

# Swedesboro-Woolwich Township School District

## Swedesboro-Woolwich Township, Gloucester County

Swedesboro started with two initiatives with district-wide impact, one led by the superintendent and one that was part of a contractual agreement. The energy reduction project was led by an elementary art teacher with no prior knowledge of energy efficiency, building management or operations. Although an unlikely candidate for the job, she is high-energy, positive and creative and quickly learned the importance of engaging the facilities staff. Some efforts involved behavior modification, but others focused solely on heating and cooling set points, lighting and timers. Without involving key stakeholders in facilities, the same level of success may not have been achieved. The district reached its goal and is tracking toward a second year of positive results.

After beginning a project and settling into the process, it is critical for a team to reflect and document on what worked and where improvement is needed. Looking back, the team leader believed team meetings, announcements and ongoing communications could have helped establish a positive tone and expectations for teamwork. One recommendation for future project is for school administrators to better support the team leader. For example, a district-wide announcement by the superintendent at an in-service or principals' meeting to introduce the project and the team leaders may have helped establish a level of understanding, authority and value. Additionally, selecting a co-team leader may be another opportunity for project leaders to navigate and work through organizational politics that exist in school districts. These two intentional actions could help teams hit the ground running.

### MEASURABLE OBJECTIVE

Reduce energy consumption by **20%**

### SKILLS FOR SUCCESS

honesty  
transparency  
openness to new ideas  
communication  
practical experience,  
empathy with staff  
to keep their  
challenges in mind



### WORDS OF WISDOM

*Empower the individual and encourage the thought process that "I can make a difference." Truly believing that you can is the first step towards impacting change.*

Vanessa Paccione,  
Energy Education  
Specialist

