

SEPTEMBER 2018

*A newsletter published by  
the School Energy and  
Recycling Team*

# SERT Spotlight



## Welcome Back to School

The **SCHOOL ENERGY AND RECYCLING TEAM** (SERT) program staff hopes that you had a fantastic and safe summer break and welcomes you back to a new school year. Whether you took a memorable vacation, spent the summer working, or simply took some well-deserved “me time” for rest and relaxation, we trust that you’ve been rejuvenated and that you’re energized and ready to provide the very best education to our students.

SERT program staff had a very productive summer. We were busy preparing and updating program materials and resources, establishing strategic goals for the new school year, implementing the summer [Peak Load Management](#) (PLM) program, conducting school visits, coordinating the installation of WiFi-enabled thermostats in relocatable classrooms, and setting up the recycling infrastructure at two new and three revitalized/expanded schools in preparation for opening day.

As we begin another school year, we look forward to building on our successes from last school year and helping schools set new goals and achieve even more great things this year. We encourage each person to make a renewed commitment to environmental sustainability because together, we can accomplish more.

We look forward to seeing you soon at your schools. As always, the SERT program staff is available to assist with your energy conservation and recycling participation programs. Remember, it’s your world. Choose to conserve!





**THE SERT PROGRAM** has a wealth of resources and information available to schools. Make sure to visit our website often to find out more about how you can conserve energy and water, and ways to increase recycling participation at your school. Our team is excited about the new school year and we're ready to serve you! How can we help you achieve your goals? Click on the icons for more details about our resources and programs.



All students and staff are invited to create posters that showcase their school's efforts in energy/ water conservation and recycling. Selected winning entries are used in promotional campaigns by MCPS.

## WATTS UP? POSTER CONTEST

## RECYCLING RESOURCES

Check out our website to learn what can/can't be recycled, get helpful hints, and see how much your school recycles each month. Also find your school's recycling pick-up schedule. Order your recycling bins, posters and recycling bin labels via Maximo.



Use the Outreach Request Form to invite SERT staff to your school for assemblies, "Lunch and Learn" and "Read Aloud" activities, and other interesting and interactive demonstrations.

## OUTREACH REQUEST

## CONSERVATION POSTERS

Energy/water conservation and recycling posters are available on our website. Download and print them yourself or order beautiful full-size posters from us.



All secondary schools are invited to participate in this effort to reinforce a culture of conservation and sustainability. Document your conservation practices and your school may be a winner!

## LEAD BY EXAMPLE CAMPAIGN



# Managing a SERT Program in Your School

**THE SERT PROGRAM** promotes environmental stewardship and resource conservation within Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). SERT provides systemwide sustainability training and education, incentives and recognition, customized energy and recycling data, conservation operations and procedures, and interactive activities for students and staff to promote and increase awareness to conserve energy, water, and natural gas, and to increase recycling participation. Top performing schools are eligible to earn energy and recycling incentive awards and recognition. Incorporating and maintaining a strong SERT program in your school not only helps us make our earth a better place to live but also teaches our students to be responsible environmental stewards.

## THE PRINCIPAL

- Appoints a SERT team leader for the school.
- Submits the completed and signed SERT Action Plan each year by the end of September. Note: this year, the completed form is due on October 1.
- Supports and recognizes SERT team members for their conservation efforts.



## THE SCHOOL-BASED SERT LEADER

- Recruits team members within the school, including teachers, staff, building service personnel, and students to help facilitate a successful SERT program.
- Selects activities to increase student participation. Ideas can be found on the SERT website, [www.GreenSchoolsFocus.org](http://www.GreenSchoolsFocus.org).
- Plans and schedules SERT team meetings and activities.
- Seeks support from and collaborates with building service staff.
- Orchestrates after-school activities.
- Plans student outreach activities and field trips focusing on resource conservation.
- Includes the Parent Teacher Association and the community in the school-based SERT program.
- Promotes the SERT conservation and recycling contests/campaigns that are designed to raise awareness.



## THE SERT PROGRAM STAFF

- Provides training and staff development.
- Assists in the implementation of conservation projects and investigational practices, and provides classroom support.
- Conducts energy and recycling assemblies, "Lunch and Learn," Read Aloud events and other activities that raise conservation awareness.
- Meets with the school administration, SERT leaders, and team members throughout the year.
- Attends school-based SERT meetings when possible.
- Conducts temperature, electricity usage, and lighting studies.





