

# Community Outreach Guide

School Uplift isn't just a schoolwide effort – it includes the whole community too! Getting the word out about your school's participation in School Uplift is a great way to keep your larger school community engaged, strengthen relationships with community members and increase awareness of energy conservation. Plus, sharing your school's commitment to energy efficiency and energy education can inspire others to try the same energy-saving behaviors students are practicing.

By using online communication channels, like email and social media, you can quickly and easily keep parents, school board members, elected officials, volunteer groups and more informed and up to date on your School Uplift activities and progress.

Use the School Uplift Community Outreach Guide to find prewritten community-facing messages, learn social media best practices and even get access to imagery you can use with your posts and updates.



## Using the Community Outreach Guide

### Who should use this guide?

The Community Outreach Guide is for Energy Team members and those responsible for school communications. Have someone from your Energy Team connect with your school communications manager (or the admin of your social media pages and email service provider) to hand off proposed copy found in this guide, student-produced work from the monthly energy activities and general updates and progress reports.

### Where do we share School Uplift content?

The content in the Community Outreach Guide is written for your school's Facebook page and e-newsletter campaigns. These channels were identified by School Uplift pilot participants as the most widely used forms of communication with students, parents and the community. This material can easily be adapted to other social media platforms or print communications.

### How do we use the Community Outreach Guide?

It's simple! We've already written the content – all you need to do is fill in a few blanks, copy and paste. Each piece of content also comes with a supporting image or a visual recommendation. Feel free to adjust the content to meet your school's specific needs and audience. We've provided ideas for customization as well.

## Creating visuals

Download ready-to-go images at [energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/](https://energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/).

Or if you'd like to create your own visuals for your posts, we encourage you to use images or videos that reflect your unique school community. Be sure to familiarize yourself with your school's or district's student photography and social media policies so that student privacy, as defined by your school, is maintained.

Here are some helpful, free resources you can use to create your own imagery:

- **Canva:** Easy-to-use graphic design templates and software. Learn more at [canva.com](https://www.canva.com).
- **Unsplash:** Royalty-free stock photography. Learn more at [unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com).
- **Pixabay:** Royalty-free images, videos and illustrations. Learn more at [pixabay.com](https://pixabay.com).



## Best practices for maximum engagement

Growing and engaging your audience requires more than a “set it and forget it” strategy. You’ve got to start to understand who these people are, what they care about and where they hang out online, specifically on Facebook. We’ve put together some questions and tips that can help you find and grow your audience successfully!

### Facebook

- **Who is our audience?** Use Facebook Insights (Facebook’s analytics tool) to learn about your audience: age, gender, interests and more. Use those insights to craft messages that will appeal to your predominant audience. From your admin page, go to *Facebook Insights > People*.
- **When is our audience online?** Breaking through Facebook’s noisy feed isn’t always easy. Give yourself a leg up by using Facebook Insights to find out when your audience is most active. Schedule your posts to go live during those times so that your audience will be more likely to see them. Don’t forget to engage with your audience at that time too! From your admin page, go to *Facebook Insights > Posts > When Your Fans Are Online*.
- **How does our audience respond to different kinds of posts?** Not all posts are created equal! Your audience may respond best to video content, or maybe they like photo carousels or memes. Once you start to learn what your audience engages with most, you can create more content like it. From your admin page, go to *Facebook Insights > Posts > Post Types*.
- **Have we posted about this topic recently?** You’ll want to work closely with your school’s communications team or social media manager to schedule School Uplift content strategically. **To increase awareness of your school’s participation in the program, aim to post about School Uplift at least twice per month.** This will also help to keep the momentum going and encourage your audience to experiment with their own energy-saving behaviors. From your admin page, go to *Facebook Insights > Posts > All Posts Published*.
- **How does our audience engage with our content?** Are you getting more likes than comments? More comments than shares? Understanding how your audience engages with what you post can help you structure content more strategically and increase engagement. From your admin page, go to *Facebook Insights > Actions on Page*.



## E-newsletter

- **On average, what time of day do we see the highest open rates?** Every email service provider (ESP) should provide an analytics section in your dashboard. Use your ESP's analytics tool to find the day of the week and the time of day your audience is opening your emails. Look for any trends, and experiment with sending your emails at peak activity times to increase engagement.
- **What type of content gets the most clicks?** Opening an email is one thing, but it's even better when readers take action on your content. Maybe they click a link, register for an event, download a PDF — whatever it is, you can count that as a deeper form of engagement. Use your ESP's analytics tool to see what's getting the most clicks. Check out your click-through rate. Then, begin to draft content that includes the type of content a reader will want to click.



# Plug and play content

In this next section, you'll find prewritten copy and preselected images you can share with your communications team for posting. Each month includes two Facebook posts and two e-newsletters.

## October Facebook and e-newsletter content

**Content focus 1:** Introduction to School Uplift

**Provided visual 1:** Designed graphic of the School Uplift video being played on a computer. Find it at [energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/](http://energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/).

**Facebook post copy 1:** Big news! This year, our school will be participating in School Uplift, a new program from TVA EnergyRight® and *[insert name of local power company]*. This is a huge opportunity for us!

School Uplift is going to help us make smarter energy choices, save money on energy bills and reduce our impact on the environment.

Stay tuned for more information on how you can get involved too!

Learn more about School Uplift at [energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/](http://energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/).

**E-newsletter copy 1:** Big news! This year, our school will be participating in School Uplift, a new program from TVA EnergyRight® and *[insert name of local power company]*. This is a huge opportunity for us!

School Uplift is going to help us make smarter energy choices, save money on energy bills and reduce our impact on the environment. Students will be learning about energy and practicing energy-saving behaviors all year.

Our participation in School Uplift includes you too! Each month, we'll provide opportunities for the greater school community — parents and caregivers, elected officials, school board members and volunteers — to get involved with our energy-saving activities.

Check out this short School Uplift video that explains more about the program and why it matters to our school and community.

*[Embed video]*

*[Add "Watch Now" button]*

Be on the lookout for more information about School Uplift all year! Learn more here. *[hyperlink "Learn more here" to [energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/](http://energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/).]*



**Content focus 2:** Energy Dashboard

**Custom visual 2:** A photo or screenshot of a data slide from the Energy Dashboard PowerPoint or a photo of your Energy Dashboard on display at your school.

**Facebook post copy 2:** Next time you're here, be sure to check out our School Uplift Energy Dashboard! Our goal this year is to reduce our energy use by *[insert your school's reduction goal]*. And we're doing it with the help of TVA EnergyRight® and *[insert name of local power company]*. After our first month, we're *[insert progress towards goal %]* of the way toward our yearly energy savings goal!

This week, ask your student(s) what they're doing to save energy!

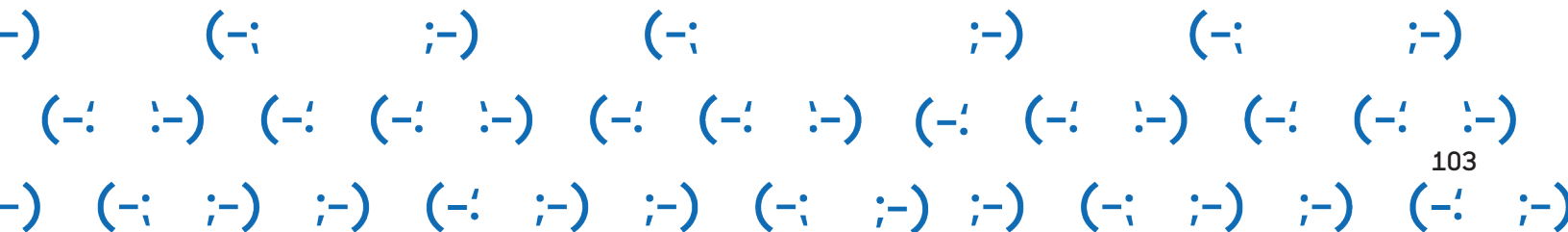
**E-newsletter copy 2a (if you DO have data to report):** Earlier this month, we shared that our school is participating in School Uplift, the energy-saving program for schools from TVA EnergyRight® and *[insert name of local power company]*. And we are officially up and running!

Our goal this year is to reduce our energy use by *[insert your school's reduction goal]*. Students, faculty and staff are already learning about energy and practicing new energy-saving behaviors.

To keep track of our goals and progress, we're using an Energy Dashboard. It's like a report card for our school's energy use each month. And everyone in our school gets to see it!

Our Energy Dashboard is located *[insert location of Energy Dashboard, e.g., in the lobby]*. That way, it keeps energy top of mind for everyone as we work toward our energy-reduction goal! It also reinforces energy-saving behaviors by showing students and staff the impact of their energy-saving actions.

And here's the best part: By tracking and reporting our energy usage, we'll also have the opportunity to compete for grants, including a Solar Demonstration Classroom or a Building Energy Upgrade! Grants are funded by TVA, and for schools located in Tennessee, additional funding is provided by the State of Tennessee's Energy Efficiency Schools Initiative.



The energy-saving changes our wonderful operations and maintenance team have implemented, along with all the energy-conscious actions everyone in the school is taking, have meant:

- We're [insert progress toward goal] of the way toward our yearly goal.
- We only used [insert energy use] kBTUs of energy. (kBTUs are a unit of heat.)
- We avoided [carbon emissions reduction] tons of carbon emissions — that's the equivalent of [insert number of tree seedlings] tree seedlings planted!

