Notes from Regional Meet & Greet – Breakout Session I

Session moderated by Jon Zirkle, Office of Governor Pat Quinn

Regional working groups:

i. **<u>Chicagoland</u>**

a. **One environmental issue your school is addressing**
   1. Brownfield redevelopment (urban) – Chicago Public Schools; trying to define what constitutes as "clean soil."
   2. Education about alternative fuels.
   3. Green team/outreach to administration. Working on how to engage everyone.
   4. Recycling
   5. Addressing environmental concerns from the top
   6. Developing an environmental promotion program

b. **One tip that is helping your school/district address this environmental issue**
   1. Posting photos of recycling bins around school and sending out newsletters about recycling

c. **One barrier to addressing this environmental issue your school or district has encountered.**
   1. Poor communication
   2. Funding constraints

d. **How can schools in your region work together to address environmental concerns?**
   1. Partnering with another school to organize an energy or career fair, reaching out to students and community (example: Andrew High School and Bloom High School planning a joint energy fair on April 25)

ii. **<u>Northern and Western Illinois</u>**

a. **One environmental issue your school is addressing**
   Energy Conservation
   1. Energy Conservation
   2. Air Quality
   3. Recycling
   4. Integrating Sustainability in Curriculum
   5. Reexamined and adjusted bus routes
   6. Green technology curriculum and training

b. **One tip that is helping your school/district address this environmental issue**
   1. Obtaining grant funding
   2. Contracting with waste hauler to include recycling (hauler donated bins)
   3. Utilizing student clubs to lead recycling
   4. PTA involvement
   5. Creating of an energy center in class and extracurricular
   6. Working with district science coordinator
   7. Tapping the interests of kids

c. **One barrier to addressing this environmental issue your school or district has encountered.**
   1. Restrictive requirements of grants (recycling)
   2. Manpower issues (recycling)

3. Teacher resistance to change; need to educate and provide tools (curriculum)
4. Getting buy-in of maintenance staff, “turf wars” (energy conservation)

d. How can schools in your region work together to address environmental concerns?

1. Collaborating with local businesses to install monitoring equipment (lighting controls) to track energy usage in classrooms

iii. <u>Central and Eastern Illinois</u>

a. One environmental issue your school is addressing

1. Energy
2. Recycling
3. Environmental awareness
4. Site planning/storm water management
5. Lacking higher education and training in environmental isssues
6. Facility expansion

b. One tip that is helping your school/district address this environmental issue

1. Smart Energy Grant; 1 KW solar panel; Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation
2. Tuscola has acquired grant funding to do lighting retrofits
3. Energy audits to baseline energy usage

c. One barrier to addressing this environmental issue your school or district has encountered.

1. Lack of money
2. Upfront costs for capital improvement too expensive
3. OPS US – Capital
4. Technology issues – addressing these issues in the classroom
5. (Recycling) Large volume of recyclables; lack of volunteers; education; and collaborating with the city
6. Penetrating market
7. Bureaucracy
8. Generational shifting/education

d. How can schools in your region work together to address environmental concerns?

1. Grant Middle School in Springfield is collaborating with University of Illinois - Springfield, installing compact fluorescent light bulbs in classroom and tracking data
2. Education
3. Access to stimulus funding
4. Appropriate process: revolving loan, small steps