LIFE HACKS

School in Arkansas Installs Solar Panels to Save on Energy & Increase Teachers' Pay

By bestfolkmedicine · 30/05/2021 · 2 min read



In this small, rural town in Arkansas, the future seems to have arrived.

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Realizing the power of renewable energy and its benefits, a school located there uses solar panels to save money.

The city known as Batesville is located in the northeast part of the state and has a small population. There, teachers don't have it easy because it's a challenging profession, yet they're underpaid.

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And, since they're in a small town, schools are also struggling to attract quality teachers and to keep them in their schools.

Through renewable energy, the district is saving money and using it to increase teachers' pay.

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School in Arkansas Is Helping the Planet & Retaining Quality Educators

The school district did the switch to solar energy back in 2017.

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Since then, they've climbed out of their $250,000 budget deficit. They've managed to recoup their losses and accumulate immense budget surpluses from saved energy.

Back in 2017, Entegrity did an audit of the district's energy efficiency. The results showed that the six schools spent $600,000 yearly on energy.

The Batesville School installed around 1500 solar panels on the school property which helped them save $600,000 yearly. They redirected these money back to the teachers and thus, massively increased their salaries.

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This further helped better the retention and recruitment of teachers who're good at their job.

Without doubt, clean energy seems to pay off. The superintendent of Batesville Michael Hester said that they decided to raise the salaries of their teachers because of the problems they were facing, i.e. staff turnover and deficit.

The quality faculty helps improve the performance of their students and increase the district's performance in achievement rankings.

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An Eco-Friendly School District

In addition to saving budget and redirecting it to increase teacher's pay and boost education quality, the school district has also reduced their carbon footprint and went eco-friendly.

Moreover, they've become an inspiration to other nearby districts that heard about the positive results and have also installed their solar programs.

The Batesville School District is only a part of the schools that are using solar energy to minimize costs, decrease emissions, and make up for shortages in their budgets.

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Since 2019, 5.3 million students went to schools that are powered by solar energy (entirely or partially). This number rises and many state and local governments are agreeing with the switch to renewable.

Encouraging the change is essential so twenty eight states and the District of Columbia took the necessary actions.

Thanks to the policies, companies shoulder the costs of installation and infrastructure on the school grounds while the districts pay for the energy they use.

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Sources:

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