



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 29, 2023

**Media Contacts:** Kay Campbell, Generation180, [kay@generation180.org](mailto:kay@generation180.org), 434-987-2572, or Jamie Wertz, [jamie@generation180.org](mailto:jamie@generation180.org), 571-213-9127

## **K-12 School Decisionmakers Gathered for First-Ever National Clean Energy Schools Symposium in Washington, DC**

Washington, DC — More than 50 school leaders from 16 states traveled to the nation's capital this week for the first-ever Clean Energy Schools Symposium – a national convening of school decisionmakers who have flipped the switch to clean energy at their schools and are actively inspiring and supporting other schools across the country to do the same. National clean energy nonprofit Generation180 hosted the March 26-28 gathering to elevate the role of the education sector as a force towards building a clean energy future in the US. The program brought together members of Generation180's [School Leadership in Clean Energy \(SLICE\) Network](#), a group of superintendents, facilities directors, transportation directors, and other education leaders who are each working to bring clean energy benefits to their individual school districts and beyond.

During [the symposium](#), attendees heard from federal leadership, including Cindy Marten, Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and Alejandro Moreno, Assistant Secretary of Renewable Power at the U.S. Department of Energy, as well as Karl Simon, Director of the Transportation and Climate Division at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. They also participated in workshops with clean energy and clean transportation experts and learned from their peers, from Massachusetts to Oregon, who shared success stories and best practices.

With a school building in every community, K-12 schools are well-positioned to lead on clean energy and U.S. schools are reaping the benefits of cost-savings, resiliency, and cleaner air for their students and communities. According to a recent report from Generation180, nearly 1 in 10 public schools have a solar installation. The K-12 decisionmakers invited to attend are in the top tier of the country leading the adoption of clean energy in the education sector, and they were awarded a scholarship as a member of the School Leadership in Clean Energy Network. The scholarships and the symposium are made possible by the support of event sponsor FedEx.

“With nearly 55 million students attending approximately 130,000 K-12 schools, the education sector has an important role to play in addressing the climate crisis and helping the country transition towards a clean energy future. Our schools should be clean-powered, resilient centers in the community where students, families, and

community members can learn about how to help build a brighter future together. We are building the movement by elevating the work of the leaders in this space and empowering them to support and inspire others to take action,” said Wendy Philleo, Executive Director of Generation180.

Symposium topics included goal-setting to reach zero emissions targets, understanding the cost-savings and resiliency benefits of microgrids (solar + storage), and an overview of the federal funding opportunities for schools to pursue clean energy and energy efficiency upgrades.

One entire day of the meeting focused on electric school buses where participants discussed benefits and challenges to electrifying school bus fleets from an expert panel, and received advice and support for creating a fleet-wide bus electrification plan. The electric school bus workshop was sponsored by World Resources Institute (WRI) and led by The Center for Transportation and Environment (CTE), which developed content for workshops. Check out [#CleanEnergySchools](#) to read twitter updates from the Symposium’s ESB day.

“What an inspiration to see school leaders from across the country gather to share their passion for and expertise in making the switch to clean energy and clean transportation,” said Sue Gander, Director of WRI’s Electric School Bus Initiative. “Given the disproportionate impact of poor air quality and climate change on low-income students and students of color, investments in clean technologies—like renewables and electric school buses—have a central role to play in advancing environmental justice in school communities. The leaders at this first-ever symposium are trailblazers, forging paths for districts across the country to leverage the IIJA and IRA for critical clean energy and clean transportation investments that reach the communities who need them most,” she added.

“CTE enjoyed helping the workshop’s participants develop individualized fleet transition plans that support their electric school bus goals,” said Lauren Justice, CTE’s Development Director. “Proper planning is key. Teaching school systems how to develop comprehensive fleet transition plans reduces risk and empowers the districts to make informed decisions.”

“Saving money with solar energy has been a game-changer for our district by enabling us to raise pay and retain quality teachers. The symposium has enabled me to take a deep dive and learn from experts on other clean energy solutions and make new connections that I can use to further our progress towards having resilient campuses powered by clean energy and clean transportation for students,” said Dr. Michael Hester, Superintendent of Batesville Public Schools, Arkansas.



##

### **About Generation180**

[Generation180](#) is a national nonprofit working to inspire and equip people to take action on clean energy in their homes, schools, and communities. Instead of the doom and gloom of a warming planet, Generation180 is focused on the unparalleled opportunity for a cleaner, healthier, and more equitable clean energy future.

Our [Solar for All Schools \(SFAS\)](#) campaign is leading a movement nationwide to help K-12 schools reduce energy costs, enhance student learning, and foster healthier communities for all. SFAS is expanding access to solar by providing [technical assistance to schools](#), supporting community advocates, building peer-to-peer networks, and advocating for stronger solar policies.

### **About World Resources Institute's (WRI) Electric School Bus Initiative**

Established in partnership with the Bezos Earth Fund, WRI's [Electric School Bus Initiative](#) collaborates with partners and communities to build unstoppable momentum toward an equitable transition of the U.S. school bus fleet to electric by 2030, bringing health, climate, and economic benefits to children and families across the country and normalizing electric mobility for an entire generation.

### **About The Center for Transportation and the Environment**

The [Center for Transportation and the Environment](#) (CTE) is a non-profit planning and engineering firm with the mission to improve the health of our climate and communities by bringing people together to develop and commercialize clean, efficient, and sustainable transportation technologies. CTE collaborates with federal, state, and local governments, fleets, and vehicle technology manufacturers to advance clean, sustainable, innovative transportation and energy technologies.