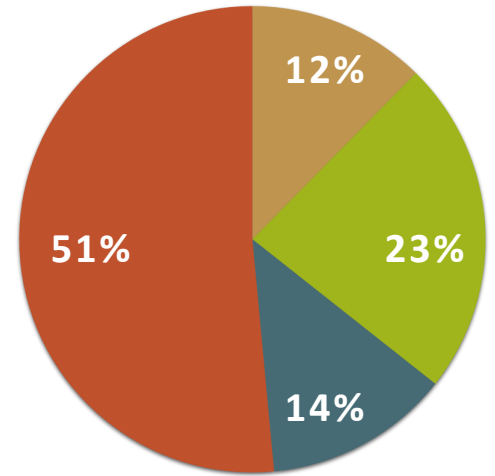
# Forty-six Schools Earn SERT Energy Awards

## OUR SCHOOLS MADE SIGNIFICANT EFFORTS TO SAVE

energy during the third quarter (March—May 2018) of the 2017–2018 academic year. During these challenging budgetary times, any avoidable operating costs will have a positive impact on the educational initiatives of MCPS. Nearly half of our schools demonstrated great energy management behavior and showed energy savings compared to their baseline.

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 following 46 MCPS schools for earning SERT energy awards:



### MCPS SCHOOLS WITH—

- GEM STATUS
- SAVINGS GREATER THAN 5%
- SAVINGS UP TO 5%
- NO SAVINGS

*If your school is not earning quarterly SERT energy awards, contact us to learn which energy-saving techniques may best benefit you. We're here to help!*

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

- |                                 |                                    |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Arcola Elementary School        | Goshen Elementary School           |
| Ashburton Elementary School     | Jones Lane Elementary School       |
| Beverly Farms Elementary School | Monocacy Elementary School         |
| Bradley Hills Elementary School | Pine Crest Elementary School       |
| Brooke Grove Elementary School  | Piney Branch Elementary School     |
| Brown Station Elementary School | Lois P. Rockwell Elementary School |
| Candlewood Elementary School    | Sligo Creek Elementary School      |
| Chevy Chase Elementary School   | Somerset Elementary School         |
| Cloverly Elementary School      | South Lake Elementary School       |
| Cold Spring Elementary School   | Stone Mill Elementary School       |
| Glenallan Elementary School     | Strathmore Elementary School       |

### MIDDLE SCHOOLS

- |                                  |                                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Argyle Middle School             | Rosa M. Parks Middle School       |
| Cabin John Middle School         | Redland Middle School             |
| Eastern Middle School            | Ridgeview Middle School           |
| Forest Oak Middle School         | Rocky Hill Middle School          |
| Lakelands Park Middle School     | Silver Spring Int'l Middle School |
| Montgomery Village Middle School | Tilden Middle School              |
| Neelsville Middle School         | Hallie Wells Middle School        |
| Newport Mill Middle School       | Westland Middle School            |

### HIGH SCHOOLS

- Montgomery Blair High School
- Clarksburg High School
- Damascus High School
- John F. Kennedy High School
- Col. Zadok Magruder High School
- Watkins Mill High School
- Thomas S. Wootton High School



# New Thermostats Installed in Relocatable Classrooms

**DURING THE SUMMER BREAK,** Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) upgraded the thermostats in nearly all relocatable classrooms systemwide. The existing thermostats were removed and replaced with Smart thermostats that are WiFi-enabled. This new thermostat technology comes with many features that will increase comfort, enhance the operation of the heating, ventilation, air conditioning (HVAC) system and improve energy conservation.



Among the biggest advantage of this thermostat is that the Division of Maintenance—Energy Management team will be able to remotely operate and view space temperatures in relocatable classrooms to provide the most comfortable learning and teaching spaces for our students and staff. The scheduling capabilities of these thermostats will result in significant energy cost savings for MCPS while ensuring that the classroom temperatures are comfortable. Additionally, the remote viewing and operating feature will further assist the Division of Maintenance staff to detect HVAC systems malfunctions sooner and facilitate quicker repairs when needed.

Heating and cooling temperatures will be remotely controlled by MCPS-Energy Management. If necessary, the preset temperatures may be adjusted by 2°F. For unscheduled use, occupants may turn on the heat or air conditioning for a block of three hours at a time. Please contact your building services manager if you experience any issues with the new thermostat.

