



*Commonwealth of Virginia*  
*Office of Governor Ralph S. Northam*

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**Charles City County Public Schools Awarded  
\$500,000 Grant for Solar Array, Energy  
Efficiency Upgrades**

*~ First Virginia school system to receive funding through Solar Enhanced  
Energy Savings Performance Contract Program ~*

**RICHMOND**—Governor Ralph Northam today announced that Charles City County Public Schools will add renewable energy production and increase energy efficiency across its school system with a new \$500,000 grant from the Solar Enhanced Energy Savings Performance Contract Program at the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME). The project, which includes a 712.5 kilowatt ground mounted solar array, will improve energy equity while advancing the Commonwealth’s clean energy goals.

“This project is a win-win for our environment and the Charles City County school system,” **said Governor Northam**. “In addition to lowering energy costs, this solar array will bring environmental and energy improvements to a historically underserved community and help accelerate our transition to a carbon free future in Virginia. I look

forward to seeing more school divisions take advantage of this program to make our communities healthier and more resilient.”

“With this project, Charles City County Public Schools will play a key role in our efforts to build a clean energy economy,” **said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Brian Ball**. “If we continue the renewable energy and energy efficiency work through these energy performance contracts, we will reduce our carbon footprint much faster.”

Charles City County Public Schools is the first Virginia school system to receive a DMME grant through the Solar Enhanced Energy Savings Performance Contract Program. The \$500,000 grant will fund the solar portion of the project, which will reduce the electricity bill for Charles City High School by 59 percent and save the school division over \$86,000 annually. In addition to savings from the solar array, other energy improvements for the school system include HVAC upgrades, lighting, building automation, boilers, improvements to the wastewater treatment plant, a building envelope that provides barriers to temperature and air, and hot water upgrades. Overall, Charles City County Public Schools will receive energy efficiency upgrades that will result in an estimated \$3.4 million in savings over the next 15 years.

“We are excited about the upcoming projects that will improve our facilities and reduce our carbon footprint, making our facilities even better places to work and learn,” **said Charles City Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Dalphine Joppy**.

“Adding the solar option is a fairly new opportunity associated with these contracts,” **said DMME Director John Warren**. “DMME’s Energy Savings Performance Contracting Program has resulted in nearly \$1 billion in savings for the Commonwealth since 2001.”

Governor Northam signed [Executive Order Forty-Three](#) in September 2019, which establishes ambitious statewide targets for clean energy deployment and expands upon Virginia’s commitments to mitigate the impacts of climate change and boost the clean energy economy. This program is among several efforts to meet the goals put forth in the Governor’s executive order, which include powering 30 percent of Virginia’s electric system from renewable energy resources by 2030 and producing 100 percent of Virginia’s electricity from carbon-free sources such as wind, solar, and nuclear by 2050.

DMME serves as the experienced and trusted third-party advisor to state agencies and localities entering into certain performance contracts with energy services companies to support savings that exceed project costs. Those participating in a Solar Enhanced Energy Performance Contract can use savings from energy conservation measures to fund the on-site solar projects. More information on the program can be found [here](#).

[Full Release](#)

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