Gov. Beshear Announces ARRA Funding at Roby Elementary

On February 8, 2010, Governor Steve Beshear formally announced the partnership between the Department for Energy Development and Independence and KPPC – the Kentucky Pollution Prevention Center – that will expand KEEPS – the Kentucky Energy Efficiency Program for Schools. Funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) will give KEEPS a boost of more than $4 million from the U.S. Department of Energy that will help all Kentucky school districts to participate in the program.

The announcement took place at Roby Elementary School, a new facility in the Bullitt County Public School District. The district participated in the KEEPS pilot program, which began in 2006. According to Superintendent Keith Davis, the district has saved more than $500,000 in operating expenses thanks to the district’s energy-saving efforts. A geo-thermal heating system and energy-saving windows are among the school’s many energy efficient design features.

Davis, along with University of Louisville President, Dr. James Ramsey, KPPC Executive Director Cam Metcalf and the Roby Elementary Earth Team were also on hand for the announcement.

“Enrolling in KEEPS is an excellent way for our school districts to gain energy cost savings while also protecting the environment,” said Beshear. “These energy savings help schools save valuable funds and teach children the importance of energy conservation.”

KEEPS is designed to help achieve the goals of Beshear’s Intelligent Energy Choices for Kentucky’s Future: Kentucky’s 7-Point Energy Strategy, and will be part of the effort to meet 18 percent of Kentucky’s energy needs from efficiency improvements by 2025.

KEEPS Enrollment Reaches 100%; Outreach to Districts Begins

As of February 12, 2010, all of Kentucky’s school districts have enrolled in KEEPS. Now, the KEEPS team begins an aggressive outreach campaign to formally introduce KEEPS to all participants and to assess each district’s energy needs.

KEEPS Program Manager Fred Byrd said that while each district has different – sometimes even unique – energy management issues, all districts should realize sustainable success by following the ENERGY STAR® 7-Step Energy Management Process. This systems approach will help energy managers, facilities personnel and other energy management team representatives understand the benefits and learn the process of effective energy management.
Enrollment in KEEPS also requires each district to complete an Energy Management Program Survey. The survey provides information about energy consumption, costs and efficiency measures in order to track the progress and challenges facing the districts. A preview of the survey is available at www.kppc.org/KEEPS.

“Some districts have not completed the survey simply because some of the questions may be tough to answer,” said Byrd. “We don’t expect the districts to know everything right off the bat. We are here to facilitate the process – from enrollment all the way through each of the seven steps.”

In addition to the personal guidance offered by KEEPS staff, districts also have access to numerous Web-based energy management tools and receive notices about upcoming workshops, training and other events. These resources are also available on the KEEPS Web site.

“As KEEPS picks up momentum, our members can expect even more resources available in the near future,” said Byrd.

**KEEPS Status Report Now Available**

In accordance with House Bill 2, Section 16, KPPC has prepared a KEEPS Status Report for the Kentucky Legislative Research Commission and the Kentucky Department for Energy Development and Independence. This report serves as a summary of KEEPS activities and funding sources from July 1, 2008, to December 31, 2009.

The report highlights savings realized from KEEPS participants, current KEEPS enrollment and Energy Management Program Survey results, K-12 energy expenditures and how KEEPS works to address the rising cost of energy for Kentucky schools.

House Bill 2 requires that KPPC report the results of KEEPS initiatives by December 2011. However, KPPC Executive Director Cam Metcalf said that timely reporting is necessary in order for KEEPS stakeholders and members to fully understand the importance and ongoing impact of the program.

“We don’t just want to meet our expectations, we want to exceed them,” said Metcalf.

**School Board Members, Superintendents Learn About KEEPS**

More than 30 school board members, superintendents and trade association representatives attended a KEEPS workshop on January 22, 2010, as part of the Kentucky School Boards Association’s Annual Conference. The workshop featured background information about KEEPS and how the program can help school districts realize substantial cost savings through best energy management practices.
Bullitt County Public School District Superintendent Keith Davis presented information about how KEEPS helped his school district realize annual cost savings of more than $500,000. KPPC Executive Director Cam Metcalf, KEEPS Program Manager Fred Byrd and KEEPS Regional Manager Cindy Wohl talked about the ENERGY STAR® 7-Step Energy Management Process, offered guidance on how to develop an effective energy policy, and emphasized the importance of how leadership support ensures a successful energy management program.

Lee Colten, ENERGY STAR® program manager for the Department for Energy Development and Independence, discussed how Kentucky’s “high performance schools” continue to realize benefits from services provided by ENERGY STAR®, KEEPS, the Kentucky NEED (National Energy Education Development) Project, Kentucky Green & Healthy Schools and the Kentucky School Plant Management Association.

