



# Brick Township Green Schools NEWSLETTER 2 – 3/05

Thank you for your interest and participation in the Brick Township Green Schools Program and welcome to this second issue!

## Updates from the Mid-Year Meeting

*On Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>, Green Schools Team members from the participating seven schools met at Lake Riviera Middle School for the Mid-Year Meeting. The purpose of the day was to report on progress to date, identify challenges that need to be addressed, and plan for the balance of the school year. This issue of the newsletter focuses on the exciting developments to date, from preschool to high school.*

### Brick Primary Learning Center

Kindergarten students ages 5-6 years old, made **posters** of how their families save energy. The posters are being hung around the school with signs added like "Waste not, watt not." Pre-schoolers ages 3-5, are focusing on **recycling**, which was illustrated by collages of garbage vs. recycling containers.

Aluman the Can, a puppet video, and a variety of books are utilized to discuss recycling. All students have learned to interpret the numbers on the bottom of plastic containers. In April, the town's recycling truck and staff will visit the school. Students will separate the different recyclables and watch the truck dump them into its compartments. Teaching staff have enlisted the help of various students to be a part of the **Big Blue Recycling Crew**. Kindergarten students rotate taking turns to empty the recycling bins located in classrooms and other places throughout the school.



In accordance with State requirements, a number of refrigerators and microwaves in the school have been removed. **Green School Team members** have initiated turning off lights in vending machines. Lights in the teacher's room, hallways, gym, and nightlights in classrooms are turned off when not in use. Thermostats for the heat and air conditioner have been adjusted to conserve energy. Outside lights are on timers and the number of signs illuminated is being explored as another avenue for reduction of electrical use.

### Herbertsville Elementary School

The **Green Schools Team** has removed a number of fans, microwaves and coffee/tea pots, in accordance with State requirements, and turn off lights in the faculty room. Custodial staff adjust heat by computer. A notice to turn off the laminator when it's not in use has been posted. The school recycles paper, plastic, cardboard and copy paper.

**ENERGY STARS**

- ▲ The stars in your classrooms and on the doors are to remind you to shut off the lights when your class isn't in the classroom.
- ▲ You should also open and close the outside doors quickly to keep the heat in.
- ▲ Only open the outside doors when necessary.

The GSP has been presented to the school via an assembly and the participating 4<sup>th</sup> grade class distributes **Energy Stars** reminders to turn off lights, open and close outside doors quickly, and shut computers and monitors off at the end of the day. The **Green Schools lessons** have been helpful. Students made **draft meters** and reported drafts to maintenance who installed weather stripping. Students like the experiment in which they wrapped thermometers in different color construction paper to learn about colors and heat absorption and have made posters about energy use at home.

The Team has also tied the GSP directly into their **character education program**:

- **Caring** – caring kids save energy and turn out the lights when no one is in the room.
- **Respect** – respectful kids keep our school clean and they don't waste...
- **Responsible** – responsible kids only use energy when they need it...

Having studied about the benefits of deciduous trees and shading, they will plant this year's **Arbor Day** new tree in front of the principal's sunny window instead of in the rear of the school. Students have made a **slide show** and will revisit classrooms to show it. Since the air conditioners' are drafty, the Team may use money saved by the program to provide covers.

## Veterans Memorial Elementary School

The Green Schools Team's action plan includes a student-voted-on **mascot**, which adorns the front bulletin board; **voluntary participation** in the program, which has involved about half the teachers through science and technology; the completion of a **pre-assessment** (with comparative data); and the creation of **energy patrols** at 1<sup>st</sup>—3<sup>rd</sup> grade levels. The program was kicked off in Nov. with an **assembly**, and teachers are using the **GS lessons**. The heating system is a problem that requires capital expenditures to solve. The Team is looking into **grant opportunities** for alternative energy/solar



roofing, repair of heating system, preparation of air conditioners and science and technology research. In addition to the GS lessons, they used *The Magic School Bus: Get Energized* and an energy song. Second graders have created colorful **light switch plate reminders**, while third graders created **conservation posters** (energy squirrel vs. energy pig). The art teacher is having students make costumes and scenery for an April production of the **Energy Talks Play**, the music teacher is doing an Earth Day musical production, and the Team's tying the program into **character education**.

