ELE Submits Planning Grant Report to ISBE

Energy Learning Exchange (ELE) members have been working since the summer of 2012 to plan for the Energy Learning Exchange in the state of Illinois. By its definition under the Illinois Pathways program, the Energy Learning Exchange focuses on “developing, planning, and managing for the production of energy including renewable energy and clean coal technology and its distribution through smart grid technologies.” ELE is a public-private partnership that consists of energy sector leaders who are dedicated to developing the future energy workforce.

In June, the required final report was submitted to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). The report presents a plan that addresses each of the nine core functions of a learning exchange as specified by ISBE. The next step will be applying for the implementation grant to carry out that plan.

Energy Projects Compete at IL FFA AgriScience Fair

ELE partnered with the Illinois Foundation FFA and the Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources Learning Exchange to hold a Student Challenge during the Illinois Foundation FFA Convention in June, at the Prairie Capitol Convention Center in Springfield, IL. This was the first year the AgriScience Fair portion of the convention included energy-related student projects. The students were excited about energy and eager to share their projects and results.

Student Kevin Mattes presents his energy-related project to the judges at the IL FFA Convention’s AgriScience Fair, Patrick Bulpitt (Exelon), Sherrie Gary (Ameren Illinois), and Dr. Willy Hunter (Center for Mathematics, Science, and Technology at Illinois State University) at the AgriScience Fair. Exelon and Ameren sponsored the partnership, providing judges for the energy-related projects in the fair, which selected five Outstanding Energy-Related Student projects, attending a Leadership Luncheon with the students, and providing the award winners with plaques and travel stipends in order to compete at the national event.

Suggestions:

Suggestions for the ELE, including additional contacts to invite to participate in the ELE should be emailed to:

EnergyLearningExchange@ilstu.edu
ELE partnered with the Illinois Foundation FFA and the Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources Learning Exchange to present this student challenge for energy-related projects at the AgriScience Fair. In the photo at left, Jess Smithers (Director of the Agriculture Learning Exchange) talks about the successful event with Dr. David Loomis (Director of the Energy Learning Exchange).

Right, student Joel Ashburn presented his project to judges Patrick Bulpitt (Exelon), Sherrie Gary (Ameren Illinois), and Dr. Willy Hunter (Center for Mathematics, Science, and Technology at Illinois State University) at the Illinois FFA AgriScience Fair. During the General Session the next day, Joel was announced as one of the “Outstanding Energy Related Project” winners.

What’s Next?

ELE efforts will continue, the next step is applying for an implementation grant.

In related news, Illinois State University’s Center for Renewable Energy and Center for Mathematics, Science and Technology will soon hold a workshop for 25 Illinois middle school and high school STEM teachers (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), thanks to a grant by the Illinois School Board of Education. The workshops will focus on next-generation energy concepts, utilizing Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) in the context of career clusters as defined by Illinois Pathways. There will be a two-week program in July that will include classes and field trips designed to help teachers comprehend principles of energy in Illinois as well as real-world applications. Another program will be held in 2014, plus additional follow-up sessions during both years. The plan is for the teachers to develop curriculum that can be adopted by schools across Illinois.

Organizations Involved:

Adlai E. Stevenson High School
Ameren
Argonne National Laboratory
Caterpillar, Inc.
Chicago Public Schools, Early College and Career Education
College of Lake County
Commonwealth Edison Company
Cook County Workforce Investment Board
Danville Area Community College
DuPage Workforce Board
Eastern Illinois University
EDP Renewables
EMB Consultants, Inc.
Exelon Corporation
Homewood-Flossmoor Com. H.S. Dist. 233
IBEW Local 34
IBEW-NECA Technical Institute
Iberdrola Renewables
Illinois Business Roundtable
Illinois Chamber of Commerce
Illinois Energy Association
Illinois Green Economy Network
Illinois Institute of Technology
Integrys Energy Group
Kankakee Community College
Kestrel Development Company
Lake County Workforce Investment Board
Lewis & Clark Community College
Mainstream Renewable Power
McHenry County Workforce Investment Board
National Corn to Ethanol Research Center
Nicor
Northern Illinois University
Northwestern University, ISEN
Operation Green Jobs
PALM and TRICON
Peoria JATC Local 34
Pontiac Township High School
Primera Chicago
PRoActive Strategies, Inc.
Richland Community College
River Valley Workforce Investment Board
Robert M. Fletcher Company
S&C Electric
SEIU Local 73
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
Sustainable Strategies
Teamsters Local 786
University of Illinois, School of Labor & Employment and Graduate College
University of Illinois at Chicago, Summer Institute on Sustainability and Energy
Urbana School District #116
Utility Workers Union of America, Local 18007
Western Illinois University, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs
Workforce Boards of Metropolitan Chicago
Workforce Investment Board of Will County