KEEPS was also among the many conference exhibitors and provided enrollment status to board members and superintendents that visited the booth.

Representatives from KEEPS will exhibit at the upcoming Kentucky High Performance Schools Workshop, which will take place March 23-24 in Lexington, Ky. For more information, log onto www.energy.ky.gov.

**State Legislators Acknowledge KEEPS at Green Caucus Press Conference**

On January 26, 2010, the Kentucky House voted to create a General Assembly Green Schools Caucus that will support healthy, environmentally friendly schools statewide. The Green Schools Caucus, created by the passage of House Resolution 24 (HR24), will encourage the construction of more “green schools” - energy efficient, water efficient, environmentally-sustainable schools designed to improve learning and save school districts money.

Prior to the formal vote, a press conference was held, where Kentucky State Reps. Rocky Adkins (D-Boyd, Elliott, Lawrence, Rowan), Mary Lou Marzian (D-Jefferson) and Jim DeCesare (R-Warren) voiced their support for HR24 and commended KEEPS, the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), the Kentucky NEED (National Energy Education Development) Project and the Kentucky Environmental Education Council for their ongoing efforts to offer cost-effective energy solutions to schools throughout Kentucky.

“We are grateful to Reps. DeCesare and Marzian for coming together to submit HR24 and for House Majority Leader Adkins for his early support,” said KY USGBC Executive Director Joan Pauly. “Today marks the continuation of the great work that’s already happened in Kentucky, much of it centered on House Bill 2 sponsored by Rep. Adkins.”

Sens. Alice Forgy Kerr (R-Fayette) and Julie Denton (R-Jefferson) filed Senate Resolution 90 to establish a Green Schools Caucus in the Senate immediately following the successful passage of HR24. The senate vote date is pending. For more information, log onto www.usgbckentucky.org.

**KEEPS Welcomes New Staff**

As momentum for KEEPS picks up, so does the program’s staff. KEEPS recently welcomed the addition of two new staff members.
Erika Wolfe, KEEPS Regional Coordinator: Erika provides assistance to school districts to further their progression in KEEPS. She develops information and tools to support the ENERGY STAR® 7-Step Energy Management Process and other KEEPS initiatives, provides training and outreach to KEEPS member districts and facilitates regional network meetings and events. Erika has worked in the energy/environmental sector for the past eight years. Her experience includes federal outreach with a Washington, D.C.-based non-profit organization, energy consulting in the private sector and research on environmental behaviors.

Chris Wooton, KEEPS Public Information Officer: Chris develops and distributes KEEPS marketing and communications materials, such as the KEEPS Moving Forward e-newsletter, annual reports as well as other hard copy and online promotional materials. He also serves as a liaison between media representatives and KEEPS personnel and assists with KEEPS-related training and awareness events. Chris brings more than 15 years of experience as a communications specialist to KPPC. Throughout his career, Chris has worked in internal/external communications, public/media relations, newspaper journalism, magazine editing, and publication design. This is Chris’ second tenure with KPPC - the first as the Center's Public Information Officer from 2003 to 2007.

**KEEPS Tip of the Month: Put a Policy in Place**

To establish an effective comprehensive energy management program, school districts need to make a commitment to continuous improvement. Such a commitment is best illustrated by instituting an energy policy. The policy formalizes the school board’s support and articulates the commitment to energy efficiency and should be communicated throughout the district – even to the students. Key components of an energy policy include:

1. State a clear and measurable objective that reflects the school district’s commitment.
2. Define roles and give authority to the energy management team to implement the policy.
3. Ensure continuous improvement by revising the policy when/how necessary.
4. Link energy performance goals to overall financial objectives.

Examples of effective energy policies are available under the “EMP 7 Steps” tab at [www.kppc.org/KEEPS](http://www.kppc.org/KEEPS).

**Training Opportunities**

KEEPS will be among the many exhibitors at this event, which will be held at the Embassy Suites in Lexington. School superintendents, board members, facilities managers, architects and engineers are encouraged to attend and learn more about how energy-savings strategies in building design can reduce operating costs and greenhouse gas emissions. Site visits to high performance schools will be part of each day’s program. Information and registration forms are posted on the Department for Energy Development and Independence’s Web site, [www.energy.ky.gov](http://www.energy.ky.gov).

The conference will include a trade show, five tracks of educational sessions, which include Energy Efficient
Sales/Marketing, Building Science and Technology for New Construction, Building Science and Technology for Existing Homes, Green Building and Diagnostic Techniques. For more information, log onto www.midwestenergyconference.com.