We're so proud of everyone for diving into School Uplift! Our actions are already making a difference.

Next time you're here, drop by the Energy Dashboard to check out the results for yourself!

Learn more about School Uplift here. [[hyperlink "Learn more about School Uplift here" to energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/.](#)]

**E-newsletter copy 2b (if you DON'T have data to report or energy use hasn't dropped yet):** Earlier this month, we shared that our school is participating in School Uplift, the energy-saving program for schools from TVA EnergyRight® and [insert name of local power company]. And we are officially up and running!

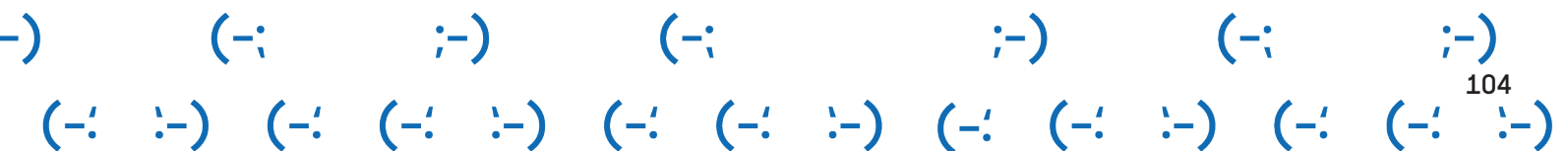
Our goal this year is to reduce our energy use by [insert your school's reduction goal]. Students, faculty and staff are already learning about energy and practicing new energy-saving behaviors.

To keep track of our goal and progress, we're using an Energy Dashboard. It's like a report card for our school's energy use each month. And everyone in our school gets to see it!

The Energy Dashboard tracks several metrics, like:

- Our energy-reduction goal for the year
- Our monthly energy use
- Our progress toward our energy-reduction goal
- The amount of carbon emissions we avoided each month, measured in both metric tons and the equivalent number of tree seedlings planted

Our Energy Dashboard is located [insert location of Energy Dashboard, e.g., in the lobby]. That way, it keeps energy top of mind for everyone as we work toward our energy-reduction goal! It also reinforces energy-saving behaviors by showing students and staff the impact of their energy-saving actions.



And here's the best part: By tracking and reporting our energy usage, we'll also have the opportunity to compete for grants, including a Solar Demonstration Classroom or a Building Energy Upgrade! Grants are funded by TVA and for schools located in Tennessee, additional funding is provided by the State of Tennessee's Energy Efficiency Schools Initiative.

We'll start sharing results next month!

We're so proud of everyone for diving into School Uplift! Our actions are already making a difference.

Next time you're here, drop by the Energy Dashboard to check out the results for yourself!

Learn more about School Uplift here. [*hyperlink "Learn more about School Uplift here" to [energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/](https://energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/).*]





## November Facebook and e-newsletter content

**Content focus 1:** Introduction to the Energy Team

**Provided visual 1:** Designed graphic that reads “Meet Our Energy Team.” Find it at [energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/](http://energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/).

**Custom visual 1:** A group photo of your school’s Energy Team

- Facebook post copy 1:** Meet our School Uplift Energy Team! These are the folks spearheading our energy-saving efforts this year. Our team includes:
- *[Example]* Bob Smith: Head of Operations and Maintenance, and Energy Champion
  - *[Example]* Caroline Jones, fourth grader and Team Scribe

If you see Energy Team members around school, make sure to say hello and show support for their hard work! Together with TVA EnergyRight® and *[insert name of local power company]*, our Energy Team members are helping us make smarter energy choices, save money on energy bills and reduce our impact on the environment.

Want to get involved in School Uplift? Contact *[insert name and contact info for Energy Champion]*.

### E-newsletter copy 1:

Meet our School Uplift Energy Team!

These are the staff, teachers, administrators and students who are spearheading our energy-saving efforts this year. Together, they’re helping us track performance, manage our school’s operations, engage with the community, train students and staff and implement education activities for students.

