



SIERRA CLUB

MARYLAND CHAPTER

Sierra Club Maryland Chapter

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Prince George's County Board of Education Commits to 100 Percent Clean Energy

College Park, MD – On March 1, 2021, the Board of Education (BoE) of Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) passed a resolution committing the school district's transition to 100 percent clean, renewable electricity by 2030, and all other energy usages, including boilers, HVAC, and transportation by 2040, as well as 100 percent zero waste by 2030. The resolution also committed to forming a focus workgroup made up of PGCPS staff, environmental experts, labor leaders, community environmentalists and local elected officials to develop an action plan to ensure successful implementation of the goals.

Mobilized to act by Climate Parents of Prince George's County, a campaign of the Sierra Club, the Board began considering the benefits of transitioning Maryland's second largest school district to 100% clean, renewable energy. With help from Board Member Pamela Boozer-Strother, the resolution was introduced at the January 14, 2021 board meeting, and voted on at an open public board meeting on March 1, 2021.

Today's announcement shows how support for clean energy has grown in Prince George's County and that PGCPS is ready to lead in the transition. The campaign showed there was widespread support throughout Prince George's County, including through a petition signed by residents in every zip code in the County and support from municipal governments, parent teacher associations, civic associations, non-profit groups, and private industry.

"With this resolution Prince George's County Public Schools has shown it is both a state and national leader in regards to fostering a healthier learning environment using the clean energy technologies of the future," says Joseph Jakuta, lead volunteer of Climate Parents of Prince George's County and PGCPS father. "We are very excited to be a partner in the development of a successful action plan and believe this will jump start efforts to do our part to ensure a healthier planet and learning environment for the children."

"I want to thank students, parents and community members of the Climate Parents-Prince George's, CHISPA Maryland, and Eleanor Roosevelt High School Sunrise Movement for their advocacy over the past year about the need for school buses and buildings to run on clean energy," said Board Member Boozer-Strother, a PGCPS parent who represents District 3. It was clear then that this is an important issue to the PGCPS community and I am excited to have introduced, along with Student Member of the Board Ninah Jackson this resolution setting clean energy goals and a Work Group to bring forward recommendations, timelines and goals for the PGCPS Climate Change Action Plan."

"To seriously address climate change, we need everybody working together for a just transition away from fossil fuels. It is wonderful to see Prince George's County Schools lead the way by



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committing to clean energy for our County's children. The transition to renewable energy is essential for clean air now and a sustainable future for our kids," says Dr. Janet Gingold, chair of the Sierra Club, Prince George's County Group.

PGCPS is the 20th largest school district in the country and the second largest in Maryland with about 130,000 students enrolled in 207 schools with more than 19,000 staff members. The district's schools and facilities make it one of the largest consumers of electricity in Prince George's County and has the largest bus fleet in the state of Maryland.

Transitioning PGCPS away from use of fossil fuels towards greenhouse gas free electricity, heating and cooling, and transportation will be a vital piece of the puzzle for Prince George's County to make its climate goals while improving the health of students and staff through reduced air pollution. The transition towards zero food waste will also play an important role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions as well and lead to healthier diets for the students. These changes will also inspire the community and future generations of students and creating a environment for students to learn about the clean energy technologies of the future.

The campaign effort was led by Joseph Jakuta, with help from Robert Goldberg-Strassler, the students and teacher of the Environmental Protection Club at Eleanor Roosevelt High School, the students and teacher of the Global Squabblers Club at Kenmoor Middle School, and the Greenbelt Climate Action Network.

For questions contact Joseph Jakuta, lead volunteer on the Climate Parents Campaign at climateparentsPGMD@gmail.com or 512-203-4538.