

More recognition for CHS solar project

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Cochrane Times — The sustainable development project at Cochrane High School beamed up another award yesterday.

For the first time in history, a Rocky View School Division branch received a Mayor's Excellence Award from the Calgary Education Partnership Foundation.

"I'm just so proud of what the students and teachers have done here," said CHS principal Chris Lees.

"It started five years ago, and we had a plan. But last year it just snowballed, with the kids who were keen on fundraising, and next thing we knew, a dollar turned into hundreds and then into thousands -- and that's exactly what we needed behind our plan was the funds."

CHS representatives accepted the Mayor's Excellence Award for the category of Curriculum Support at a luncheon at the Fairmont Palliser Hotel Jan. 24.

The award was presented to the high school's sustainable development committee for its efforts in producing a hybrid solar/wind energy technology that will produce one per cent of the school's energy, and the major business partners involved, including the Cochrane Environmental Action Committee, Fortis and BP Energy.

"CEAC is one which definitely got the ball rolling," said Stephanie Bennett, a science teacher at the high school who is heavily involved in the program.

"It's so difficult to motivate people to try a different way of getting electricity," she said.

"Watching the students grow in confidence, and seeing their willingness to tackle hurdles, and stand up for issues is just so rewarding."

The award recognizes and celebrates the efforts of business and education working together to improve the quality of public education in the Calgary area. The Calgary Education Partnership Foundation supports the two school

divisions in the city, as well as four that surround it.

"We received a multitude of nominations for all the different categories," said Doug Clovechok, of the CEPF.

The Mayor's Excellence Awards are symbols of achievement that are presented to partnerships that stand as benchmarks by continuing to positively impact the education of children.

Business education partners prepare applications for awards which are categorized: Curriculum Support, School-To-Work Transition Programs, Small Business Programs, Advancement of Aboriginal Youth (Recognizes those businesses, organizations, or groups who have shown leadership and commitment toward the advancement of educational success for Aboriginal youth through school partnerships.), Literacy Support and Enhancement, Multi-sector Partnerships, Health and Well-being, Special Needs and Special Settings.