

Toppenish School District to Celebrate Completion of Valley View Elementary Solar + Battery Energy Storage Project with Community Flip the Switch Event

TOPPENISH, WA — September 2026 — Toppenish School District (TSD) invites media, community members, families, and project partners to celebrate the completion of a landmark clean energy initiative at Valley View Elementary School. The Flip the Switch event will mark the completion of the school's new Battery Energy Storage System (BESS+), the final milestone of a \$1.7 million renewable energy project funded through the Washington State Department of Commerce Community Decarbonization Grant. The event will feature activities, snacks, giveaways, and many exciting demonstrations centered around renewable energy, sustainability, and community.

EVENT DETAILS

What: Flip the Switch Community Event

Date: Thursday, September 17, 2026

Time: 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

Ribbon Cutting/Switch Flip: 6:30 PM, featuring Toppenish School District students

Location: Valley View Elementary School, 1605 S. Ash St., Toppenish, WA 98948

Admission: Free and open to the entire community

Activities & Giveaways: This family-friendly evening will feature over 20 interactive activities for kids and adults of all ages that highlight renewable energy and conservation efforts with fun takeaways, free bags, books and pumpkins for kids, free dinner and treats, an opportunity to build a solar car, prizes, and so much more!

PROJECT UPDATE

Valley View Elementary School is marking the completion of a 128-kW DC rooftop solar array paired with a 1376 kWh Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), a landmark investment in clean energy, community resilience, operational cost savings, and enhanced educational outcomes for students and the Toppenish community. This project was completed with assistance from partners throughout Washington including Săzăn Group, and Sulis Energy. This project not only aims to increase renewable energy generation in the community, as well as reduce operating costs for the District, support community energy resilience, and support STEM curriculum development for students.

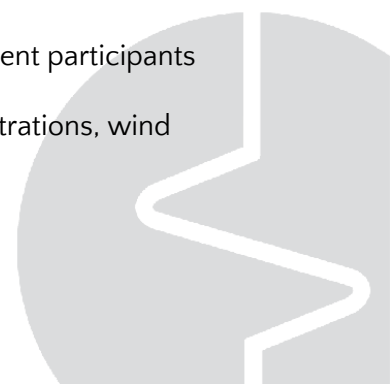
KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Solar power and battery storage projects have benefits beyond providing clean energy! This type of project will save the district money and provide a place for the community to depend on if the need for backup power arises.

- Projected to save the District approximately \$22,600 per year in electricity costs which helps direct more money towards student education
- Provides a minimum of 12 hours of battery-backed power during grid outages
- Transforms the school into a community emergency resilience center with access to lighting, communications, and power for essential equipment
- Achieves Washington State Clean Buildings Act compliance by reducing the school's energy use below the 45 Energy Use Intensity (EUI) threshold
- Gives students hands-on, real-world exposure to solar and battery energy technology

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE EVENT

- Official Flip the Switch ribbon-cutting ceremony featuring Valley View student participants
- Remarks/statements from District leadership and project partners
- Interactive STEM activity stations: build a solar robot, hydropower demonstrations, wind energy activities, renewable energy sorting games, etc.



- Free meal for all attendees (hot dogs, chips, and beverages)
- Community partner exhibits, games, prizes, raffle, and free books on renewable energy
- Photo and video opportunities at the newly energized BESS+ unit on campus

PROJECT PARTNERS, COMMUNITY PARTNERS

This project was made possible through the collaboration of the following organizations:

- Toppenish School District: Project owner and community champion
- Valley View Elementary School faculty and staff
- Washington State Department of Commerce: Community Decarbonization Grant
- Sätzen Group Inc.: Owner's Representative, engineering and system commissioning
- Sulis Energy, LLC: Solar and battery storage design, procurement, and installation
- Toppenish High School Leadership & CTE Program
- Toppenish School District Indian Education Department
- Toppenish Middle School STEAM
- Pacific Power: Serving electric utility and grid interconnection partner
- Heritage University, Environmental Sciences Department
- Girl Scouts
- Toppenish Historical Mural Society
- Educational Service District 105
- Pepsi Bottling Group of Yakima

MEDIA INVITATION

Members of the media are warmly invited to attend and cover the Flip the Switch celebration. Photo and video opportunities will be available at the live energizing ceremony, student STEM activities, and remarks from District and partner representatives. For press inquiries, interview requests, or to arrange advance site access, please contact:

Brittany Kaple, Director of Public Relations, Toppenish School District:
bkaple@toppenish.wednet.edu

Toppenish School District Solar + Battery Energy Storage Project: Community Flip the Switch Event

You're invited: Celebrate the future of community resilience and clean energy in Toppenish!

Join us for a remarkable milestone as we officially flip the switch on Valley View Elementary School's Solar + Battery Energy Storage Project, a landmark energy and resilience project for the Toppenish Community! Made possible through funding from the Washington State Department of Commerce, this innovative project represents a major step to advance clean energy and community resilience.

At the core of the system is a 128-kW DC rooftop solar array paired with 1,376 kWh Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) which is capable of powering critical infrastructure during outages and disasters. The system features high-performance solar modules from Washington-based Silfab Solar, and an advanced battery storage solution manufactured by ELM. This system was expertly installed by some of the region's leaders in solar including Sulis Energy, Mills Electric, and NW Renewables.

The Flip the Switch event will be open to the community and fun for all ages. Those who attend

can participate in solar and sustainability themed activities and students of all ages can receive a free book related to renewable energy and conservation. The official “ribbon cutting” ceremony, which takes place at 6:30 PM, will be a human sized light switch and with presentation by District leadership, community partners and the project team.

Please join us to learn about the latest renewable energy and resilience project in Toppenish and connect with community members, local leaders, and energy experts to help launch a new era of sustainability and resilience for the community!

Project Photos:



