

**Education and Workforce Development Cabinet**

# **Students can make schools green and healthy by receiving \$800 grant**

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## **ARRA funds expand Kentucky Green & Healthy Schools energy grant program**

FRANKFORT, Ky. – The Kentucky Green and Healthy Schools (KGHS) program is offering \$800 grants to K-12 schools completing student-led energy efficiency projects.

“By encouraging students to explore and recommend energy efficiency measures, these grants will provide a wonderful learning experience,” said First Lady Jane Beshear. “I applaud this program’s efforts to engage students in making their own environments more energy efficient. This program will allow them to better appreciate the need to decrease Kentucky’s energy dependence.”

The grants must be used to purchase materials that will save energy or improve energy efficiency at school facilities, but may also include projects that reduce school waste, conserve water or plant trees. The grant program was made possible by an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) stimulus grant awarded to the Kentucky Environmental Education Council (KEEC), which administers the KGHS program.

“We are thrilled to offer these grants to schools,” said Elizabeth Schmitz, KEEC executive director. “The grants not only save energy and improve sustainability at Kentucky schools, but they also help

students understand the issues surrounding energy use and conservation.”

Students will use the inquiry-based program to investigate various topics on their campus, such as water and energy usage, and then work with their teacher to design a school improvement project that is paid for with the grant. Examples of previously awarded projects include compact fluorescent light bulb pledge campaigns coupled with bulb giveaways; and the purchase of items such as bike racks, vending machine misers, recycling bins, rain barrels and composting containers.

To streamline the program, all grant purchasing is completed by the KGHS program and materials are then shipped to the applicant school.

“The program was designed to be as simple as possible, with busy teachers in mind,” said Merin Roseman, KGHS coordinator. “Any school registered in the Green Schools program is eligible to apply, and enrolling in the program is as simple as signing a pledge form available on the web.”

Since the beginning of the program in the fall of 2009, 17 grants have been awarded to Kentucky schools, totaling more than \$7,000. To increase the viability of the program, the grant amount was recently increased from \$250 to \$800. The grants will be available until the spring of 2012 or until funding is exhausted.

Schools may apply for multiple grants but must complete reporting requirements before moving on to additional projects. For more information, visit the KGHS website at [www.greenschools.ky.gov](http://www.greenschools.ky.gov).

The Kentucky Environmental Education Council and the Kentucky Department of Education jointly sponsor KGHS. Both are agencies in the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet.

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