

Star power

Hartman Elementary places well in national energy competition

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Showing respect

Hartman Elementary is nearly half a century old, but it's ahead of its time. Wylie ISD's oldest building came in second in the nation in the K-12 School category and fourth overall in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's 2011 Energy Star National Building Competition: Battle of the Buildings.

"It's an advertisement that we are doing everything we possibly can and obviously we're doing it right," said Don Pool, director of facilities and maintenance for Wylie ISD.

The competition measured energy use over a period of 24 months. Through lighting retrofits and other improvements, in addition to the conservation efforts of school staff and students, the school's energy use was reduced by more than 43 percent, saving more than \$26,000.

Hartman Elementary was one of 10 Wylie ISD school buildings entered in the competition; combined, the buildings realized a savings of \$155,920.51 — "which is the equivalent of four teaching positions," Pool said.

Brian Miller, Wylie ISD assistant superintendent for business and finance, said the district entered the competition to verify its belief that its buildings are being run very efficiently.

"I am so proud of the results," he said, "but not surprised because our maintenance department has made this one of their goals."

Another of its goals, in the same vein, is also nearing reality. Of Wylie ISD's 19 schools, 16 are Energy Star-certified, and Pool said he hopes to see them all qualify during this school year.

The Battle of the Buildings was nearly over when Hartman Elementary Principal Whitney Sellars learned that her school was a contestant, she said. Students and staff members didn't make a particular push in order to place high, she said.

"It wasn't something that we were trying for, it was just affirmation for what we were doing already," she said.

Sellars encourages her staff and students to respect and give back to the environment, she said. It's one way to show appreciation for recent improvements to Hartman Elementary.

"The community has done so much in regards to updating our school, so it's all about respect," Sellars said.

A 2009 bond, paired with a grant from Oncor, helped pay for the retrofitting of lights in the school. Among other things, the bond also covered bathroom renovations and helped redo the school's kitchen, now full of new, Energy Star-qualified machinery.

Sellars said this support of the school, and Hartman Elementary's long history in the community, make working there special.



‘One more area’

Miller said he believes Hartman Elementary’s energy conservation success is because of the dedication of Pool and Ronnie Bayless, assistant director of maintenance (trades). Pool, in turn, credits his staff and also the staff and students of Hartman Elementary, who conserved energy with simple steps like turning off lights in empty classrooms.

Sellars said the school’s achievement is a demonstration of what can happen when the environment is respected — and it fits right in with the culture of Hartman.

“That’s just one more area where Hartman shines,” she said.

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Staff photos by RUTH HAESEMEYER/neighborsgo
Rita Reynolds, assistant manager for Hartman Elementary’s cafeteria, looks over paperwork in the school’s recently renovated kitchen.



ing were special.



Top right: Hartman Elementary principal Whitney Sellars shows off the nearly 50-year-old school's bright hallways. Lighting retrofits played a big part in the energy savings that helped the school to place among the top in the nation in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's 2011 Energy Star National Building Competition: Battle of the Buildings. **Above:** Cafeteria worker Delona Phalan serves up lunch in Hartman Elementary's recently renovated kitchen, now full of Energy Star qualified appliances.