From the Program Manager: Keep Your Energy Team Dynamic

By Fred Byrd
KEEPS Program Manager

The school district energy team serves as the driving force behind district-wide energy management program initiatives. Even with a full understanding of the structure and function of the energy team, the level of the program’s success is largely determined by how well the team works together.

Choose Wisely
School district energy managers (or the person designated to lead energy program efforts) should assemble a team that represents all or at least most of the district’s key operating areas (information technology, facilities, food services, transportation, etc.) and is genuinely enthusiastic about helping the district reduce operating costs through best energy management practices. How much a school district takes ownership of its energy management program influences year-over-year energy and cost savings.

Sound Off
Energy team meetings are an opportunity to openly and honestly assess the energy management program’s success and evaluate progress toward identified goals. Maintain a high level of trust and respect for one another’s opinions and ideas. Ask your fellow team members (or even yourself) the tough questions. Use brainwriting exercises to identify the good ideas and throw out the bad ones. Bring your functional area’s energy concerns to the table and determine how the program as a whole meets the needs of each area.

Know the Rules; Share the Load
The energy team should operate like any other program in the school district. As such, the team must agree upon and follow certain administrative guidelines that set the standards for how the team functions. Taking meeting minutes, scheduling meeting times/locations and other administrative duties are just as important to the program’s success as the high-profile projects. Set a schedule that assigns those administrative tasks to different team members throughout the course of the year.
Follow Up: Follow Through

Each energy team meeting agenda should include a discussion about what needs to be accomplished before the next meeting. In many respects, the level of effort that goes into program initiatives between meetings is more important than the meetings themselves. This is where each team member's enthusiasm will pay off for the program's success.

See KEEPS Energy Management Toolkit 1B: Establish an Energy Team for more information.

Questions? Comments? Contact KEEPS.

Now Available: Recent KEEPS Webinar Recordings

This past spring and summer, KEEPS hosted a series of webinars that demonstrated how to use KEEPS resources and showcased successful Kentucky school district energy management programs as well as best energy management practices.

Recordings of KEEPS-sponsored webinars are available in the "Webinars" section of the KEEPS website.

Recent additions to the recorded webinars are:

- Using School Energy Competitions to Drive Energy Savings
- Energy Star Portfolio Manager: Benchmarking Kentucky's K-12 Schools

KEEPS will host more webinars in the near future. In the meantime, if you would like to suggest a topic for an upcoming webinar or if you have questions about past webinars, contact your KEEPS regional coordinator.

Bell County and Green County are Latest KEEPS Stewardship Award Winners

In October, Bell and Green County Public Schools were presented with the KEEPS Stewardship Award for completing all components of Step 1 of the Energy Star framework - Make the Commitment.
Kentucky Energy Department for Energy Development and Independence, the U.S. Department of Energy and KPPC.

KPPC is Kentucky’s primary resource to help businesses, industries and other organizations develop environmentally sustainable, cost-saving solutions for improved efficiency. Based at the University of Louisville J.B. Speed School of Engineering, KPPC provides technical information and assistance that is free, confidential and non-regulatory.

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ABOVE: The Bell County Public School District was presented with the KEEPS Stewardship Award at a special ceremony, which took place before the district board of education’s October 17 meeting.

BELOW: The Green County Public School District was presented with the Stewardship Award at the board of education’s October 24 meeting.

"I am very proud of this accolade for my Senate district as well as the innovation and group effort behind it," said Kentucky State Senator Brandon Smith, whose district includes Bell County.

To earn the Stewardship Award, both school districts passed a school board approved energy policy, established a district energy team to lead energy management program efforts, developed a communications plan to raise awareness about district-wide initiatives to save energy, became a partner in the U.S. EPA Energy Star program and established baseline and follow-up energy performance tracking standards for all facilities within the district.

"It is an honor to receive the award, but even more of a reward to reap the benefits of the practices put into place as a result of our energy management program," said Green County Superintendent Jim Frank. "I am grateful for the hard work and dedication of all the members of the team. The added bonus is seeing our students take home what they have learned and implement these (energy management) practices in their homes, which benefits the community as a whole."

Twelve Kentucky school districts have earned the KEEPS Stewardship Award to date. According to KEEPS Program Manager Fred Byrd, several applications are currently being reviewed for KEEPS Stewardship Awards as well as for KEEPS Champion and Leadership Awards.

Barren County High School's Green Team Visits
Landfill

Members of the Barren County High School's Green Team visited the Glasgow Regional Landfill on October 16 to learn about the process that goes into the disposal of the community's waste and the benefits of recycling.

"Standing at the edge of a huge mound of waste really shows how important recycling is for the future," said Calvin Penn, a senior at Barren County High School.

The Green Team is part of a district-wide initiative for Barren County Public Schools to raise awareness about environmental stewardship and energy efficiency throughout the school district and the community.

The Barren County Public School District is a recipient of the KEEPS Stewardship Award for its commitment to best energy management practices.

Glasgow Regional Landfill representatives Buck Houchens and Chris Blythe discussed the process of waste disposal and the benefits of recycling to the Barren County High School Green Team.

**KEEPS Kudos and Newsmakers**

**Kenton County School Receives Credit from Electric Company**

- nky.com

**Western Kentucky School Districts Participate in Annual "Plugged In Energy Week"**

- The Gleaner.com
- WEHT-TV

**New Energy Star Partners**

Greenup County Public Schools recently became an Energy Star Partner for its commitment to best energy
management practices.

Kentucky now has 122 K-12 Energy Star Partners and 110 K-12 Energy Star-labeled facilities.

Learn more about the benefits of becoming an Energy Star Partner with KEEPS Energy Management Toolkit 1D: Become an Energy Star Partner.

Events and Training Opportunities

Kentucky NEED Fall 2011 Energy Workshop
November 17
Elizabethtown, Kentucky

The Kentucky NEED Project is sponsoring this workshop for K-12 educators who are interested in learning more about NEED's multi-disciplinary energy education program. The workshop is free, and substitute reimbursement is provided. See the Kentucky NEED website for more information.

Energy Star Webinars
November 2011

Energy Star offers free, online, energy efficiency training for government and education organizations. Following are web-based training opportunities for November.

November 9 - Energy Star and Green Building Rating Systems
November 15 - IT Energy Savings for Non-techies
November 15 - Computer Power Management with Energy Star
November 16 - Purchasing and Procuring Efficient Equipment