*(Find the different types of Energy Team members and role descriptions in the SEM for Schools Manual. Adjust this section to reflect your current Energy Team members.)*

Our Energy Team includes:

- **<Name>**: Energy Champion  
<Name> leads the Energy Team and manages our school’s participation in School Uplift.
- **<Name>**: Engagement and Empowerment Champion  
<Name> implements education and awareness activities for teachers and students.
- **<Name>**: Data Champion  
<Name> manages our school’s performance by tracking energy data and costs and updating the Energy Dashboard each month.
- **<Name>**: Training Champion  
<Name> plans and coordinates job- and system-specific training for faculty and students.
- **<Name>**: Facility/Systems Champion  
<Name> monitors our building’s operating systems, making sure we’re not wasting any energy.
- **<Name>**: Team Scribe  
<Name> is the Energy Team’s student representative and helps develop meeting agendas, records notes and action items, keeps meetings on time and distributes information to the rest of the team.
- <Insert any other Energy Team members, their roles and responsibilities>

If you see Energy Team members around school, make sure to say hello and show support for their hard work! Together with TVA EnergyRight® and *[insert name of local power company]*, our Energy Team members are helping us make smarter energy choices, save money on energy bills and reduce our impact on the environment.

Want to get involved in School Uplift? Contact *[insert name and contact info for Energy Champion]*.





*(You can also share some of the activities your school has used during Energy Pledge Month, like the pledge tree, and include photos or quotes from students about the activities.)*

At the end of the month, we'll encourage students to continue their energy-saving actions moving forward – and maybe even pick a new one too!

Don't forget to ask your student(s) about their Energy Pledge and why they think the pledges are important to practice.

## December Facebook and e-newsletter content

**Content focus 1:** Power Down Month

**Provided visual 1:** Designed graphic of a multiple choice question from Power Down Jeopardy. Find it at [energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/](http://energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/).

**Custom visual 1:** A photo of a class playing Power Down Jeopardy or Trivia.

**Facebook post copy 1:** Winter break is just around the corner. That means it's also Power Down Month! Students, teachers and staff will be working together to get the school ready for break. Everyone will be taking actions that help us to reduce energy use — and even eliminate some of it altogether — while we're closed. By properly powering down the school, we can reduce our energy use by up to 20%. That's HUGE!

As part of Power Down Month, students will be playing Power Down Jeopardy or Power Down Trivia to learn the different ways we can help the school save energy. Check in with your student(s) to find out what they're doing in their classroom to help us power down!

**E-newsletter copy 1:** Winter break is just around the corner. That means it's also Power Down Month! Students, teachers and staff will be working together to get the school ready for break. Everyone will be taking actions that help us to reduce energy use — and even eliminate some of it altogether — while we're closed.

We'll be turning off and unplugging lights, fans, computers, AV equipment and more. By properly powering down the school when it's closed, we can reduce our energy use by up to 20%. That's HUGE!

As part of Power Down Month, students will be playing Power Down Jeopardy or Power Down Trivia to learn the different ways we can help the school save energy. Then they'll get to work together as a class to practice some of their new power-down skills.

**Did you know:**

- Saving water saves energy? It takes energy to treat, pump and heat water before it's delivered to faucets or showerheads.
- During cool months, blinds and shades should be closed at the end of the day? This helps keep the room temperature comfortable.
- You should unplug your devices at the end of the day? Shutting down helps, but devices still use energy as long as they're plugged in, even if they're not being used.

*(Try including a quote from a student or teacher about their experience with Power Down Month.)*

Check in with your student(s) to find out what they're doing in their classroom to help us power down!



**Content focus 2:** At-Home Power Down

**Provided visual 2:** Designed graphic of an at-home power down checklist. Find it at [energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/](http://energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/).

**Facebook post copy 2:** Heading out of town for the holidays? Power down your home before you go! Just by taking a few small actions — like turning your thermostat down to 50–55 degrees Fahrenheit — you can save a lot of energy and come home to a lower utility bill!

Staying home and need something to do? Play Power Down Jeopardy, made available to our school and all of you from TVA EnergyRight® and [insert name of local power company], and discover lots of new ways to save energy! Find it at [jeopardylabs.com/213752](http://jeopardylabs.com/213752).

**E-newsletter copy 2:** Heading out of town for the holidays? Power down your home before you go! (We'll be doing our own version of this for the school!) Just by taking a few small actions, you can save a lot of energy and come home to a lower utility bill!

Here are a few things to try:

- Turn all thermostats down to 50–55 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Adjust your water heater to 120 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Unplug all small electronics, TVs, power strips, computers, etc.

And of course, don't forget to turn everything back on when you get back!

Want even more ideas for reducing your energy use? Check out everyday lifestyle changes you can make for even more ways to save energy at home. [hyperlink "everyday lifestyle changes" to [energyright.com/residential/education-advice/](http://energyright.com/residential/education-advice/).]

Staying home and need something to do? Play Power Down Jeopardy, made available to our school and all of you from TVA EnergyRight® and [insert name of local power company], and discover lots of new ways to save energy! Find it here. [hyperlink "Find it here." to [jeopardylabs.com/213752](http://jeopardylabs.com/213752).]

