



SERT Spotlight

NOVEMBER 2017



In 1997, **AMERICA RECYCLES DAY** was introduced to the American public and November 15 was selected for observance. Although conscientious citizens recycle wisely every day, celebrations and activities are held each November 15 to raise awareness about the importance of recycling. Thousands of events are held across the country in connection with the [Keep America Beautiful](#) nonprofit organization. [Presidential proclamations](#) are often released encouraging Americans to make personal pledges to commit to recycling and buying products made from recycled materials. Visit www.AmericaRecyclesDay.org to register, organize, or attend an event, pledge to #BeRecycled, and get more information about America Recycles Day. If you want to learn more about what you can and can't recycle in MCPS, click [here](#). 🌱

IN THIS ISSUE:

SUCCESS STORIES

Does your school have an amazing SERT team? Is your school's name sitting at the top of the energy and/or recycling data charts each month? If so, we'd like to spotlight your success story. Send your photos with captions and a paragraph or two about what you're doing to SERT@mcpsmd.org and help inspire other schools to do well!

E ENERGY AWARDS

Find out which 63 schools saved enough energy during the final quarter of last school year to earn an award!

R RECYCLE MORE

When it comes to recycling numbers, what can be done to close the gap between the high-performing schools and those that don't make the cut? Take note of these tips and techniques to make the most of your recycling.

T THANKSGIVING BREAK

With school starting after Labor Day this year, we're about to experience our first official long weekend shutdown opportunity of the school year! Please remember to power down properly and submit your [shutdown form](#).



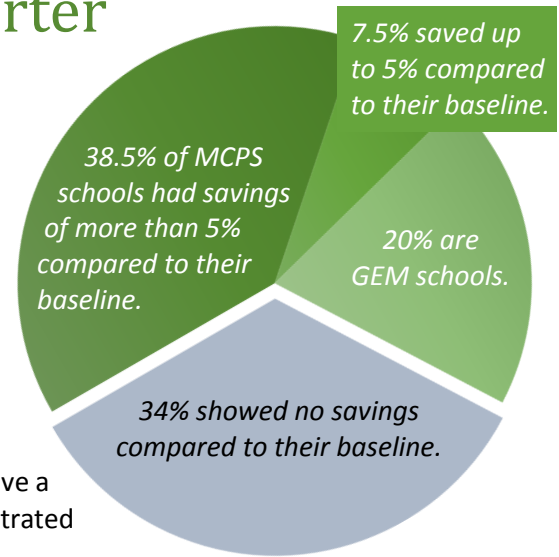
Energy Awards for the Fourth Quarter

SERT IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE that our schools made significant efforts to save energy during the last quarter (June–August) of the 2016–2017 academic year.

During these challenging budgetary times, any avoidable operating costs will have a positive impact on our educational initiatives. MCPS was able to achieve \$175,923 in energy cost avoidance during the fourth quarter.

Schools achieving top energy cost avoidance as compared to their baseline usage are eligible to receive quarterly monetary awards. The baseline for each school is an average use of their prior five school years for the same quarter. Schools without an established baseline are eligible to receive a monetary Great Energy Management (GEM) award which is based on demonstrated active participation in the SERT program and energy efficient behavior.

We applaud all of our students and staff for their commitment to conservation and sustainability and congratulate the 63 schools listed below. If your school hasn't earned an award, contact SERT to explore ways to save energy at your school.



AWARD-WINNING SCHOOLS

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Lucy V. Barnsley Elementary School | Stephen Knolls School | Argyle Middle School |
| Belmont Elementary School | Lake Seneca Elementary School | John T. Baker Middle School |
| Brooke Grove Elementary School | Little Bennett Elementary School | Forest Oak Middle School |
| Brown Station Elementary School | Matsunaga Elementary School | Robert Frost Middle School |
| Burning Tree Elementary School | Meadow Hall Elementary School | Francis Scott Key Middle School |
| Chevy Chase Elementary School | Monocacy Elementary School | Dr. Martin Luther King Middle School |
| Clearspring Elementary School | New Hampshire Est. Elementary School | Col. E. Brooke Lee Middle School |
| Cloverly Elementary School | Oakland Terrace Elementary School | Montgomery Village Middle School |
| Cold Spring Elementary School | Piney Branch Elementary School | Newport Mill Middle School |
| Capt. James Daly Elementary School | Rock View Elementary School | Parkland Middle School |
| Fallsmead Elementary School | Sequoyah Elementary School | Ridgeview Middle School |
| Flower Hill Elementary School | Flora M. Singer Elementary School | Rocky Hill Middle School |
| Forest Knolls Elementary School | Sligo Creek Elementary School | Silver Spring Intl. Middle School |
| Georgian Forest Elementary School | Somerset Elementary School | Sligo Middle School |
| Glen Haven Elementary School | Takoma Park Elementary School | |
| Goshen Elementary School | Travilah Elementary School | Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School |
| Greencastle Elementary School | Viers Mill Elementary School | Clarksburg High School |
| Greenwood Elementary School | Waters Landing Elementary School | Damascus High School |
| Highland Elementary School | Westbrook Elementary School | Poolesville High School |
| Jackson Road Elementary School | Westover Elementary School | Quince Orchard High School |
| Kensington Parkwood Elem. School | Woodfield Elementary School | Springbrook High School |
| | | Wheaton High School |

