



KGHS Update

Winter, 2010

Featured Schools

- Morgan County School District
- Montessori Middle School of Kentucky

News

- Taskforce writes Environmental Literacy Plan for Kentucky
- Elizabeth Schmitz Appointed as New KEEC Director

Announcements & Events

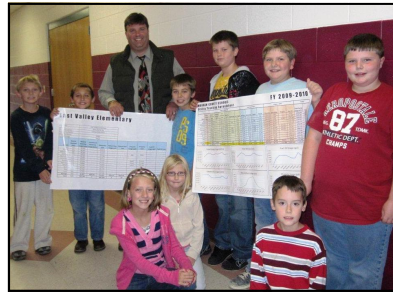
- Energy Saving Grants
- KGHS Joins Energy Star as a Pledge Driver
- New School Profile System
- Summit Information
- 2011 Nonformal Environmental Education Certification

Morgan County School District

The Morgan County School district has become the first in Kentucky to have 100% of its schools pledge participation in KGHS. By including students, district and school staff, and the local community in their Green Team, the 6 schools are making big strides toward their goals of increased energy efficiency and sustainability.

Frances Gulley, the Green Team leader and gifted and talented teacher for the district, Linda Rose, a PRIDE liaison, and Lisa Hoskins, an Ameri-corp employee, are working with 4th and 5th grade students from the 4 elementary schools.

The students are in the process of completing KGHS inventories and projects in both the solid waste and energy categories. "Our elementary students approach our custodians with clipboard and pencils in hand to get answers for the energy inventories," said Gulley. "They are learning math skills by calculating the cost of energy per stu-



East Valley Elementary students and Principal Tommy Potter with energy usage charts.

dent based on the answers they get." The students and staff have also started a recycling program in each of the elementary schools.

While the elementary students have focused on recycling and gathering information about energy usage in the schools, the school and district staff have begun work on energy efficiency improvements. Darren Sparkman, the facilities director for the district, has created a friendly competition between the 6 schools to encourage energy savings by posting energy usage charts in each school.

Even the school board office is participating—each light switch in the building has been labeled with an employee's name, and it is that employee's responsibility to ensure lights are turned off in rooms that are not being used.

By including individuals with many different roles within the schools, the district has formed a highly effective team and has created cost-saving behavior change in both students and staff.



Ezel Elementary students learning about thermostats from custodian Jerry Goodpaster.

Work began with the elementary schools, but "We plan to keep going, and to start working on KGHS inventories with the middle and high school soon," Gulley said of the district's future plans.

Montessori Middle School of KY



MMSK students planting cold weather crops in the school's raised beds.

Students at the Montessori Middle School of Kentucky have started off the 2010-2011 school year by studying sustainable living. In doing so, they have completed both the water and indoor air quality inventories this year, and have reviewed their previously completed energy, transportation and green spaces inventories.

The students have initiated a number of projects in the water and green spaces categories,

moving them closer toward their goal of reaching Official Green and Healthy School status.

For the water category, students have designed a rainwater collection system and have applied for a KGHS grant to fund the project. The collected water will be used (instead of treated water) to irrigate the outdoor classroom area. Students have also installed a rain gauge in preparation for a spring semester

(Continued on next page)

Continued: Montessori Middle School



MMSK students cleaning the chicken tractor (mobile chicken coop).

Stream and Aquatic Life Study. The focus of this study will be to structurally improve the stream that bisects the school property.

The school has been recommended to receive an LFUCG grant to pay for the construction and monitoring of this project.

In the green spaces category, the students have established a system of monitoring and providing



Student watering plants in the outdoor classroom.

care for the school chickens on weekends and during vacations. Students and staff plan to begin using the eggs from the chickens as soon as they start producing.

The work doesn't stop there. In the school garden area, plans have been made to start an asparagus garden. The students are pictured (page 1) planting other cold weather crops in the school's raised beds.

Kentucky Environmental Literacy Plan (KELP)



Stakeholders work on the KELP.

A Task Force appointed by [Kentucky Department of Education](#) Commissioner Terry Holliday is developing an Environmental Literacy Plan for Kentucky (KELP). In partnerships with KDE, the [Kentucky Environmental Education Council](#) and several other environmental education organizations are drafting the plan. The working group intends to present a draft of Kentucky's Environmental Literacy Plan to the full Task Force by early Summer, 2011.

