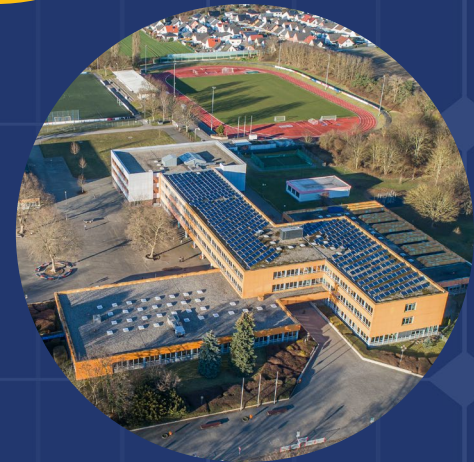
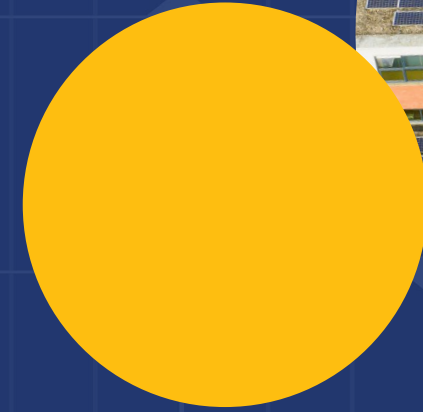


Solar Made Simple:

The Illinois Shines Program for Public Schools



Presented by Illinois Shines Program Administrator
April 2026



Today's Presenter



Brian Keller
Illinois Shines
Public Schools Sector
Strategist

Agenda

1 Illinois Shines Program Overview

2 Getting Underway with Project Planning

3 Additional Resources



Illinois Shines Program Overview



About the Illinois Power Agency



- The [Illinois Power Agency](#) (“IPA” or “the Agency”) was established in 2007.
- Committed to the planning and procurement of reliable, efficient, and cost-effective electricity – insulated from improper influence.
- Administers incentive programs and procurements to promote renewable and zero-carbon energy generation.

Specific goals and objectives include:



Developing annual electricity procurement plans to ensure adequate, reliable, affordable, efficient, and environmentally sustainable electric service at the lowest total cost over time.



Develop a Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan and implement the programs and procurements contained in the Plan.



Supply electricity from any Agency facilities at cost to one or more of the following: municipal electric systems, governmental aggregators, or rural electric cooperatives in Illinois.



Develop electric generation and co-generation facilities that use indigenous coal or renewable resources, or both, financed with bonds issued by the Illinois Finance Authority.



Conduct competitive procurement processes to procure the supply resources identified in the procurement plan.



Develop and implement a Zero Emission Standard Procurement Plan.

About Illinois Shines

Illinois Shines is a state-administered incentive program that encourages the development of solar photovoltaic systems by offering incentives to offset solar development costs.

The Program is designed to:

1. Support the state's renewable energy goals.
2. Foster a smooth purchase process of the Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) produced by participating solar projects.
3. Allow participants to offset solar project development costs.

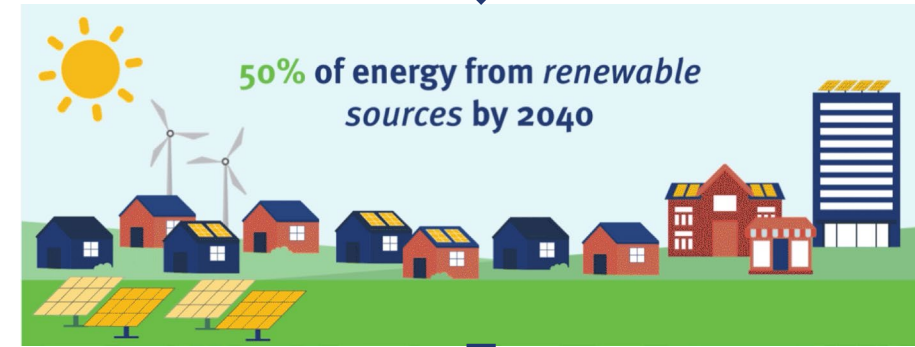
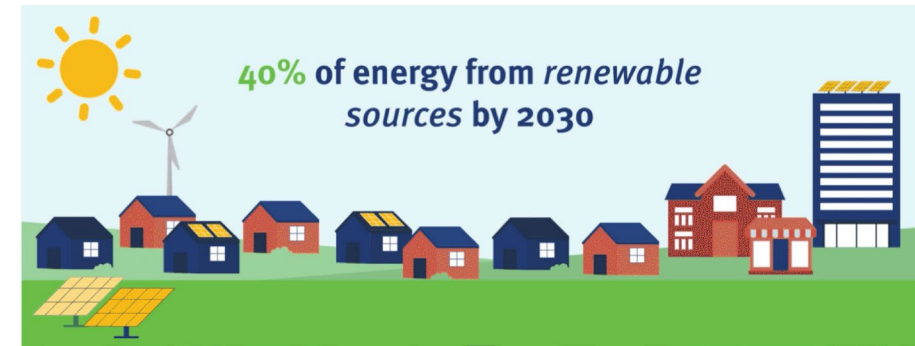