CLOSING the GAP

SIMPLE SOLUTIONS FOR IMPROVING RECYCLING RATES

RECYCLING is arguably one of the easiest ways to contribute to protecting the environment and many of our schools do an excellent job recycling. Unfortunately, there's a large gap between the recycling rates of our top performing schools and those whose numbers don't look as well. So, how do we close that gap? What can be done to encourage all MCPS students and staff are recycling as best they can?

Addressing this gap and exploring ways to transform student/staff recycling behavior over the long term is something that the SERT program has been focused on for more than a decade. What we've learned over the years is that instead of recycling being a conscious decision, it is most often part of an instinctive routine. It's one that is incorporated into our normal daily lifestyle. Closing the gap between good intentions and reality means that more students and staff need to make a commitment to recycle.

We know that improvements to recycling can be achieved through education, public awareness, and the existence of proper recycling infrastructure. Each school faces unique challenges but together, we can find solutions for each one.

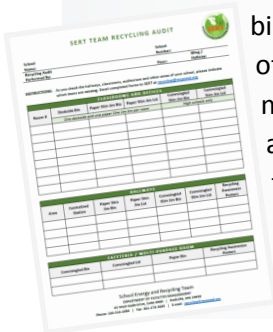
Over the next few months, we will share strategies for increasing your recycling participation, starting with the following steps to building a successful recycling program.



BINS

First, familiarize yourself with [what is and isn't recyclable](#) in MCPS. Next, think about the types of recycling that's being produced in your school. Do you have paper and

commingled recycling bins in your hallways, offices, classrooms, multi-purpose rooms and outdoors? Use the [recycling audit form](#) to help determine your needs.



LABELS

Recycling is far too important an act for it to be confusing. When bins aren't properly labeled, it's difficult for students and staff to know what should go into them.

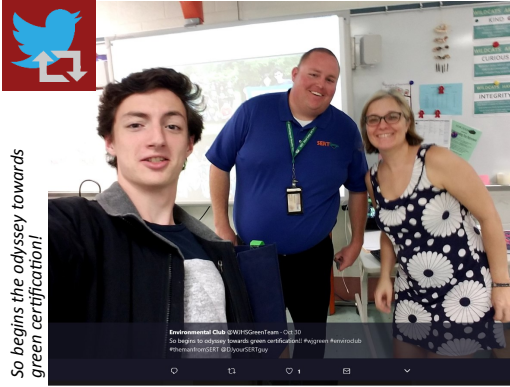
Adding our color-coded labels to your bins is a great way to promote your program and educate students and ensures material is sorted properly. These new labels match the tops of the recycling and trash bin lids for quick recognition. [Order labels](#) via Maximo.



LIDS

Did you know that when recycled materials aren't put in the proper bin, or when trash is put in a recycling bin, the entire bin has to be put in the trash?

One simple way to avoid this issue is to make sure that your commingle and paper recycling bins have the proper lids on them identifying what should be placed in that bin. The color-coded lids make it easy for students and staff to learn that blue = paper, green = commingle, and red = trash! [Order lids](#) via Maximo.



So begins the odyssey towards green certification!

Have you been paying attention to our website?

We're making subtle changes that should make it easier for you to find the information you need. Visit often to see our progress!



Congrats to Laurie Jenkins, who was recognized by Gov. Hogan for advancing student achievement by promoting outdoor education!

Happy Thanksgiving

The SERT program staff is thankful to have an incredible group of students and staff as part of our extended SERT family. We hope you enjoy a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday with your family and friends.

Thank you for remembering to perform the long weekend energy shutdown and submit your [form](#) to SERT!

SERT Spotlight

This newsletter is produced by the School Energy and Recycling Team (SERT) program and distributed to SERT leaders, school-based SERT teams, building service personnel, and others who are interested in conservation and sustainability. As part of the [Montgomery County Public Schools](#) Department of Facilities Management, the SERT program provides opportunities for all schools to participate and receive incentives and recognition for their energy conservation and recycling efforts. We support a balanced environment for the integration of all students to work together in a culturally diverse environment, and strive to provide the resources, support, and vision of the future for a successful conservation program at each school. Promoting the connections between human behavior and its impact on the environment reinforces our culture of conservation and increases participation in our mission to conserve resources and recycle actively.

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