

Allison Miller, ASE

Poster Title: EmPowered Schools: Scaling Student Leadership in Energy Efficiency

Abstract: Mitigating climate change requires community education and wide-spread behavior change in energy use. The Alliance knows that some of the most influential voices of change are those of our young people. For over 25 years, students across the country have engaged in the Alliance's PowerSave Schools program, learning about energy efficiency and leading outreach campaigns with their peers, teachers and families. Participating schools have saved an average of five to 15 percent on their energy bills. While these results reflect students' ability to drive meaningful change, the program's costs and administrative burdens have limited the number of schools it can support. In order to scale the program while preserving its intensive engagement including STEAM curriculum, student-led activities and support for schoolwide outreach campaigns the Alliance is developing a new online platform that will launch in fall 2019: the emPowered Schools program. Through concurrent pilots with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), the Los Angeles Department of Power and Water (LADWP), and Energy Upgrade California (EUC), students will learn the fundamentals of energy and efficiency, and how they can be leaders of change. Through the LAUSD & LADWP program, students will conduct energy audits of their schools and homes and communicate data-based energy recommendations to their classmates, school administrators, and families. In the EUC pilot, students will help their families to shift energy use to times of the day when renewable resources are more abundant, helping the state achieve its 100% clean energy goal. The emPowered online platform streamlines program implementation, giving both students and staff access to an interactive web platform that guides activities, provides immediate feedback, and serves as a medium for communication. All lessons, follow-up activities, materials, and data tracking will be accessible in real time. The program also allows schools to benefit from one another's experiences and engage in friendly competitions as they lead their schools' efforts. Moving to the emPowered platform will significantly reduce program costs and make it possible to reach more schools in more regions throughout the country. We hope the emPowered platform will create a blueprint for delivering student-led behavior-change programs at scale. Our goal is to make energy literacy available to all students, and to prepare them to be creative, bold, and innovative leaders with a global impact.