About Illinois Shines

Illinois Shines ensures that together, we can all play a role in our clean energy future and supports the State's renewable and clean energy targets.

Illinois targets include:

- 40% of energy from renewable sources by 2030
- 50% of energy from renewable sources by 2040
- 100% of energy from clean sources by 2050



Public Schools Project Types

Illinois Shines supports solar energy across two main project types - Distributed Generation or Community Solar.

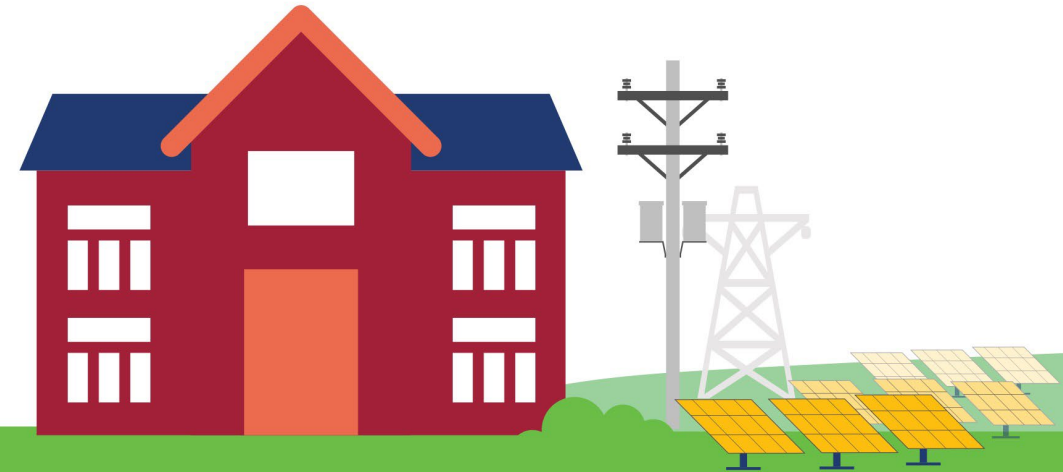
Distributed Generation

A project designed to meet the electric needs of a school or district building.



Community Solar

A large solar project designed to meet the electricity needs of many subscribers. This type of project supplies electricity to other community members or businesses as well as the school or district building.



What's New Under CRGA?

Starting June 1st, 2026, the Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act (CRGA) will come into effect. This will bring a key change to the Public Schools category.

15-year REC Contract Option will be available

- Allows for 15% of the REC contract value to be paid upfront payment project is energized
- Remaining balance paid out over the next 6 years
- Reminder: this takes effect starting June 1st



Benefits of Going Solar with Illinois Shines

Though customers can “go solar” on their own, Illinois Shines provides substantial, additional benefits including:



Financial incentives you may receive



Approval and compliance monitoring of Approved Vendors



Educational resources and consumer protection support



Equity opportunities for contractors, workforce, and your community

Benefits of Going Solar with Illinois Shines

The Illinois Power Agency and Program Administrator take consumer protection very seriously.

The Program has various requirements with which Approved Vendors must comply to ensure consumers are protected.



Approval and compliance monitoring of Approved Vendors

- 4-to-6-week approval process
- Must renew AV status each year
- Mentorship Program
- Program violations report



Customer Protection Support

- Help for stranded customers
- Consumer protection working group
- Disclosure form deep dive
- Consumer complaint report



Getting Underway with Project Planning



Solar Financing Types

Illinois Shines provides three common financing options for going solar, including:



Purchase:

Buy the project outright or finance with a loan.



Lease:

Make regular payments to the project owner.



