



News Release

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For Immediate Release

Hitch Elementary Students Build On Their Success

Over the past three years, students in Ms. Perri and Ms. Smarz' classes have been tackling energy waste in their Chicago Public School. The results are verifiable energy savings of 15% in 2007 followed by another 6.69% in 2008.

Working with the EnergyNet Program, students in grades 3-6 formed an Energy Detective Agency. By conducting energy assessments called "stakeouts" these energy sleuths have come to understand the equipment and the people that provide and use energy in their school. Ms. Perri says "Over half the teachers, following stakeouts and student presentations, have now implemented energy conservation measures suggested by the program."

EnergyNet empowers students to be the change agents for energy use in their schools and homes. The teaching materials also help them succeed in their school work. Materials are correlated to the Learning Standards for Science, Technology, English and Math. Because students are so engaged in the EnergyNet project-based activities they learn and retain the information better than if they were engaged with traditional teaching methods.

Team work and problem solving skills are also integral to the program. "It created a sense of team, with kids working well across grade levels" said Ms. Smarz. An added benefit according to Ms. Smarz is the connection to home. "Students are far more mindful of how they can help to save energy in their classrooms and are talking to their parents about saving energy and money at home."

According to Carol Timms, EnergyNet's director attributes EnergyNet's success to "The combination of relevant material; an important topic like energy and the environment; and challenging and rigorous learning outcomes." The EnergyNet program at Hitch Elementary School is being funded by a grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. Schools interested in participating in EnergyNet are encouraged to contact Ms. Timms at 877.359.3638.

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