

Kentfield School District, Kentfield, California

District Eliminates Electricity Costs

In 2005 the Kentfield School District— consisting of Bacich Elementary School (K-4) and Kent Middle School (5-8)— became the first public school district in California to be 100% solar powered.

The solar systems provide enough power to eliminate the electricity costs at both schools, and have been operating maintenance free for over four years. Each year the systems have been operating, they have saved the district \$95,000 in avoided electricity costs.

Recently, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Green Power Partnership recognized Kentfield School District (KSD) for its solar photovoltaic (PV) electric generating system. Schools across the nation were honored for generating power from renewable resources such as solar, wind, geothermal, biomass, biogas and low-impact hydropower.

According to the EPA, Kentfield schools are among the top 20 in the United States when it comes to renewable power generation.



Kids at Bacich Elementary School (shown above) participate in a program called Cool the Earth, which teaches students about environmental consciousness.

District Snapshot

Kentfield School District includes two schools, Bacich Elementary and Kent Middle School, that focus on energy efficiency and green energy use

Green Actions

- Installed a solar photovoltaic (PV) system
- Utilizes solar power for the entire district
- Generates enough power to eliminate electricity costs at both schools
- Produces 462,903 kilowatt-hours of electricity a year
- Implemented nonprofit Cool the Earth program

Cost of Solar Installation

- \$628,000

Estimated Yearly

- Cost Savings: \$95,000 from solar panels
- Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions: 154 metric tons of CO₂



"Since going green and implementing the Cool the Earth program, our students, staff and school families have an increased awareness and appreciation for the Earth and our environment.

—Sally Peck,
Bacich Elementary School Principal,
Kentfield, California



What Actions Did Kentfield School District Take to Engage Students?

In addition to greening its own facilities, Kentfield School District (KSD) extends its environmental commitment to students and families through the nonprofit Cool the Earth program. Cool the Earth is a grassroots, school-to-home program founded in 2007 by KSD parents Carleen and Jeff Cullen. The program launches with a school-wide assembly featuring an original, age-appropriate play to educate children about global warming. Students then go home with a coupon book that lists 20 no-or-low-cost energy efficient actions. To ensure that these environmental practices become part of participant's everyday living, the families and children aged 5-13 commit to taking actions over the entire school year. The coupons are completed and sent back to school, where they are tallied, tracked and displayed on a tracking banner to the entire school community.

How Does Cool the Earth Work in the Kentfield School District?

First launched at Bacich Elementary, the Cool the Earth program helps children understand the issues of global climate change and empowers them to take energy-saving actions at home with their families. Because children are such strong catalysts for social change, the program has had wonderful results in the Kentfield School District and is now running in more than 100 schools in the United States.

How Did Cool the Earth Help the Kentfield School District?

Through the Cool the Earth program, the Kentfield School District (KSD) community has taken more than 3,500 actions to reduce global warming and avoided the emission of 1,400 tons of carbon dioxide into the environment—the equivalent of the annual emissions from 240 cars.

Kentfield School District has taken the initiative by becoming one of the most green school districts in the United States. Their commitment to the environment is evident in their goal to teach all students about climate change.

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Photo Credit: Cool the Earth

Carleen Cullen (shown above) of Cool the Earth helped Kentfield School District save a total of 1,400 tons of carbon dioxide.



Photo Credit: Cool the Earth

Kids in the Kentfield School District learn firsthand about solar energy and issues surrounding climate change.

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