When the Environmental Literacy Plan is complete, the Kentucky Department of Education will become eligible to apply for funding that is expected to be made available through the [No Child Left Inside Act](#) (NCLI). NCLI is a proposed amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. If passed, the act would provide funding for teacher professional development in environmental education.

The Environmental Literacy Plan will outline how Kentucky will ensure that all citizens will have an understanding of environmental information, concepts, and processes.

The working group has also created the [Kentucky Environmental Literacy Alliance \(KELA\)](#), a coalition that businesses, individuals, and organizations can join to show their support for expanding environmental literacy in Kentucky.

The KELP working group is soliciting feedback from teachers and school administrators.

The information gained from the surveys below will help the KELP working group create a more effective plan.

To take the surveys, simply click on the links.

[Teacher Survey](#)

[School Administrator Survey](#)

New KEEC Executive Director



Elizabeth Schmitz, new KEEC Executive Director.

KGHS is pleased to announce that its parent agency, the [Kentucky Environmental Education Council \(KEEC\)](#), has a new Executive Director. Elizabeth Schmitz was appointed in September 2010 after Jane Eller (Director of the agency for 16 years) retired.

Elizabeth has 10 years of experience as a non-formal environmental educator. Previous to taking her new position at KEEC, she served first as an Environmental Education Specialist, then as an Internal Policy

Analyst III for the Kentucky Division for Air Quality. Elizabeth also served on the Kentucky Association for Environmental Education's Board of Directors for four years and is a past-president of KAEE.

"I'm looking forward to helping teachers, administrators and families get children outside to learn and play, a strategy shown to increase student engagement and creative problem solving skills," Elizabeth said. "The environment is an engaging context for learning because

children can relate best to what they are familiar with, to what they can find in their own schoolyards," she said.

KEEC, located within the education cabinet, provides environmental education resources to Kentucky citizens, teachers, organization and businesses. The agency produces several [publications](#), including a Master Plan for Environmental Education, research on Kentuckians' environmental literacy, and lesson plans that are free to download.

Announcements & Events

\$800 Grants for Energy Saving Projects

Non-competitive grants will be available until Spring of 2012. Act now to fund your school's project! For more information, [click here](#). Eligible projects are not limited to the energy category. To date, KGHS has funded materials such as CFL bulbs, bike racks, composters, and rain barrels.

Take the Energy Star Pledge with KGHS!

KGHS is now an Energy Star pledge driver. If you would



like to sign the pledge, visit [KGHS Energy Star Pledge](#). If you would like free resources to help you hold a pledge event at your school, [click here](#). Through our Energy Saving Grant program, KGHS can provide you with materials to support your efforts.

Online School Profile System

KGHS will soon begin using an online school profile system. Green team leaders will be assigned a username and password that can be used to log in to a personalized school profile. On the profile, users will be able to check their school's award status and the status of all submissions and documents. When this system goes live, all KGHS participants will receive a notification email with instructions on how to access the system. For now, all forms should be submitted by contacting the [KGHS coordinator](#).

Save the Date!

The 2011 KGHS Summit will be held on **May 18**, at the Frankfort Convention Center in Frankfort, KY. All schools registered with the program are invited to attend.

The deadline for submissions to be counted toward this year's awards is **April 8, 2011**.

Limited travel reimbursements will be available to schools located more than 50 miles away from Frankfort. To reserve yours, contact the [KGHS Coordinator](#).

2011 Nonformal Environmental Education Certification

KEEC is now accepting applications for the 2011 EE certification course which is taught by highly qualified environmental educators. If interested, please visit [Certification](#).

For an updated list of announcements, visit the [KGHS website](#).



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Kentucky Green & Healthy Schools (KGHS) is a service learning and student-centered program that empowers students and staff to move their school toward becoming safer, healthier, and more environmentally sustainable. This inquiry-based program uses the entire school grounds as a learning laboratory for students. All grade levels of all existing (and even schools in the process of being built) are invited to join KGHS! To participate, [click here](#).

KGHS is a joint program of the Kentucky Department of Education and the [Kentucky Environmental Education Council](#).



**Kentucky Environmental
Education Council**

[Click here](#) to sign up for this seasonal newsletter.

Would you like to see your school featured in the KGHS Update? Contact the KGHS coordinator by [clicking here](#).