

Focus on TUSD - October 2007

Conservation Matters: Davidson Students Demonstrate Work to ConocoPhillips Execs



ConocoPhillips may be an international leader in the energy industry, but **Davidson Elementary School** is giving the company some competition in the energy conservation category.

ConocoPhillips executives visited the school at 3950 E. Paradise Falls Drive on Wednesday, Sept. 19, as part of its 35-city tour to discuss energy needs through its public outreach program, "Conservation on Energy." Davidson was selected because Conoco wanted a school site that has a solar photo-voltaic system and because it was built with energy saving measures. Davidson is a model of a school built with conservation designed into the construction and ongoing operation, said **Art DeFilippo**, the TUSD principal for the school. Davidson has also been recognized by the US Green Building Council as a LEEDS school, which means it has a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design rating. This Green Building rating system is a nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings. Davidson was rebuilt two years ago after the original building was demolished.

ConocoPhillips executives visited **Dennis Rosemartin's** fourth-grade classroom, where students presented a program detailing the energy-saving measures Davidson uses. They took turns asking, "Did you know?" followed by the information. They offered these points:

- Our windows are tinted to keep the heat out and let the light in.
- The lights in our room turn off when there's enough sunlight.
- The switches in the room are separated to discourage people from turning them on all at once.
- Our room has no carpet to cut down on allergies.
- Our room was built to allow the most light into the room in winter and the least amount in the summer.
- A shade over the walkway outside our classroom keeps the area cooler.
- Recycled blue jeans in the ceiling provide insulation.
- Solar panels make 5 percent of the electricity in our schools.
- Our bathroom sink turns off automatically so we save water.
- Our school uses green chemicals to clean, which are safe for the environment.



Students also demonstrated an experiment they did using boxes containing thermostats and covered with various colors of paper to determine which box heated the fastest. They found that boxes covered with darker paper heated more quickly than those with light colors.



"We're excited to have visitors," Rosemartin said. "The kids enjoy having their work recognized. This is like a mini-conference for them."

Fourth-grader **Tanner Summers**, and fifth-graders **Ashley Mata** and **Zahra Mohammadpour** led visitors on a tour, showing them sites such as a grant-funded outdoor botanical area that will be turned into a butterfly garden, seating area and exercise space.

Colette Reynolds, manager of Conoco's Challenged Resources, said the classroom presentations and tour were professional quality. "The children were knowledgeable and I was very impressed," she said. "They knew the principles and I could tell they had learned the material. They weren't reading anything. They just know what they're talking about. Using the school is an amazing educational tool."

-- By Sharon Dunham