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Contact: CarolAnn Hibbard, (508) 661-2264
news@ameresco.com

Dr. David Suzuki kicks off EarthCARE™ program on November 8 at You Matter! Respect & Responsibility in Our Community event

Noted environmentalist/broadcaster Dr. David Suzuki is inviting students to show the environment more respect—and is coming to the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board (HPEDSB) to inspire them to make a difference. You Matter! Respect & Responsibility in Our Community will launch EarthCARE, An Environmental Education Partnership in HPEDSB schools. EarthCARE is an environmental program that complements the school-renewal and conservation initiatives already underway through the Better Schools Partnership® (BSP). Spearheaded by energy partner Ameresco Canada, the BSP is a unique program that helps schools conserve energy, save money on utilities and fund essential school upgrades. EarthCARE actively involves students and staff in activities that reduce consumption of energy, water and waste. Students will promote conservation by acting as environmental stewards in their schools, homes and communities. The EarthCARE program is customized to enhance HPEDSB initiatives in character education, healthy active living, literacy and numeracy. The Board's BSP investment, which is valued at \$42 million, has already achieved annual savings of \$1 million on utility costs. To date, the program has reduced greenhouse gas (CO₂) emissions by 8,050 tonnes per year, or 30 percent. The Board expects to cut an additional \$600,000 from utility expenditures annually, and attain a 35 percent reduction in CO₂ emissions (12,050 tonnes), well beyond the Kyoto Protocol's recommended 20 percent. A number of schools have already received retrofits, which include new washroom equipment, heating and cooling system upgrades, lighting improvements and new exterior doors, with many more school improvements scheduled over the next four to five years. At You Matter!, student representatives will interview Dr. David Suzuki for school newspapers, followed by a media Q&A. Dr. Suzuki's keynote address will focus on how we need to prepare for the future by examining climate-change issues in the present. This will be one of his last school board speaking engagements as he approaches retirement. He will continue to work to promote environmental initiatives through his work with The Suzuki Foundation. Following Dr. Suzuki's speech, there will be a brief Q&A. Students will present him with a special gift, and he will sign copies of his books. A conservation trade fair, complete with information provided by regional and project partners, will allow guests to gain a better understanding of the Better Schools

Partnership and EarthCARE. A VIP luncheon for Dr. David Suzuki and invited guests will round out the event. The audience will include students and school community members. The event is closed to the public.

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