efficiency Program, the school system jumped at the chance to make needed upgrades at a fraction of the cost.

## The Georgia Power Solution

Businesses can take advantage of direct incentives to reduce the cost of upgrading to energy-efficient technologies, resulting in lower energy use and costs. Incentives are available for retrofit projects, replacement of aging equipment and high-efficiency equipment installations in new construction.

Carroll County Schools set its sights on upgrading the lighting in 11 of its facilities, including schools and an administrative building. At Temple Elementary School, for example, extra, inefficient T12 fluorescent lamps were replaced with new, more efficient fixtures. LEDs were installed where feasible, such as in office and hallway displays and in storage areas. All told, Temple Elementary upgraded 852 lighting fixtures.

In schools with gyms, such as Central High School, old 400-watt metal halide systems were upgraded to T5 high-output fixtures. Some schools, including Temple Elementary and Temple High, received new energy management systems that give facility managers greater control over heating, ventilation and air conditioning.



Mike Beers, Director of Facilities,  
Carroll County Schools

## Savings at a Glance

Carroll County Schools used incentives from Georgia Power to upgrade lighting and kitchen equipment and automate HVAC systems in several school facilities.

**Energy savings:**  
1,027,000 kWh/year

**Total project cost:**  
\$1,035,000

**Incentives paid:**  
\$65,000



Brighter, more consistent lighting in the library at Temple Elementary makes for a better learning environment.

"The building automation piece is big," Beers says. "Now we can turn lights on and off and turn the heat up and down remotely online. Teachers and janitors don't need to do it."

Carroll County Schools also upgraded the kitchen equipment in several cafeterias. These renovations included the installation of new high-efficiency walk-in coolers and ENERGY STAR® certified holding cabinets and dishwashers—all in an effort to be more energy efficient.

Facility	Lighting	Building Automation	Kitchen Equipment
Administrative Building	✓		
Bowden High	✓		
Central High	✓		✓
Glanton Hindsman Elementary	✓		✓
Mt. Zion Middle	✓		
Roopville Elementary	✓		
Temple Elementary	✓	✓	
Temple High	✓	✓	
Whitesburg Elementary	✓		
Villa Rica Elementary	✓		
Villa Rica High	✓		✓

## The Benefits

The school system's contractor, Georgia Power Energy Services, which is an unregulated division of Georgia Power, completed the upgrades at night and on weekends to minimize interference with classes. "A lot of people would come back to work on Monday and notice something was different," Beers says. "But they couldn't put a finger on it at first. We'd tell them new lights were put in, and then they'd say, 'Oh, they look great!'"

Not only has the lighting quality improved, but also the functionality is better. For example, Beers reports that coaches are much happier with the new lights in the gyms. "The old lights took forever to warm up," he says. "If you turned them off during a pep rally or presentation, they took a while to reboot. Now you can turn the lights off and on quickly, so that's a big plus." The new lamps and ballasts also require less maintenance.

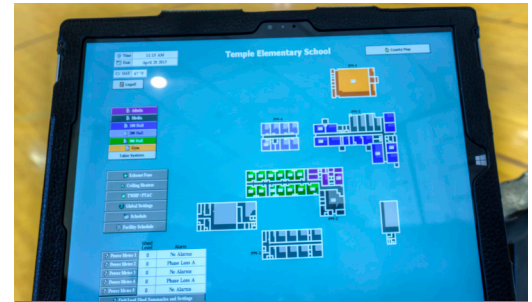
With increased efficiency, Carroll County Schools is seeing a decrease in power bills. "We've improved the learning environment," Beers adds, "and we're demonstrating good stewardship of taxpayer money by making our schools energy efficient. That money is going back into the general fund to help with direct instruction—benefiting our children."

**"Every school system should look into Georgia Power's Commercial Energy Efficiency Program. The customer service and savings make the whole process easy and worthwhile."**

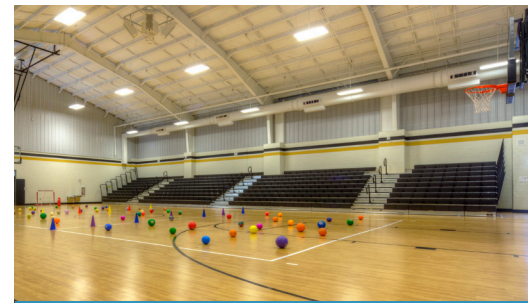
- Mike Beers, Carroll County Schools



This ENERGY STAR certified holding cabinet is about 70 percent more energy efficient than standard models.\*



New energy management systems provide greater control over heating and cooling in the schools.



A win-win in the gym: coaches applaud the improved lighting, while administrators appreciate the energy savings.

Georgia Power's Commercial Energy Efficiency Program makes incorporating energy-efficient improvements into your business even more attractive.

Available incentives help reduce the cost to install high-efficiency equipment that results in lower energy use and costs. Incentives apply to:

- Lighting • Heating & Cooling
- Food Service & Grocery • Water Heating
- Reflective Roofing • Custom Projects

For more information, visit [georgiapower.com/commercialsavings](http://georgiapower.com/commercialsavings) or call 1-877-310-5607.