



ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION

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Arizona Corporation Commission Agreement Puts More Money in Classrooms Commissioners Unanimously Approve School Energy Efficiency Pilot Programs

(Phoenix AZ) Arizona Corporation Commissioners paved the way for more schools to get involved in energy efficiency programs. In the Open Meeting the Commissioners, along with Arizona Public Services (APS), agreed to create a Schools Energy Efficiency Pilot Program for 2016 and 2017. That will make energy efficiency programs more affordable for schools and put more money back into the classroom.

“If you shoot for the stars, you don’t hit a bush,” said Commissioner Tom Forese, who helped draft the proposal. “The best case scenario is that we have a dramatic decrease in energy consumption. The worst case is that we save schools money and we put that money back in the classroom.”

ConservAmerica was key player in forming the agreement.

“This is a unique innovative program,” said ConservAmerica Vice-Chairman Paul Walker. “It will allow Arizona to explore more aggressive approaches towards energy efficiency investments.”

Under the agreement, APS will develop a program within the next 90 days. APS will contact eligible schools that have shown an inability to raise capital to fund the costs of the projects themselves. The School Energy Efficiency Pilot Program’s costs will be covered at 100% for those participating schools. The schools will be able to get a rebate up to \$500,000.

“I have to salute all five of the Commissioners,” said Dick Foreman, President and CEO of the Arizona Business and Education Coalition. The Commission’s action demonstrates their commitment to Arizona’s schools, children, teachers, parents and taxpayers. Classroom expenditures will now increase as energy savings are achieved. As important, the Commission has clearly signaled that education is a regulatory priority and for that, we are most grateful.”

The program will have a total budget of \$2 million over the two calendar years. The budget comes from APS’ Demand Side Management (DSM) Funds that have been already collected, but have not allocated in the DSM budget. DSM funds are collected from customers to pay for energy efficiency programs to keep the company on track to meet the Commission’s goal to reduce energy usage by 22% by 2020.

APS officials at the Open Meeting, along with Commission staff were overwhelmingly in support of this program. Eligible schools must be K-12 public or charter schools in APS service territory that can demonstrate an inability to raise money to fund the projects themselves. Priorities will be given to schools that have not received rebates from existing partnerships in the past three years.