



Nampa School District, ID – 50001 READY

BACKGROUND

The Nampa School District covers 94 square miles of Canyon County, Idaho, and provides a quality education to between 13,000 and 14,000 K-12 students. The District is the County’s largest employer, with about 1,650 staff members, including administrators, certified and classified staff, and substitutes. Like many school districts nationwide, budgets are stretched, so any cost savings can be put to good use. The District had previously completed several energy projects to qualify for rebates offered by Idaho Power, but outside of these projects, the District had little in-house expertise in energy management and no formal structure for analyzing or managing energy use.

“Our school has participated in the 50001 Ready program for the past few years and it has allowed our school to foster a culture of energy awareness and become stewards of our energy consumption”

*- Preston Pruett, Principal
Iowa Elementary School, Nampa School District*

SOLUTIONS

In 2017, representatives of the Nampa School District joined a cohort of other Idaho school districts led by the Strategic Energy Group (SEG) to pursue Continuous Energy Improvement. Idaho Power had engaged SEG to coach members of the cohort in monitoring energy use and improving energy efficiency. Cohort members challenged and inspired each other to seek meaningful savings. In 2019, SEG showed the cohort how their achievements fit into the larger 50001 Ready framework for continuous improvement in energy management and could qualify them for U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) recognition.

Skyview High School was the first school in the Nampa District to achieve 50001 Ready status in April 2020. When Skyview again qualified in January 2021, eight additional schools in the District also qualified for 50001 Ready: two more high schools, three middle schools, and two elementary schools. In all, approximately 1,350 staff members had become engaged at some level in systematically managing energy within the 50001 Ready framework.



Columbia High School exterior.

Photo credit: Nampa School District.

Lone Star Middle School exterior.

Photo credit: Nampa School District.

Sherman Elementary exterior.

Photo credit: Nampa School District.

The effort that the Nampa School District put into managing energy more efficiently and systematically with 50001 Ready is producing real dollar savings. Some of these savings are helping to pay for needed supplies, and some are helping pay for additional equipment upgrades, such as new direct digital controls (DDC) for other school buildings.

Implementing a 50001 Ready Energy Management System

- ▶ **Real energy savings:** Between January 2017 and May 2021, the nine participating schools implemented 46 energy efficiency projects, including many LED lighting and HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) control projects, for which Idaho Power offered capital incentives. The utility estimates that, over those four years, these projects saved the school district approximately 10,071,140 kilowatt hours, reducing overall energy usage 18.3% (modeled) and avoiding 3,024 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions.
- ▶ **Energy management team:** The District’s maintenance director and assistant manager are key members of the team. In addition, each participating school has one representative who leads energy improvement efforts at their school. These staff members had little or no experience in energy management, so the SEG training and coaching have been essential to the program’s success. Team members have learned new skills and continue to attend monthly model review and energy champion meetings as well as a Report-Out Workshop every six months.



- ▶ **Big savers:** Setting HVAC temperature controls to recommended settings and centralized controls helped curtail fluctuations in HVAC efficiency. Elevating energy awareness and instilling better practices in the habits of students, teachers, coaches, and kitchen and maintenance staff also led to significant savings.
- ▶ **Procurement:** The major capital investment projects focused on LED lighting and DDC systems for HVAC. Other investments included a new roof and kitchen upgrade.
- ▶ **Training:** SEG led a series of walk-throughs in the schools to help the District’s energy team spot places where energy may be wasted or conserved. Initially, the group spent time clarifying and refining energy assessment processes, making subsequent maintenance and training easier.
- ▶ **Navigator Tool:** The District’s team found that DOE’s 50001 Ready Navigator tool helped them see their activities in a cohesive structure, and the District’s new energy policy lays the groundwork for continued achievements and savings.

“The best thing about 50001 Ready is that everyone can be a part of energy conservation and contribute to managing energy. Our staff at Columbia High School were very supportive of these conservation changes, but it was the students who took the lead and developed posters and messaging to help everyone remember key messages and ways to conserve energy.”

*- Nick Stern, Vice-Principal
Columbia High School, Nampa School District*



Signage created by students to encourage behavioral changes around managing energy. Photo credit: Nampa School District.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The District-wide energy policy and new practices for tracking energy use have set the stage for changing habits on a larger scale. The nine 50001 Ready schools are now working to engage teachers and students at other schools in thinking about how they use energy. Some science teachers are working energy into their classes, recognizing the value of getting students involved in energy efficiency and conservation.