ENGAGING THE ADULTS
To Create a Culture of Sustainability in Schools
QUESTIONS FOR THE AUDIENCE

• How many of you have been involved in an effort to “green a school”?
• How many of your efforts focused on curriculum?
• How many of your efforts included activities to engage the students?
• How many of you would say your outcomes deserved an A+?
WHAT WE OFTEN HEAR

“The green education and experiences we provided didn’t stick – nor did they translate outside the classroom.”
WHAT WE ASK FIRST

“What have you done to engage the adults in the school?”
WHAT IS CULTURE?

Group norms of behavior and the shared values that help keep those norms in place.
CHANGING A CULTURE

What does not work:

✓ A superintendent or the school board decides what the new culture should be.

✓ They send a list of values to the principals with the order to tell teachers and staff what the new culture is.

✓ Teachers and staff get the memo, and little to nothing changes.
What does work:

✓ The superintendent or school board or even a group of principals or teachers decide the old way isn’t working.

✓ They decide what should be changed, start making the change, and enlist others to do the same.

✓ The new actions produce better results, which are communicated and celebrated, new norms are formed, and new shared values grow.
THE SEE PROGRAM

The Schools for Energy Efficiency program helps a district:

• **Educate** people about why saving energy is important and how they can help.

• **Identify opportunities** for both short- and long-term wins.

• **Engage people** and asking them to do their part.

• **Measure and track progress** toward the goal.

• **Communicate and celebrate** the results.
CAMBRIDGE-ISANTI SCHOOLS

- 8 buildings, 900,000 sq. ft, located just north of the Twin Cities in Minnesota.
- 5,000 students, 742 staff
- Joined SEE in 2004
- To date, has reduced energy use by 36%
- Avoided $2.6 million in energy costs
CAMBRIDGE-ISANTI SCHOOLS

Bruce Novak, Superintendent

Nancy Johnson
Energy Coordinator

Mark Eisenbacher
Building & Grounds Director

Energy Steering Committee (Comm. Ed, Kitchen, IT)

Site Teams, Teachers, Staff

Operators, Custodians, Grounds
Thank You!

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