



# National Green Schools Campaign: USGBC Chapters Green Schools Committees

## 2009 Year-End Report Executive Summary

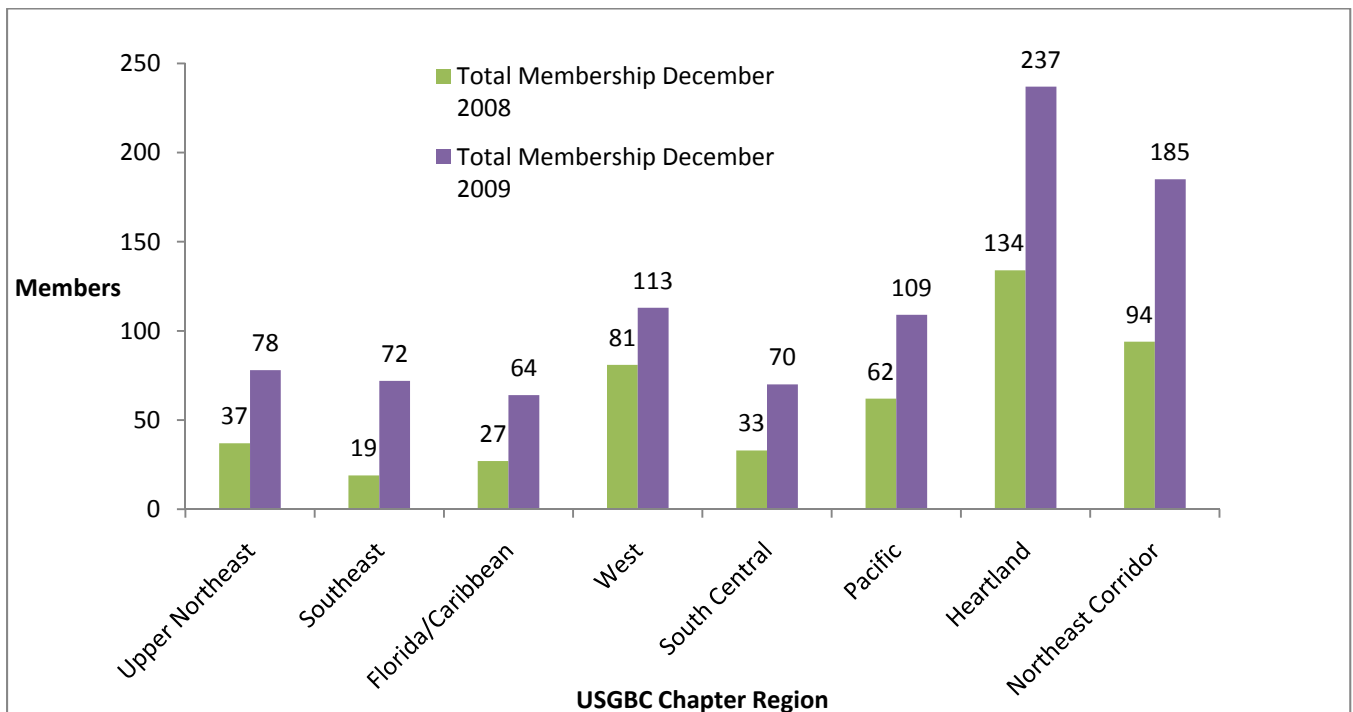
Within the last year USGBC has seen a marked increase in chapter involvement with green schools initiatives. At the end of 2009 we received *Year End Reports* from 80% (63/79) of chapters, indicating varying degrees of engagement, with a total estimated membership of almost 1000 across all chapters. This demonstrates a 9% increase from reports received at the end of 2008 (71%), and a nearly 100% increase in membership.

### Green Schools Committees, By the Numbers

The number of chapters making the commitment to putting green schools at the top of their agendas continues to be encouraging. Within the last year USGBC has seen a marked increase in chapter involvement with green schools initiatives. At the end of 2009 we received *Year End Reports* from 80% (63/79) of chapters, indicating varying degrees of engagement, with a total estimated membership of almost 1000 across all chapters. Of the 63 reporting chapters, 59 have already formed a Green Schools Committee.

The size of the Green Schools Committees ranges widely, with a reported total membership of 939, though the definition of “members” can range from those that regularly attend meetings to those that subscribe to a list-serve. 27 chapters reported fewer than 10 members, while the majority of members (279) work within 11 chapters. Four chapters (Chicago, Detroit, New Jersey, and NY Upstate) report a combined total of 247 members. The chart below shows the increase in Green Schools Committee membership by region since year-end 2008.

