



# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF **ENERGY**

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## Press Release

News Media Contact: [\(202\) 586-4940](tel:2025864940)

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## **Energy Department Recognizes Arizona's Dysart Unified School District for Leadership in Better Buildings Challenge**

As part of the Obama Administration's effort to cut energy waste in the nation's buildings, the Energy Department today recognized Arizona's Dysart Unified School District (USD) for increasing the use of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies at 25 schools. Through the Department's Better Buildings Challenge, Dysart USD has committed to 20 percent energy savings over 10 years, spanning more than three million square feet of building space. The district is well on its way toward meeting an ambitious goal of implementing solar energy at each school.

"The Dysart Unified School District demonstrates what schools of the future could look like if we harness community ingenuity and proven cost-effective solutions to deliver low-energy buildings," said Dr. David Danielson, Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. "The district's commitment to pursue sustainable practices offers a replicable model for other school districts in the nation to follow, so they too can reap the benefits of clean energy technologies."

Dysart USD has already achieved 10 percent energy savings since 2011, and its Better Buildings Challenge showcase project, Kingswood Elementary School, has achieved 16 percent energy savings. That's \$44,000 in cost savings each year that can be spent on learning in the classroom instead of operating the school building.

Officials from the Energy Department and the school district will tour the showcase project, now equipped with rooftop solar panels generating 469 kilowatts (kW) annually, and advanced chillers to cool the building. Besides contributing to energy production, the panels provide shade for playgrounds and parking.

Several other energy-efficient upgrades have been completed at Kingswood. With funding leveraged under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, the district made improvements to a central chiller plant, as well as installed new lighting controls and fixtures, and solar water heaters. The solar water heaters take advantage of onsite solar resource capacity, and further reduce the school's annual energy costs.

The solar projects feature an electronic kiosk to help students monitor how much energy is produced by the solar photovoltaic panels, based on the position of the sun and local weather conditions.

“Dysart Unified School District prides itself on being a good steward of resources—that includes financial and natural resources. By embracing energy saving initiatives, the district is able to reduce energy costs and model best practices in energy conservation. And being a part of the Better Buildings Challenge allows us to spread positive change to other school districts across the country,” said Dysart Unified School District Superintendent Dr. Gail Pletnick. “These initiatives are working—we’re saving on energy costs, with no money up-front. Installing solar at all of our schools is a goal within our reach.”

As a cornerstone of the President's Climate Action Plan, the Better Buildings Challenge is aimed at achieving the goal of doubling American energy productivity by 2030 while motivating corporate and public-sector leaders across the country to save energy through commitments and investments. More than 250 organizations are partnering with the Energy Department to achieve 20 percent portfolio-wide energy savings and share successful strategies that maximize efficiency during the next decade. Across the country, partners have shared energy data for more than 32,000 properties and are reporting energy savings of 20 percent or more at 4,500 properties, and 10 percent or more at 12,000 properties.

Learn more about Better Buildings Challenge partner results, showcase projects and innovative solutions being shared with others at <http://betterbuildingssolutioncenter.energy.gov/>.

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