Cross-Country Travel for the Center for Green Schools Fellows

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Last week, I had the opportunity to travel to Boston, Mass. and Sacramento, Ca. to visit our two Center for Green Schools fellows at their respective school districts.

The first half of the week was spent in Boston, where Phoebe Beierle is immersing herself in work on district contracts and policies that deal with waste streams and school renovations. She's also strengthening the district's ties to community groups that do environmentally-focused work in the schools. While I was there, Phoebe took me to several schools, including a votech school with a three-story home (with solar panels!) in their shop to have kids practice construction trades. Phoebe also talked to us about a recycling program she is starting in the Boston Public Schools.

During the second half of the week, I was in Sacramento visiting Farah McDill. The energy level in the schools is palpable, and district leadership is largely responsible. Superintendent Jonathan P. Raymond came in to visit while I was with Farah and Teresa (the district's chief of staff) and told me that every day, when he comes home from work, his littlest girl loves to take off the Center's green apple pin he's been wearing all day and talk to him about what it means. Farah took me to a few of the schools with very successful gardening programs and those that are going to begin or strengthen green teams with their students. We also toured the new "Met," a high school focused on job experience through internships, which is being renovated to LEED standards.

It was great to be with Phoebe and Farah in their day-to-day lives, and it was very helpful to meet the individuals they interact with regularly. The Center is looking forward to the great work these two will do in 2012!

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