



Department of Facilities Management
School Energy & Recycling Team (SERT)
Strategic Plan
FY 2015 to FY 2020
(Updated September 2014)

MISSION STATEMENT

The School Energy and Recycling Team (SERT) provides support to significantly reduce energy and natural resource consumption and increase recycling participation systemwide through:

- Sustainability training and education
 - Incentives, recognition, and awards
 - Accessible energy and recycling data
 - Customized energy and environmental conservation programs and learning opportunities
 - Conservation operations and procedures
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MOTTO

“It’s your world...choose to conserve”

VISION STATEMENT

To be a global model of sustainability by actively engaging in innovative energy and environmental programs

CUSTOMERS

- Students
 - Principals/school staff
 - School system executive staff
 - Non-school based MCPS employees
 - Community user groups and tenants of MCPS facilities
 - Parents/guardians and community leadership team
 - Board of Education and County Council, County Executives
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PARTNERS

- Other MCPS departments, divisions, and units
- State agencies (i.e., MDE, MEA, etc.)
- Federal agencies (i.e., DOE, EPA, OSHA, etc.)
- Local government agencies (ie., DEP, CUPF/ICB, etc.)
- Utilities and public service agencies (i.e., Pepco, Washington Gas, WSSC, etc.)
- Vendors/contractors/suppliers/associations (i.e., Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE), Green Kids, Potomac Disposal, Inc., etc.)



VALUES

Learning

We believe that our program is focused on engaging students, staff and the community to foster a lifelong commitment to environmental sustainability and conserving natural resources.

Therefore, we are committed to promoting, raising awareness, sharing resources and providing learning opportunities towards achieving a balanced environmentally sustainable future.

Relationships

We believe that collaboration by building relationships and partnerships is vital and the key to achieving a successful systemwide conservation program.

Therefore, we will seek to understand and commit to building professional relationships with our customers, partners and stakeholders to provide the necessary resources to achieve program objectives.

Respect

We believe that respect for all opinions and individuals is the foundation to building strong relationships and adds value to the success of the SERT program.

Therefore, we will respect all contributions, provide good will, act professionally, listen actively, and welcome open communication with our customers, partners and stakeholders realizing that collectively we can achieve more.

Excellence

We believe that setting, maintaining, providing high standards and exceptional customer service is essential to our success.

Therefore, we will actively model exemplary behavior, embrace new ideas and perspectives, adhere to the highest ethical standards and provide exceptional customer service.

Equity

We believe that conservation and environmental sustainability is equally important to all regardless of racial, cultural and ethnic diversity that is represented in MCPS.

Therefore, we will embrace the diversity of the SERT program staff, MCPS staff, students, partners and stakeholders and leverage upon the wealth of experiences to effectively implement the conservation initiatives and celebrate that diversity through our posters, presentations and activities.



STRENGTHS

- Comprehensive MCPS Environmental Sustainability Management Plan (ESMP)
 - Commitment to continuous improvement and process management
 - Commitment to exceptional customer service: “Let us know what you need to succeed.”
 - Innovative, visionary team with entrepreneurial spirit
 - Strong focus on results, processes, and relationships
 - Integration of creativity, new technology and social media
 - Increase the level of commitment/collaboration of program objectives
 - Leverage institutional and historical knowledge for advancement
 - Diversity in SERT staff and expertise
 - Established systemwide SERT program
 - Increase number of MAEOE and Green Ribbon Schools
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WEAKNESSES

- Limitations to influence school based programs – competing agendas
 - Commitment to too many initiatives
 - Missed opportunities – increased workload without staffing increase
 - Lack of resources and authority resolve issues
 - Misperception of SERT’s mission
 - Lack of understanding of intra-department processes
 - Changing utilities costs
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OPPORTUNITIES

- Increasing energy costs improve the payback of many emerging energy efficient technologies.
- With the increase in environmental awareness we have more opportunities to collaborate about the impact of energy and conservation with these groups.
- Federal, state, and local government environmental policies increase the credibility of SERT’s mission.
- Promoting active recycling in the schools provides SERT with opportunities to increase recycling rates systemwide.
- SERT incentives provide schools with additional funds.
- Provides facilitators with opportunities to promote the program to principals.
- SERT continues to build goodwill with customer, partners and stakeholders.
- Facility issues provide SERT with opportunities to make connections, to resolve problems, and to build relationships.



THREATS

- Aging system-wide HVAC/facility issues prevent energy savings
 - Increasing community use of schools increases energy and recycling needs
 - Lack of guidelines, regulations, and policies that support energy conservation and recycling
 - Lack of consistent buy-in and staff turnover at schools limits the potential energy savings
 - Control of our own success is weighted heavily on outside participation
 - Limited ability to control outside influences
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CORE COMPETENCIES

- Skilled team of professionals with diverse resource conservation expertise
 - Well balanced team with marketing, technical and communications skills
 - Seven core competencies of the SSPGS
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STRATEGIC ISSUES

1. Collaboration—How to effectively collaborate and communicate to achieve objectives?
 2. New ideas—How to implement new ideas with limited resources?
 3. Competing agendas—How to align the SERT program with school system needs and objectives?
 4. Financial incentives—How to continue to increase energy savings to support financial incentives to schools?
 5. Energy and recycling data—How to improve the integrity and timely availability of data to schools?
 6. Sustainability—How to increase the participation and commitment to sustainability?
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ASSUMPTIONS

- Continue to pursue opportunities in resource conservation
 - Continued uncertainty and volatility in the price of energy and natural resources
 - Sustainability continues to be a focus for MCPS
 - Increase demand for utilities
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STRATEGIC GOALS

1. Increase efficiency by streamlining processes and communicating improvements to customers, partners and stakeholders. (SI 1-6)
2. Continue to exploit existing communication channels to increase program presence and to promote sustainability. (SI 1-6)
3. Continue efforts to provide more accurate, timely data and resources to customers, partners and stakeholders to reflect progress in meeting program objectives. (SI 1, 5, 6)
4. Increase energy savings and recycling rates. (SI 1-6)



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5. Consistently represent the connection between energy and recycling data and with human behavior at the schools. (SI 1-6)
6. Increase the number of schools to achieve external green recognition. (SI 3, 6)

STRATEGIES

1. Implement an ongoing process improvement plan with routine review schedule. (SG 1, 4)
2. Implement a public relations program through existing MCPS communication channels and continue exploring new means of communication. (SG 2, 4, 5, 6)
3. Implement a comprehensive data program that provides timely performance feedback to customers. (SG 1-5)
4. Focus and align SERT activities to emphasize the connections between customer behavior and performance. (SG 3, 4, 5, 6)
5. Proactively seeking and pursuing new and innovative opportunities (people, technology, etc.) to improve energy and recycling efficiency. (SG 3, 4, 5)

SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES

1. Achieve a 13 percent reduction in energy consumption against baseline for all performance schools by June 2020.
2. 50 percent of MCPS schools will achieve MAEOE certification by 2024.
3. Review four processes for improvement and program efficiency each year.
4. Publish monthly SERT flashes and/or e-newsletters.
5. Publish quarterly energy reports/awards.
6. Publish monthly recycling and solid waste tonnage reports.
7. Conduct quarterly school visits.
8. Three annual contests.
9. Minimum of 75 school meetings/outreach events.
10. Ten principal visits per depot annually.