

NEWS RELEASE

Mike Cook, Coordinator for Communications and Technical Writing
575.527.5934 mcook@lcps.k12.nm.us www.lcps.k12.nm.us



For immediate release: **August 16, 2010**

Energy Ed Specialists Hope To Save LCPS Millions

LAS CRUCES – Twenty-five cents a day doesn't sound like much to pay for the electricity to run a personal computer. But there are about 13,500 computers being used every school day by the students (about 25,000) and staff (about 3,700) of Las Cruces Public Schools. That's almost \$3,400 per day and more than \$600,000 per year during the current school year. About 15 cents (60 percent) of each quarter is or could be saved on each computer if it's turned off when not in use.

Making sure energy savings like that are taking place throughout the school district is just one part of the job of LCPS' first-ever energy education specialists. Former teacher and assistant principal Jim Mulhauser and former teacher and Advanced Educational Services facilitator Sean Barham began their new duties July 1.

Mulhauser and Barham will visit every school and school district property (47 total) – comprising more than 3.5 million square feet – during all hours of the day and night to determine where energy – and money – can be saved.

Estimated savings within the next year: \$1 million. Estimated savings in the next 10 years: \$14 million. And that's on top of the cost of LCPS' contract with Energy Education (EE), a private company based in Dallas that has saved more than 1,000 clients across the country more than \$2 billion in energy costs in the past 24 years.

“ This new energy savings program will have long-term benefits for the entire school district,” said Superintendent Stan Rounds. “We are winning two ways: We're reducing our energy use and we're saving money.”

Mulhauser and Barham are looking for wasted energy in offices, classrooms and hallways; in music labs and cafeterias; in lockerrooms and on playing fields – including lights, computers, televisions, VCRs, copy and fax machines, air conditioners, heaters, even ice machines – anything with an energy bill.

During visits to school buildings at five different times in a 24-hour period (including very late nights and very early mornings), and using state-of-the-art tools to measure temperature, humidity and light use, Mulhauser and Barham will find equipment running when it doesn't need to be or not operating properly or efficiently. (An HVAC unit that is heating or cooling the air too much in a building, office or classroom is a good example.

It costs about \$700 an hour to operate air conditioners throughout the school district – nearly \$500,000 per year.)

Mulhauser and Barham “will be looking at everything that uses energy and try to come up with a management plan for its optimum use,” said EE Vice President and Lead Consultant Tom Diliberti.

The two also have a complicated computer software system to track meter readings, energy usage and billing across the school district. (And, yes, they both turn their computers off at the end of the work day, even though that may be at midnight or 5:00 a.m.) But, they won't be spending much time at their computers. “80 percent of our time will be in the schools,” said Mulhauser, who has been with LCPS for almost 22 years.

But making sure equipment is operating efficiently is only part of the job for Mulhauser and Barham. They also will work with staff and students to educate them about being more energy efficient. “We have to pull everyone into the process, bring everyone to the table,” said Diliberti.

Barham, who has been with LCPS for four years, said what has impressed him the most during his first month as an EE specialist is “how much everybody wants to conserve. Everybody knows the opportunity is out there.”

The training EE provides to Mulhauser and Barham, along with the experts on energy management the company sends to Las Cruces to assist them, “is already helping us win people over,” said Mulhauser. “It will happen.”

Contact Mulhauser at 575.635.2072 or jmulhauser@lcps.k12.nm.us. Contact Barham at 575. 202.8494 or sebarham@lcps.k12.nm.us.