

Let's Save Energy



School Energy Managers Project



June 2014

Energy Manager – Full-Time OR Added Responsibility?

Who is the Jill of your district?

Jill Carnahan has worked with Clay County Schools for twenty-five years. She was the high school math teacher for twenty-one years, but after ten years assumed the additional responsibilities of coordinating the Local Educator Assignment Data (LEAD) and Highly Qualified (NCLB) data collection processes.

Four years ago things changed. Instead of teaching as her main responsibility, she became the District Technology Coordinator. Over time, she was also assigned to be the Substitute Teacher Coordinator. In 2013, another responsibility was assigned – Jill was now the Clay County Energy Manager.

Clay County Schools participated in the original SEMP grant and realized cost avoided savings totaling \$150,000. As other grant opportunities came, they decided to assign Jill, an existing district administrator, to be responsible for energy management AND receive available funding from KSBA-SEMP. They recognized the KU/LGE funding as a bonus to support what they were required to do under *KRS 160.325*.

"Initially my biggest challenge was the lack of knowledge in energy management," said Jill. "Btu's and kWh's were not in my daily vocabulary, but with the training and support from KSBA's SEMP staff, I can honestly say that I have learned so much and have developed a new passion and appreciation for conservation, reducing carbon footprints, reducing consumption, and reducing district operating costs."

Another challenge Jill describes is the challenge it takes to manage time for all her different jobs. "Being DTC actually takes priority over every other job I do, but I find ways to manage our obligations under our energy management grant."

There are certain skills critical for an energy manager (see box to left), one is being profi-



Clay County Energy Manager Jill Carnahan juggles many roles in her district. Shown with AP Environmental Science Teacher Tabitha Owens, Jill is reviewing "Green Tips" which are provided to implement at school and at home. Jill believes if they conserve at home, they will be more aware of opportunities at school

cient in EXCEL. Being a math teacher and technology coordinator, Jill felt comfortable with using EXCEL, but adds, "the formulas in the templates provided, and the shortcuts SEMP staff demonstrated, added greatly to my ability to be efficient not only my responsibilities in energy management, but also for other responsibilities."

Changes in energy regulations are forcing school districts to review and implement business strategies to use energy more efficiently. **Those districts that have been able to make culture changes and implement energy conservation measures have benefitted financially from this change.** The common thread of success with this change has been having an energy manager to identify opportunities and to track and analyze data. Whether full-time OR an added responsibility, it is critical for districts to have someone in the role as energy manager.

WHO IS THE JILL OF YOUR DISTRICT?

Energy Manager Critical Skills

◆ Proficiency in Excel

- ◇ Track utilities
- ◇ Generate reports for Board & Administration
- ◇ Cost/benefit analysis

◆ Proficiency in PowerPoint

- ◇ Generate presentations for Board, Administration, Staff, and Students

◆ Ability to communicate with stakeholders

- ◇ Translate energy best practices into district financial rewards

◆ Basics of Energy Management

- ◇ Understanding of utility rate application and bill calculation
- ◇ Ability to translate Best Practices into actions
- ◇ Problem analysis and solution
- ◇ Life cycle analysis

SEMP Partnering with Kentucky Association of Manufacturers for May professional development

One service provided by SEMP is professional development in energy management. Each year two multi-day sessions are held for grant funded energy managers. Regional sessions are also held throughout Kentucky as well as webinars for all school energy management personnel .

Recognizing the similarities in employee development, a partnership was formed with the Kentucky Association for Manufacturers (KAM) to participate in their 2014 Energy Conference. The SEMP staff was part of KAM's conference planning committee throughout the past year, as well as having responsibility for specific breakout sessions for school energy managers.

The specific breakout session for SEMP included as it's learning objectives:

- Life-Cycle costing
- Paying off high efficiency replacement equipment with energy savings
- Critical business conversations of justification of energy investments

This training was described by school energy managers as one of the most beneficial conferences because of the depth of the

subjects presented from a national and state perspective. According to SEMP Director Ron Willhite, "Participation in the robust dialogue between national and state experts, energy providers, and manufacturing and commercial users established a greater depth of knowledge for the school energy managers. We are very appreciative of this opportunity provided by KAM and look forward to continuing this partnership into the future!"



Kentucky School Energy Managers participated in breakout sessions with energy professionals from various businesses throughout Kentucky. Hearing from state, as well as national leaders in the energy industry provided a greater understanding of issues that schools are experiencing.