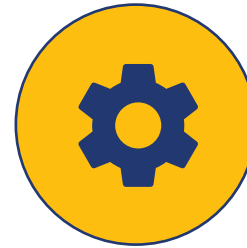
Power Purchase Agreement (PPA):

Pay the project owner for the electricity generated by the project at an agreed upon per kilowatt-hour rate.



Public Schools Success with Illinois Shines

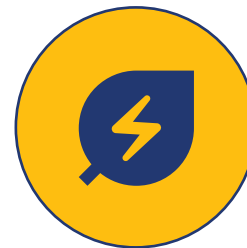
Be the next Olney Central Community College, an eastern Illinois community college that found workable solutions to going solar with Illinois Shines, reducing its electricity expenses and turning its campus into a hands-on renewable energy learning hub.



System Size:
370.1 kW



**Expected Annual Energy
Production:**
525 MW



Annual Savings:
\$30,000 in year one and
further future savings

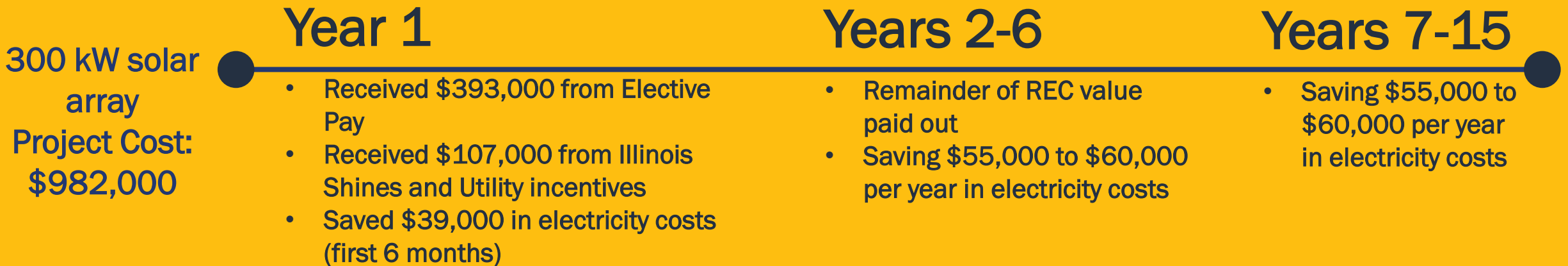


Financing Type:
Purchased
and Owned

Success with Illinois Shines and 15-Year REC Contract Timeline

Be the next Jonesboro Elementary CUSD #43, a rural district that found workable solutions to going solar with Illinois Shines by taking advantage of Elective Pay and other incentives, reducing the project cost by 51% and making the decision “a no brainer”.

Originally considered a third-party ownership model, but Elective Pay allowed Jonesboro to own the system and get reimbursed for a portion of the project cost.



Public Schools Workshop

Illinois Shines Program Administrator is offering personalized, one-on-one workshops for public schools. These sessions are tailored to your school or district and include:

- Review of your school's Carbon-Free Assessment results
- Discussion of your solar energy potential
- Answers to any questions you may have about project planning, financing, and Illinois Shines incentives
- A walkthrough of how to become your own Approved Vendor

To schedule your session, contact us at schools@illinoisshines.com



Additional Resources



Additional Financing Opportunities

To make projects more financially viable, schools can research and explore additional financing options and incentives, outside of Illinois Shines/the Illinois Power Agency



Federal

- [IRA Direct Pay Tax Credits](#)
- [Renew America's Schools Grant](#) (U.S. Department of Energy)
- [Clean School Bus Program](#) (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency)
- [Climate Change Resources for Educators and Students](#) (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency)



State

- [ISBE School Construction Project Grants](#)
- [The Illinois Climate Bank](#)



Other

- [Ameren's Educational Facilities Incentives](#)
- [ComEd's Distributed Generation Rebates](#)

Additional Resources

- [Public Schools Hub](#)
- [Public Schools Project Guide](#)
- [Illinois Shines Public School Category](#)
- [Other Funding Sources](#)
- [IPA's Power Hour: Clean Energy Future for Public Schools: Benefits and Challenges](#)
- [Public Schools Case Study](#)

These resources and more available at
<https://illinoisshines.com/public-schools>



Thank you!

Brian Keller

Public Schools Sector Strategist

(510) 482-4420 x1183

Schools@IllinoisShines.com