What has worked best: making the program optional for teachers to integrate into what they're already doing, having a building-wide theme, and linking it with character education, the wider community and environmental responsibility.

## Lake Riviera Middle School

Green Schools Team members have used several of the **GS lessons** with their own classes on all three grade levels, which is where the fall's activities have been focused. The Team plans to roll out the program to the wider school and community in the second half of the year. The Team has gotten **recycling containers** back, including by the copier, which has been moved to a cooler room. Heat distribution among rooms is also a problem. They've done a **school Energy Map**. The students who created the 3 best **posters** re. incandescent—CFL comparisons won CFLs. Students have calculated the cost of energy upgrades for the school. They've tied lessons into **greenhouse gases**. **The home appliance survey** showed that students have 1,200 appliances at home, while their parents had only 700 when they were youths. Students have created **board games** re. waste management, including specific information re. Brick. Each class will have a campaign and appointed **monitors** to turn out lights and computers, close windows, and promote paper recycling. They've had a **mascot and a slogan contest**, and students are apparently "taking it home," based on positive parental feedback. For science and persuasive writing, students have developed and aired **conservation commercials**, "**Be cool, save energy in school.**" Information from the GS lessons has been used to help an 8<sup>th</sup> grade special ed. class review for state tests. Since this class helps clean up the Lake area, they will compare inside conservation efforts with their impact on the out-of-doors. They have also researched **solar energy incentives** and observed houses in the neighborhood with PV systems.

## Veterans Memorial Middle School

The whole school is responding nicely to the program. Green Schools teachers are talking one-on-one with fellow teachers in their houses. The Green Schools Team collaborates 2 times/month. The school has the same problem with not being able to regulate heat very well. They've moved the copier from its original space in the faculty room because it was too small, became too hot, and the copier kept breaking down. After seeing one of the teachers (Senala Radonicic) on the **Mayor's cable TV show** being interviewed about the Green Schools Program, students from other grades approached her to discuss the program.

The team has selected a winning **Energy Mascot** drawing and is in the process of naming it. 6<sup>th</sup> graders are working on **light switch plate reminders** to turn off the lights. The light meter, the "best" instrument in the tool kit, made students realize one can *measure* light. **Energy Tips of the Week** are broadcast as a slide show on the school's TV show. Team teachers are modeling turning off the lights in their pods. Students performed and videotaped the **Energy Play**, which may get broadcast on the Brick cable station. They're getting ready to launch "**K.O.P.s**" – **Kids on Patrol**, and are looking forward to extending activities into the wider community. Students are taking energy conservation lessons home.



An idea for improving what's been done thus far: perhaps a school-wide competition for the Energy Mascot, getting each homeroom to select 1 finalist for the final competition, would have involved more people.

## Brick Township High School

The Green Schools Team is working with a small but enthusiastic core of 8 students in a **data collecting strategy**. This core and one class have counted: 311 computers, 2,082 40W light bulbs, 77 300W light bulbs, 3 drinking machines, 2 food vending machines, 16 microwaves and 18 refrigerators. Students used the watt meters with some of these items as well. They have roughly calculated that the lights cost \$70/day x 180 days = \$12,000/year, and have discovered computers use 100+ watts and vending machines and refrigerators are very expensive to operate. They will develop a report and a plan of action based on their research.

Another class has made a large **energy map** of the school and is color coding energy problem areas. Excessive heat in classrooms (98 – 100°) is a problem compounded by no thermostats, so people open windows to moderate the temperature. Rooms can become 55° when windows are left open.

## Brick Memorial High School

The plan to work with a **new environmental science club** has been slow to start because they have just recently located a person to be the club's founder. A small core of students in science classes have indicated an interest in the club. Teachers have started data collection and enlisted some students to conduct an **after school survey** of 20 rooms, which found: 80% left BMHS TV channel on; the channel's white primary background color draws more energy than darker colors; 90% of monitors were left on. A major challenge in getting teachers to turn computers off overnight involves the fact that the computers are old, take time to "warm up" and teachers log-on in the AM on these computers. Another challenge will be the practice of turning on classroom air conditioners to cool overheated rooms. The two high school teams made plans to collaborate more with each other in the upcoming months.

**For next issue: How have you used the Green Schools Tool Kit? Please let us know!**