



# "SEE the Light" at Boxford's Spofford Pond School

## CASE STUDY

### BACKGROUND

Spofford Pond School in Boxford was already a very energy efficient building when National Grid targeted the school for a new "[SEE the Light](#)" energy-saving program. Spofford sixth grade teacher Vanessa Boyle said the theory was that, if Spofford could achieve energy savings, then "SEE the Light" could lead to efficiency improvements anywhere. Boxford's Department of Public Works (DPW) had also been aggressively tracking town energy use with ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager, and DPW Superintendent John Dold was eager to pursue "SEE the Light".

[Spofford Pond School](#) serves 450 students in grades 3 to 6. (2013-2014 school year)

### ACTIONS



Implementation of "SEE the Light" at Spofford began in the fall of 2012, with Boyle and Rosario Barbosa (Dold's DPW assistant) appointed to head up the program as Spofford's "Energy Champions." Boyle led the student Green Team, while Barbosa tracked energy use and provided progress reports.

Boyle put the word out that Spofford sixth graders could become members of the school's Green Team for "SEE the Light", and got a "huge turnout"—about 40 students wanted to participate. From this group, she chose six students to be Green Team Champions. Boyle met with the Champions regularly, and the whole team convened monthly. The Green Team sought to introduce six energy efficiency tips over the course of the school year, such as Shut it Down (for electronics), Turn it Off (for lights), and Keep it Closed (for doors and windows). The original plan was to have monthly all-school assemblies about the tips, but, to minimize the burden on teachers, Boyle opted for an alternative idea. In place of the assemblies, the students made short monthly videos (usually less than four minutes in length) that teachers could show at their convenience. All members of the Green Team (not just the Team Champions) could participate in making the videos. Green Team members also put up signs and posted on a team blog.

### About "SEE the Light"

"[SEE the Light Energy Toolkits](#)" were developed as frameworks for implementing formalized behavioral programs to improve energy efficiency. Through the *Enhanced Municipal Incentive*, National Grid offers the "Toolkits" free of charge to municipalities and public schools throughout Massachusetts and Rhode Island. "SEE the Light" Toolkits include energy benchmarking software, a how-to handbook, energy tips and posters, employee training materials, and employee communications templates.

### RESULTS

- ♦ During the 2012-13 school year, Spofford Pond School reduced electricity use by 11 percent, leading to more than \$25,000 in savings.
- ♦ "SEE the Light" is inspiring students' families to behave in more energy-efficient ways. Boyle said that she has received emails from families about changes they are making at home to improve energy efficiency.
- ♦ Boxford may extend the program to some of its other schools.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Boyle said that the flexibility of allowing the teachers to show the energy efficiency videos on their own time was one key to Boxford's success with "SEE the Light". She said that making the videos was fairly simple and not too time consuming. Boyle also emphasized the importance of involving students as much as possible.