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Competition photos and videos available by request

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### **Aurora Students are About to Get Hands-on in Energy Education Renew Our Schools Expands**

Twelve Aurora School District Schools are days away from beginning a school-wide, student led competition called ReNew Our Schools that empowers students to get their school and community enthusiastic about saving energy. This will be the first time the competition, run by the Center for ReSource Conservation (CRC), has been hosted in Aurora Public Schools, and the excitement is building. Each of the participating twelve schools is attempting to win one of three \$20,000 solar arrays for their building.

The competition has the potential to impact 10,000 students in Aurora. Teachers are incorporating renewable energy curriculum into their lessons but the real education is coming from the students themselves. The main objective of the competition is to see how much energy the schools can conserve in the one month competition from April 1 – 30<sup>th</sup>. Students must lead the charge to determine ways to save energy and encourage their peers to change behaviors such as turning off lights, unplugging unused appliances, and turning off computers when not in use. Students can also earn points by encouraging area homeowners to get involved by pledging to save energy.

Reducing energy use in school is no small task. To aid student efforts, each participating school will receive an E\*Gauge electricity monitor, donated by local companies eGauge and Magnelab. These devices will track each school's electricity use during the competition and show real time changes in energy use via a sophisticated web application. Aurora students will be able to view their energy monitor online, seeing any change in energy use right when it happens. Students can use this information to find ways to reduce their use of energy and adjust their competition strategy accordingly. "Students can view their performance at any time on the CRC's website, which creates a competitive spirit around the competition, and gives the students a reason to learn about energy," says Kathy Croasdale, ReNew Our Schools Program Coordinator.

Additionally, each school will benefit from the tremendous support provided by energy experts from local organizations. These 'Mentors' include experts from UC Denver, Xcel Energy, Slater Paull Architects, NREL, Amplidyne, Johnson Controls, the General Services Administration, Waste Management and Green Schools Alliance. They will educate student groups about energy conservation, energy efficiency opportunities, and ways to motivate their peers and community to join in these important efforts. They will also conduct energy 'walk-throughs' of the schools with the students to show them areas where energy can be saved.

A school administrator in St. Vrain School district where ReNew Our Schools held a competition earlier this year said, "The ReNew Our Schools competition adds value at every level. We learned how to reduce electricity costs, engage students, teachers and staff in behavior changes, and surely many students will see a career path forming from this experience."

To date, 30,700 Colorado students have participated in a ReNew Our Schools competition. “It is fun to watch what this competition can do for students. It provides students a way to solve a real-world problem without even leaving the school building,” said Croasdale.

**Schools competing from the Aurora Public School District** include: Aurora Hills Middle School, Aurora Quest K-8, North Middle School, Elkhart Elementary, Vista Peak Exploratory, Crawford Elementary, South Middle School, East Middle School, Side Creek Elementary, Tollgate, Aurora Frontier P-8 School, Aurora West College Prep Academy.

To find out more about the ReNew Our Schools Competition, visit:

<http://conservationcenter.org/rnos/>

Aurora Homeowners can participate on behalf of one of the competitors at

<http://conservationcenter.org/rnos/home-checklist/>

**About the CRC:** The Center for ReSource Conservation’s mission is to put conservation into action. Our vision is thriving communities living sustainably and we implement this through our Sustainability Programs and our ReSource Yard. For more information on how we bring practical environmental solutions to homes, businesses and schools, visit our website at [www.conservationcenter.org](http://www.conservationcenter.org)