

# Ellicott City school to explore wind as an energy source

Students at Ellicott City's Our Lady of Perpetual Help School will soon be putting a lot more energy into their studies - literally.

The 215-student school in Howard County, in partnership with the Albright Foundation, University of Maryland Baltimore County and Federal Hill Preparatory School in Baltimore City, has been awarded a \$50,000 grant from Constellation Energy to study the school's use of wind as an energy resource.

OLPH and Federal Hill Prep students will participate in an applied science project to evaluate whether a wind turbine can produce enough energy to meet the power needs of the two schools.

Constellation's grant program, "E2: Energy to Educate," targets projects that advance energy innovation and build on student knowledge and application of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). The program awarded a total of \$350,000 to 10 projects in communities where Constellation Energy does business.

OLPH principal Nancy Malloy, a former high school science teacher, said she was excited about the school's opportunity to work with UMBC professors and students. The school also recently received a Weather Bug system as a gift from a supporter.

"We wanted to get more enriched in the STEM areas," Malloy said. "It's something we've been really hoping for recently."

Howard County has a celebrated public school system and three Catholics schools that have been honored as Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education. Malloy believes the recent additions will be attractive to potential families.

"We know we are offering excellent programs already," Malloy said. "This, at least, lets people in the community know there is excellence in academics happening in our school."

Malloy said school board chairwoman, Shelley Johnson, was instrumental in procuring the grant for OLPH. Sixth, seventh and eighth-grade students will begin work on the project this spring.

A news release from Constellation Energy said the funds will support a variety of initiatives, ranging from a project to evaluate the viability of wind energy at local schools to designing and building a solar-powered house that produces as much energy as it uses.

Mayo A. Shattuck III, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Constellation Energy, said in a statement: "As we celebrate American Education Week, the E2 Grant program helps to underscore the importance of providing all of our children with a quality education while at the same time preparing them to address our energy challenges. Through these projects, students will explore innovative ways to promote our necessary transition to a more secure, efficient and low-emissions energy system, while learning math and science skills that will help them compete in the global marketplace."

Our Lady of Perpetual Help School, which will launch a preschool in 2011, will hold an open house Dec. 19 a.m. for perspective families.