

Education and Workforce Development Cabinet
Kentucky Green & Healthy Schools
Program recognizes students,
schools and outstanding
leadership at summit, awards
ceremony

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FRANKFORT, Ky. – More than 200 students and teachers buzzed with excitement as they set up exhibits showcasing their environmental projects at the Frankfort Convention Center on May 2 for the Kentucky Green & Healthy Schools (KGHS) and Kentucky National Energy Education Development (NEED) Project Youth Summit and Awards luncheon.

“My students and I can hardly wait to see the different ideas and projects completed by students across Kentucky,” said Darleen Horton, the environmental magnet coordinator at Cane Run Elementary in Jefferson County. “Engaging our students in real-world problem solving at our school makes learning fun, while building teamwork and critical thinking skills.”

Kentucky First Lady Jane Beshear said, “With all of our school districts facing budget cuts, every penny matters. I am impressed at the initiative shown by so many students and teachers. Through their efforts, many districts have saved enough money on energy costs to purchase new textbooks or keep a teacher in the classroom.

“As an added benefit, we are preparing our students to tackle the energy conservation and sustainability challenges of not only today, but also those of tomorrow,” she said.

Representatives from 30 schools attended the fifth annual event which recognizes student participation in the KGHS program and the Kentucky NEED Project.

In his keynote address, Energy and Environment Cabinet Secretary Len Peters said, “It is essential that schools equip students with the knowledge and skills to be environmentally literate citizens, now and in their adult lives. The skills gained through these programs are crucial in preparing our students to be college and career ready.”

The KGHS program continues to grow, with 244 schools enrolled to date. Participants implement environmental health and sustainability projects at their schools in nine categories: energy, indoor air quality, green spaces, hazardous chemicals, water, health and nutrition, transportation, solid waste, and instructional leadership.

Fourteen of the 57 schools that received KGHS awards for their work this school year attended the summit and were recognized for their achievements in the program. A complete list of award recipients can be found on the program <http://www.greenschools.ky.gov/status/>.

At the event, John F. Kennedy Montessori received the Kentucky Green & Healthy Schools flag for completing nine sustainability improvement projects. Farnsley and West Carter middle schools along with the Harlow Early Learning Center were awarded School in Progress plaques for completing projects in three categories. Another 10 schools received certificates for joining KGHS and completing initial student team work in KGHS.

Additionally, the Paris Independent and Clinton County school districts received District-Wide Participation awards for achieving 100 percent enrollment in the KGHS program. KGHS staff also presented Outstanding Leadership Awards to Energy Manager Bill Gittings and Energy Education Curriculum Coordinator Andrea Curtis, both of the Green River Regional Education Cooperative, and Fayette County Sustainability Coordinator Tresine Logsdon. Although they were not able to attend, Clinton County School District Superintendent Mickey McFall and Grayson County School District Facilities Director Glendel Carroll were also recognized at the event for their outstanding leadership.

“I am pleased to announce that 50 new schools enrolled in KGHS this year. Many of these new schools, as well as others already enrolled in the program, received grants made available via funding from the Kentucky Department of Energy Development and Independence. The grant funding has expired, but because of it we were able to fund 58 energy-saving projects at Kentucky schools,” said Elizabeth Schmitz, executive director of the Kentucky Environmental Education Council, which houses the KGHS program.

The Kentucky Environmental Education Council is an agency in the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. For more information about KGHS, visit <http://www.greenschools.ky.gov> or call 1-800-882-5271.