### Green Schools Committee Growth 2008-2009, by Region



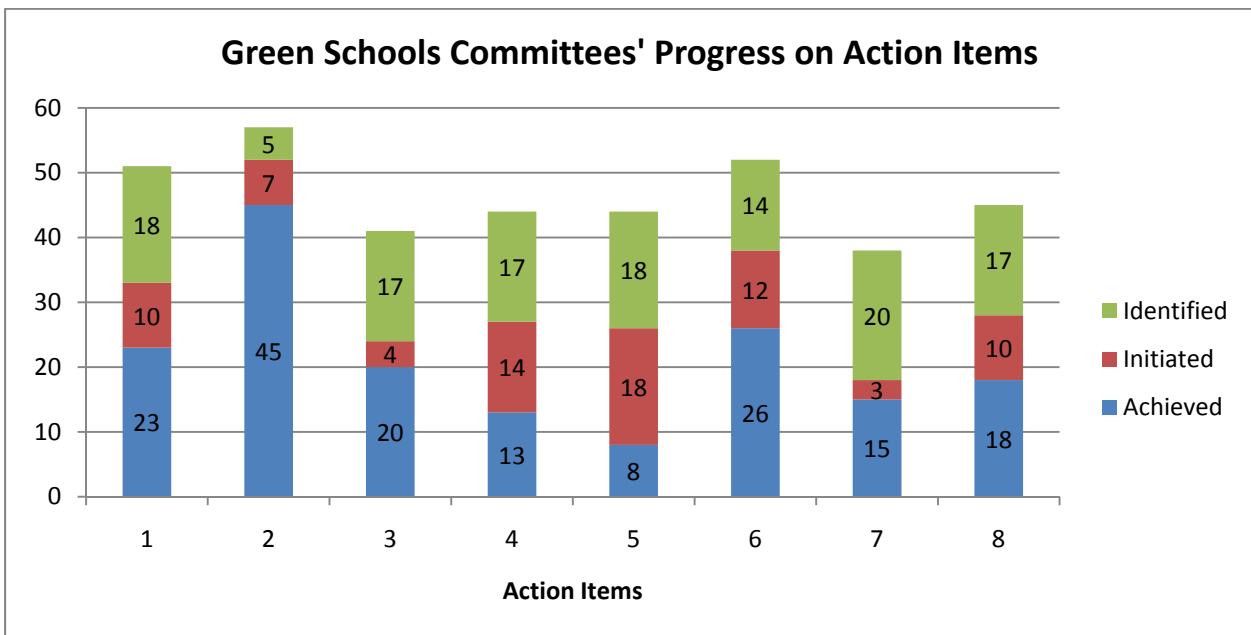
## Goals and Achievements

In Fall 2008, USGBC introduced Green School Committee Chairs to seven action items they were required to carry out with their committees and chapters in 2009, based on their level of engagement at the end of 2008. At the 2009 Green Schools Advocates Symposium, these action items were modified to reflect the changing role of the Green Schools Committee in relation to the Chapter Advocacy Committee and the priorities of USGBC. An eighth action item was also added, to encourage Committees to engage with the media.

Each chapter was asked to complete at least four of the following action items; if the position of Schools Committee Chair or the formal committee was created relatively recently, they are asked to complete two:

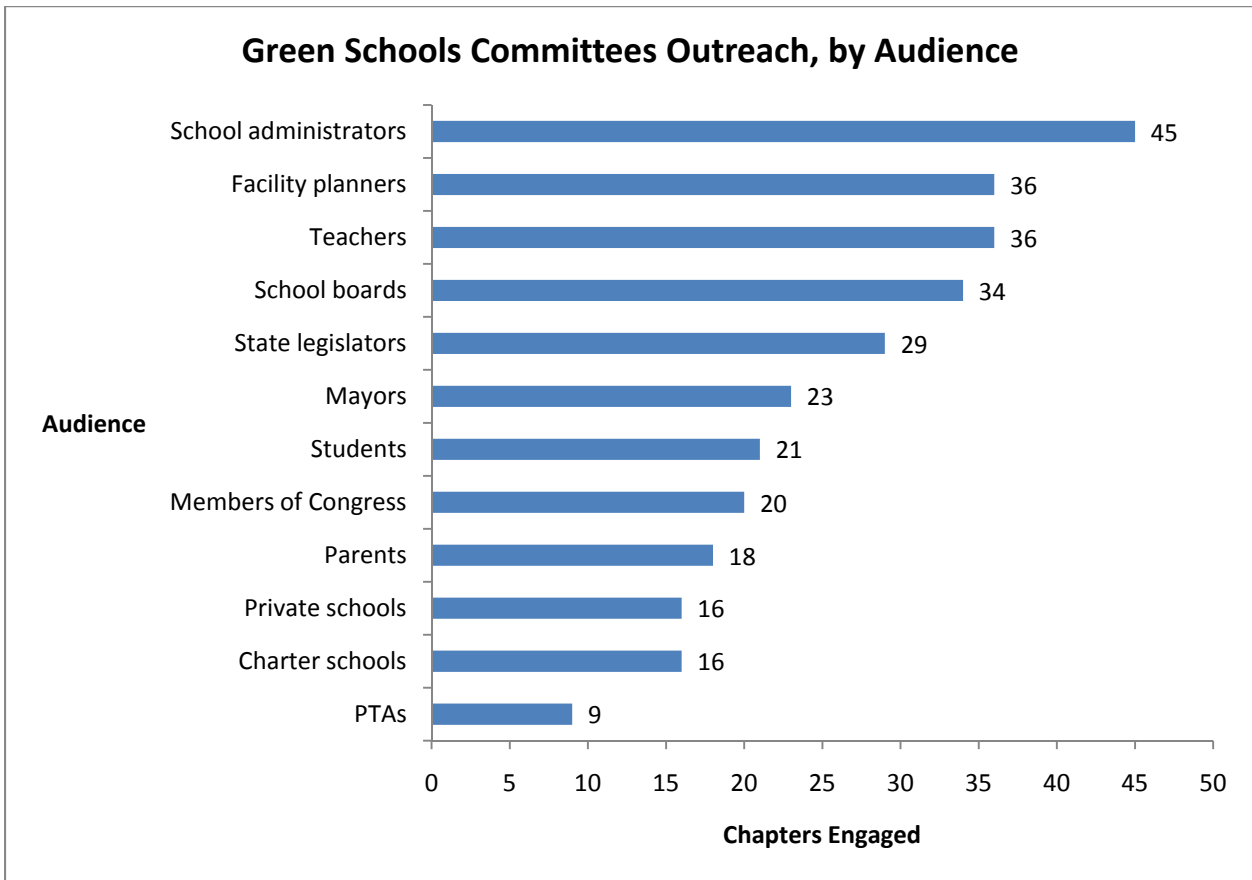
1. Host a green school community event
2. Make a green school presentation
3. "Adopt" a school or school district
4. Support your chapter's Advocacy Committee in recruiting local mayors to join Mayor's Alliance for Green Schools
5. Support your chapter's Advocacy Committee in establishing a Green Schools Caucus in your state's legislature
6. Engage an educator – recruit a teacher or school district representative for your local committee.
7. Invite your community to attend a USGBC LEED Technical Review or other USGBC course offering.
8. Engage the media with your initiatives.

In the *2009 Year End Report*, Chapters were asked to indicate whether they had "Achieved, Initiated, or Identified" each Action Item. The graph below indicates the level of chapters' engagement with each Action Item listed above (by number). For example, 51 chapters set the goal of hosting a green schools event in their community (Action Item 1), with 23 chapters having done so last year, and another 10 in the planning stages for an event early in 2010. 57 chapters have made speaking engagements a priority (Action Item 2), with 45 having achieved this goal in 2009.



## Outreach

Committees are reaching out to a variety of audiences, with most Advocacy Chairs reporting outreach to teachers, school boards, facility planners, and school administrators. With a majority reaching out to school administrators, facility planners, and teachers, it is encouraging to see the chapters engaging with audiences that have direct impact on facility decisions and operations. By looking at this chart in conjunction with the types of outreach described in the chart above, it is clear that Committees continue to utilize a variety of strategies to educate their communities about green schools.



## Stories of Success

In September 2009, USGBC hosted a Green Schools Advocates Symposium, inviting the Green School Committee Chairs to Washington, DC to participate in two days of media training, success-story and resource sharing, and outreach strategy development. Eighty participants attended, representing 69 chapters. USGBC's Schools Sector team invited other USGBC departments, including Chapters, Advocacy, Education, and Higher Education, as well as outside partner organizations such as the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), the National Clearinghouse for Education Facilities (NCEF), and others to introduce the chapter network to their programs.