# PLM

**EACH SUMMER,** MCPS institutes a late afternoon curtailment of air conditioning operations in schools from 4:00–5:00 p.m. The energy we use during the peak hours in the summer affects MCPS’ electricity costs year round. Because these peak demand periods drive our price of electricity for all 12 months of the year, conserving energy during the summer break is vitally important.

This summer was no exception, energy waste issues at several schools were identified and successfully resolved throughout the Peak Load Management program. MCPS will benefit greatly from reduced energy costs during the upcoming year because of the collaboration and diligence of school-based staff, Energy Management Systems (EMS) personnel, the Energy Resources Team (ERT), and SERT program staff.

## Hitting the Mark with Energy Shutdown Checklists

**WHENEVER SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED** for a long weekend or break, MCPS has an opportunity to save a tremendous amount of energy, which helps conserve natural and fiscal resources. During the 2017–2018 school year, there were seven such opportunities, for savings. The schools listed below completed and submitted energy shutdown checklists for each of the long weekends or breaks, and we commend them for a job well done!



- Brown Station Elementary School
- Cloverly Elementary School
- Great Seneca Creek Elementary School
- Lakewood Elementary School

- Ritchie Park Elementary School
- Viers Mill Elementary School
- Woodfield Elementary School



# 2018 Drive for Supplies Nearly Doubles 2017 Weight

AT THE END OF EACH SCHOOL YEAR, students and staff clean out lockers, desks, closets and classrooms. As they perform this task at many schools, new and gently used supplies are collected as part of the annual *Drive for Supplies* campaign. Notebooks, folders, crayons, glue, and many other items are carefully weighed and sorted by middle and high school student volunteers. Then Montgomery County families are invited to an open house-style event where they can stock up on school supplies at no cost.

In July, the 2018 *Drive for Supplies* campaign was celebrated at Montgomery Village Middle School with Dr. Jack R. Smith, MCPS Superintendent of Schools, and other dignitaries in attendance. Seventy MCPS schools participated in the event and the supplies collected weighed 8,805 pounds – only 41 pounds shy of doubling the weight of the supplies collected in 2017.

The next *Drive for Supplies* campaign will mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this program. Dr. Smith has challenged MCPS students and staff to increase systemwide participation in the 2019 campaign by 25 percent so make plans now to be part of this activity.

Participation in this worthy cause not only teaches our students the importance of helping those in need, but also reinforces the significance of recycling and reducing waste.



*Gaithersburg Elementary School's principal, Mrs. Meredith McNerney, and GES's campaign coordinator, Ms. Ashley Thornton, proudly display the ceremony's program along with the award and certificate presented to them by SERT. North Bethesda Middle and Albert Einstein High schools were also winners.*



## Got Paper?

SERT'S 2018 *GOT PAPER? RECYCLING CONTEST* was, as always, a great success. Our MCPS schools recycled 673.42 tons of paper during the contest period of June 1-30, topping last year's monthly collection by more than 40 tons. To put that tonnage into perspective, the paper and cardboard that we recycled during the one month would fill the beds of 29.9 tractor trailers. What a convoy!

SERT appreciates and acknowledges the conservation efforts of all of our participating schools and congratulates the three winning schools for recycling the highest pounds per person (PPP) and earning SERT recycling awards. For this contest, the PPP is calculated by taking the total weight of paper recycled divided by the number of students and staff.

Congratulations to the 2018 Got Paper? Winners: Northwood High School (\$1,000 award for 8.72 PPP), Redland Middle School (\$750 award for 16.61 PPP), and Belmont Elementary School (\$500 award for 24.72 PPP)

## WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT ZERO WASTE?

Have your say in the future of solid waste management in Montgomery County and help set the path forward to zero waste.

## TAKE A SURVEY OR ATTEND AN OPEN HOUSE EVENT.

Click below for more details.





# What You Can and Can't Recycle in MCPS

AS WE BEGIN ANOTHER SCHOOL YEAR, please take a moment to review the following list of items that can/can't be recycled in our county. MCPS recycles in accordance with Montgomery County's [recycling regulations](#) therefore, all the items that you recycle at your school can also be recycled at your Montgomery County home. The same rules apply to cleaning up after an instructional day in your classroom, lunch in the cafeteria, or a holiday party at home. All of your plain, "flat" paper and boxes can go into the mixed paper recycling bin while all the aluminum foil, foil serving trays, bottles, cans, and plastic containers should be placed in the commingled recycling bin. As you review this list, you may find a few more items that you can include in your recycling bins. Remember, the more we recycle, the less we throw away as trash.

