



Front L-R, Jackie Warren, GCS Director of Maintenance; Randal Henige, Consumers Energy Account Manager
Back L-R, Carlee Allen, GCS Director of Finance; Anthony Esson, Project Architect; Justin Kowatch, Project Engineer

Gaylord Community Schools Receives Consumers Energy Rebate

The Gaylord Community Schools (GCS) received a \$36,294.51 refund check from Consumers Energy as a result of energy savings initiatives implemented at GCS this year. Improvements to various mechanical and electrical systems in the district were possible as a result of 2010 voter-approved sinking fund upgrades. These energy saving measures included: new, high efficiency gymnasium lighting reducing power consumption by 29%; the installation of new lighting control systems; and 23 high efficiency motors replacements in air handling units. Additionally, high efficiency chiller improvements resulted in a 12% improvement on minimum energy code requirements. Various other mechanical and electrical system upgrades rounded out the refund issued by Consumers Energy.

In a letter to GCS, Consumers Energy commended the district saying, "Consumers Energy would like to thank you for doing your part to help reduce energy use in Michigan. Your energy efficiency activities will not only save you energy and money, but also help Michigan's environment." Project engineer Justin Kowatch added, "The goal of this project was to sensibly spend the taxpayers' sinking fund dollars in a sustainable manner that will benefit the students and the school district for years to come."

Every year districts are being asked to do more with less financial assistance from the state, so it is becoming increasingly important to look beyond the initial investment. "Sometimes it makes sense to spend...on improvements now to save on operating costs over the life of the building/system," said Kowatch.

The Gaylord Community Schools will continue to assess and identify additional ways in which the district can continue to trim expenditures so that programs and services continue to serve our most important resource, our students.