

## **Houston: Largest Solar Rooftop Project in Texas Public Schools**

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Solar electricity generation has a lot of proponents on the “green side” and a lot of skeptics on the “economics side,” at least today. But today isn’t tomorrow. The cost of solar power has continued to decline, and the Department of Energy’s Solar America Initiative hopes that as early as 2015 PV solar could become cost competitive. Houston happens to be one of the Solar America Cities. While many people have a growing awareness that Texas has by far the largest wind power generation capacity in the country, **it is less well known that Texas has the largest potential for solar power generation.**

When it comes to solar generation capacity, Texas falls severely behind for a multitude of reasons particularly with the lack of a targeted Renewable Portfolio Standard for solar. And, of course, natural gas and wind power are significant competitors in this state. So, **there is a delicate balancing act of preparing for the future while recognizing today’s economics.**

To try to figure out this balance, the GHP Energy Collaborative formed a solar task force initiative a couple of years ago led by Dr. Richard Haut from the Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC), and Dr. Alex Ignatiev from the University of Houston. Today, Mike Hansen and Pete Mathey from Ignite Solar are leading this effort. **It’s interesting that HARC and Ignite Solar teamed up with the Pasadena Independent School District (PISD) to develop the biggest solar school project in Texas that is now up and running.** There are three solar installations totaling approximately 145 kilowatts of energy at Sam Rayburn and South Houston High Schools.

If you haven’t seen all the great press coverage, check out this Fox video [http://www.myfoxboston.com/dpp/news/education/building\\_better\\_minds/110218-pasadena-students-learning-through-solar-panels](http://www.myfoxboston.com/dpp/news/education/building_better_minds/110218-pasadena-students-learning-through-solar-panels). **This is really a smart project that gets our youth, who will one day be our future energy leaders, to truly learn about this emerging technology.** Kudos goes to HARC, PISD, and Solar Ignite.