



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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SFUSD recognized as a leader in achieving zero net energy performance goals

SAN FRANCISCO (December 1, 2017) – San Francisco Unified School District received a School Leadership Award in recognition of its efforts to utilize policies and plans that result in larger scale advancement of zero net energy (ZNE) buildings. ZNE buildings represent high performance buildings that combine energy efficiency and renewable resources to produce at least as much energy as they consume annually.

According to the award administrator, New Buildings Institute (NBI), six ZNE School Leadership Awards were given this year to showcase the individuals, design teams and school districts that are driving this new standard for school environments. Schools built and renovated to ZNE performance have substantially lower energy costs and save money on energy bills that can be spent on students and programs.

“The Board of Education is in full support of pursuing ambitious energy goals,” said Board Vice President Hydra Mendoza, co-author, along with Commissioner Matt Haney, of the SF Board of Education’s recent Carbon-Neutral Schools Resolution.

“We have developed a comprehensive sustainability plan that includes ZNE-ready construction, an emissions-free fleet, and a shift to renewable energy. This award is a great recognition of our district’s leadership in sustainability.”

SFUSD has completely transformed the process by which it designs, constructs, and modernizes its buildings in order to achieve a carbon neutral district by 2040. SFUSD is an active participant in the Department of Energy Zero Energy Schools Accelerator program and shares the details of its strategy with other districts in order to demonstrate that carbon neutral schools can be achieved at little or no additional cost.

The SFUSD Sustainability Office, one of the first in the country at a major public school district, coordinates efforts to reduce utility usage. Since the 2008 to 2010 average baseline, the district has reduced its energy usage by 22 percent, its natural gas usage by 28 percent, and its water usage by 29 percent.

“Zero energy buildings are not only good for the bottom line, freeing up funds to use in the classroom, but they also provide natural light and a connection to the outdoors. This has been shown to improve both academic outcomes and student well-being,” said SFUSD’s Director of Sustainability, Nik Kaestner.

ABOUT THE ZNE SCHOOLS LEADERSHIP AWARDS

To support California's ambitious energy efficiency goals, a Proposition 39 ZNE Schools Retrofit Pilot Program is providing existing schools with ZNE financial resources that can help transform some of the state's K-12 and community college buildings to ZNE. The ZNE Schools Leadership Awards are part of Proposition 39.. Judges for the inaugural ZNE School Leadership Awards represent state agencies, green school nonprofits, professional industry associations, and energy efficiency interests. Learn more [here](#).

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