The Colorado and Nebraska Flatwater Chapters teamed up in 2009 for the second annual *Colorado Green Schools Summit: Graduate to Green*, in order to educate school leaders in Nebraska about the benefits of building green. Brad Carne, USGBC Nebraska Flatwater Chapter's Green Schools Committee Chair, invited 15 school districts from across Nebraska to head west to Colorado, to experience firsthand the impact of green schools. Superintendents, directors of maintenance, principals, and board members travelled to learn about

green schools and attend the Colorado Chapter's second annual *Green Schools Summit*. One visitor, Dan Hoelsing of the Alliance School District (NE) said he "came away with a much expanded view of the need to connect education and building design to create educational environments that promote responsibility and awareness." This is just one example of how Green Schools Committees are working to introduce their local decision makers to the benefits of green schools and collaborating together as leaders in the national green schools movement.

Many Green Schools Committees are working to establish connections with education and curriculum organizations in their states and regions. In Wisconsin, the Green Schools Committee is working with the state's K-12 Energy Education Program (KEEP) to develop a green curriculum for K-12 students. This includes a new element on energy use, efficiency, and renewable energy in school buildings. With the help of KEEP and the Wisconsin Focus on Energy Program, the chapter's Green Schools Chair Mark Hanson and his committee surveyed attitudes towards green education in school districts across the state.

The Arizona Chapter supported the development of a green room gallery at the Arizona Science Center, for the Green School exhibit (image below). In the space, students learned about green schools and were encouraged to draw their version of a green school. Leslie Lindo, the Committee's Chair in 2009 and the Chapter Chair for 2010 led the effort with a dedicated committee, while also supporting the hosting of Greenbuild 2009 in Phoenix.



The eight chapters in California consist of an active network of more than 70 Green School Committee members. In 2010 these committees will take the lead on coordinating efforts with Green Technology to produce a track of USGBC sessions at the *Green California Schools Summit*. For the past two years this effort has been led by National staff; however, as the California network has grown and strengthened, this will be a unique opportunity for regional collaboration and local-level support of green schools initiatives in a state that is a proven leader in the green building movement.

## Plans for 2010

In an effort to better clarify the role of this growing membership, a decision was made in conjunction with the USGBC Advocacy Department to change the name of the committees working on green schools from “Green School Advocacy Committees” and “Green Schools Advocates” to “Green Schools Committees” and “Chairs”. Green Schools Committee Chairs and members are encouraged to support the work of and work in partnership with their chapter’s Advocacy Committees, and serve as content-matter experts as the need arises. Green School Committees will continue to focus their efforts on raising community awareness of the benefits of green schools through events, presentations, and working with key stakeholders such as teachers, parents, school administrators, and students, while Advocacy Committee members will lead the outreach to elected official such as state legislators and members of Congress.

We will continue to engage the Green Schools Committee Chairs with a variety of outreach initiatives. We will host a Green Schools Webcast each month, inviting chairs and their committees to learn about each other’s successes with outreach efforts and initiatives, as well as keep them informed on large-scale initiatives going on at the national level. The first webcast of 2010 already took place and had over 60 callers – an all time high, as 2009 Webcasts averaged around 20 live participants, with the majority of chapters listening to the recorded session later.

Other regular communications with the Committee Chairs will continue to include informal emails, with information about upcoming events and pertinent deadlines, and the quarterly K-12 Update. The Update will continue to include the “Ask an Advocate” column (potentially to be renamed in 2010), providing the opportunity each month to showcase a recent chapter success or project before our widening audience of green schools stakeholders and other interested members of the green building community. In 2009 we used this avenue to highlight the work of a diverse group of chapter initiatives and local accomplishments, including the partnership between the Nebraska and Colorado Chapters to raise green building awareness in both states, the work of the Alaska Green Schools Committee with schools across the state, and the work of the Indiana Chapter to support Indianapolis’s commitment to LEED certify all of its public schools.

We are encouraged by the ever increasing level of activity from the Green Schools Committees and Chairs, and are optimistic that many of the Committees are establishing themselves as strong presences within their chapters and their communities. We will monitor and support the activities of each chapter throughout 2010 via formal quarterly reports and monthly webcast attendance, and look forward to the exciting ways in which this critical grassroots-level work will continue to shape the green schools movement.