## MIXED PAPER

### ACCEPTABLE PAPER ITEMS

- ✓ Empty milk and juice containers
- ✓ Lunch trays, paper boat trays, paper plates and cups
- ✓ Newspapers (with inserts)
- ✓ Magazines, catalogs, junk mail, and windowed envelopes
- ✓ Cardboard and paperboard boxes (including all cereal boxes without the liners, frozen food packaging, etc.)
- ✓ Corrugated cardboard (all boxes must be broken down)
- ✓ Spiral notebooks and composition books
- ✓ Colored paper, theme paper, and used copier paper
- ✓ Books (including paperbacks, textbooks, and hardbacks)
- ✓ Shredded paper contained in a sealed or tied clear plastic bag
- ✓ Non-metallic wrapping paper
- ✓ Paper bulletin board decorations
- ✓ Brown paper bags
- ✓ Telephone books
- ✓ Construction paper
- ✓ Files and folders
- ✓ Cardstock



### UNACCEPTABLE PAPER ITEMS

- ✗ Paper towels, tissues
- ✗ Any paper contaminated with food waste, including paper plates and cups
- ✗ Metallic wrapping paper
- ✗ Laminated paper
- ✗ Loose, shredded paper, and plastic-coated paper



## COMMINGLED ITEMS

### ACCEPTABLE PLASTIC, BOTTLES, CANS

- ✓ Black plastic (PET Plastic #1) food containers
- ✓ Empty plastic milk, juice, and water bottles
- ✓ PET #1 Thermoform plastic packaging, such as clamshell containers, trays, deli containers, lids, and caps
- ✓ #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #7 rigid plastic containers, including bottles, jugs, wide-mouth tubs, caps, salad and vegetable containers
- ✓ Aluminum food and beverage containers
- ✓ Bi-metal steel/tin cans, such as soup and vegetable cans
- ✓ Clean aluminum foil and aluminum pie pans
- ✓ Glass containers: brown, clear, and green glass containers jars and bottles
- ✓ Empty non-hazardous aerosol cans
- ✓ Plastic buckets with metal handles (such as floor wax and stripper)
- ✓ Plastic flower pots
- ✓ Plastic drinking cups/glasses (stadium cups)
- ✓ Plastic 5-gallon water bottles

### UNACCEPTABLE PLASTIC, BOTTLES, CANS

- ✗ Styrofoam (cups, plates, bowls, to-go containers, and foam packing material of any kind)
- ✗ Materials contaminated with food waste or grease
- ✗ Trash/food waste
- ✗ Colored plastic film (such as candy and food wrappers or bags, colored plastic shopping bags)
- ✗ Plastic cutlery (forks, knives, spoons)
- ✗ Non-container glass (cookware, plate glass, window glass)
- ✗ Motor oil, anti-freeze, and pesticide containers
- ✗ Ceramics
- ✗ Construction and demolition material
- ✗ Vinyl siding
- ✗ Wood

# What's your school's plan for recycling and saving energy?

**ALL MCPS SCHOOLS** are required to actively participate in the SERT program. Each school is challenged to reduce their electricity consumption and increase their recycling participation. The SERT program provides opportunities for student and staff to develop their leadership skills while expressing their creativity and enthusiasm for environmental sustainability. As a further incentive, top performing schools with conservation efforts that result in energy cost avoidance and increased recycling participation are eligible to receive monetary incentive awards.

All schools are required to complete and submit a SERT Action Plan, using [MCPS Form 201-10](#) on or before Monday, October 1, 2018. The information provided in the SERT Action Plan will be used to provide the necessary resources and support to schools to implement a successful conservation program.

For more information about implementing a successful school-based SERT program at your school, please click [here](#).



**THE 2017-2018 OLNEY RECYCLING RANGERS**

**WHO'S GOING TO BE A MEMBER OF YOUR SCHOOL'S AWESOME SERT/ GREEN TEAM THIS YEAR?!**

This newsletter is produced by the School Energy and Recycling Team (SERT) program and distributed to school-based SERT leaders and 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.

The SERT program supports a balanced environment for the integration of all students to work together in a culturally diverse environment. Our goal is 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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