



## **ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINE**

### **Title: Environmental Education**

**Effective Date:** April 26, 2010

**Responsibility:** Superintendent of Program and Schools (Elementary)

### **Rationale**

The Near North District School Board models the values of environmental awareness and appreciation, high ethical standards, and stewardship and promotes and supports the implementation and expansion of environmental education through leadership, curriculum, staff, student and community engagement.

### **1.0 Implementation**

#### **1.1 Student Engagement**

Students must be active participants in Shaping Their Future. All students should have the opportunity to actively participate in sustainable environmental practices, a strong student voice and involvement in their schools and community in meaningful ways.

Further, without limiting the scope of the above statement by the following list, the Director of Education shall:

- Initiate and maintain administrative practices which protect and preserve the environment.
- Demonstrate regular evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of internal processes to ensure good stewardship of public resources.
- Operate with educational programs and resources for staff and students which promote the development of environmental awareness, appreciation, and stewardship.

### **2.0 Teaching and Learning**

To increase student knowledge and skills to foster environmental stewardship, to enable students to be responsible citizens, environmentally active and to apply skills and knowledge to effect change.

- Incorporate environmental education in program content in all subjects and grade levels, using relevant curriculum documents .
- Link environmental knowledge and related skills to the teaching of our First Nations, character education and social justice issues .
- Encourage schools to provide opportunities for students to acquire knowledge and skills related to environmental education in all subject areas. Teachers use active learning strategies .
- Schools will develop learning opportunities for students to acquire knowledge and skills related to environmental education in all subject areas; as well as understanding and comprehending the environmental issues and the causes of these issues.
- Embed environmental education in Board improvement plans and school improvement planning.
- Fundraising promotes environmentally friendly choices .

### **3.0 Environmental Leadership**

So that environmental education will be integrated into school board policies, administrative guidelines and the Strategic Plan, the Board will:

- Create an Environmental Committee, membership from OSSTF, ETFO, OPC, Plant, the Board Office, a Trustee and a Superintendent. Community members welcome.
- Imbed the Environment in the Strategic Plan.
- Develop a plan to integrate sustainable environmental practices in all operations .
- With Health and Safety ensure workplaces are safe and healthy while protecting and conserving the environment.

### **4.0 Community Partnerships and Student Engagement:**

To foster active participation in environmental initiatives and build partnerships with the community, and ensure a strong student voice the Board will:

- Engage community members as partners
- Engage community members to deliver programs to our students (Greening Nipissing, Georgian Bay Biosphere) .
- Share school and student projects which demonstrate engagement in environmental stewardship (meatless bbq's, science fairs)

### **5.0 Education Reference:**

- Ready, Set, Green! Tips, Techniques and Resources from Ontario Educators
- Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools
- Shaping Our Schools, Shaping Our Future

## **PAPER USE**

We use an incredible amount of paper every day. When you consider the significant amount of trees and water needed to produce this paper, and the cost-effective and accessible recycled options, it becomes clear that this is an area where our organization could easily make a measurable impact.

### **Checklist:**

- Recycle all of your paper waste.
- Double side all of your copies and save one sided sheets for re-use whenever possible.
- Attempt to source your paper needs (if photocopier compatible) from 100% post consumer sources and from Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) approved suppliers. This would ensure that a minimum number of trees are harvested for our use.
- Email materials for meetings in advance and print off only copies when needed for discussion.
- Provide meeting reports and other information on flash drives, and encourage the use of personal laptops. The flash drives can be returned for re-use. It may be more time-efficient to post agendas, minutes and reports on the web than to put them on a flash drive, but consider the security of the information. Use only password-protected web sites and wikis.
- Change the default settings on your word processor, spreadsheet, etc., to get the most out of your paper and ink. Narrow the margins, and select an eco-sensitive font.

## **FOOD**

### **Checklist:**

- Buy locally produced foods whenever possible. If you hire a caterer or book a conference, ask whether they source their food locally.
- Avoid the use of disposable containers from restaurants when ordering food for events. Ask whether restaurants carry reusable or recyclable containers and choose from restaurants that do.
- Avoid the use of disposable items such as plastic cutlery and glasses that are often not recyclable, in favour of traditional tableware that can be washed and reused.
- Avoid the use of single serve items such as individual creamers and sugars.
- Minimize food wastage by informing food preparers of the exact number of participants. If you can re-evaluate the quantity needed as the event is on-going, this may help minimize waste.

## **WATER AND BEVERAGES**

### **Checklist:**

- Use re-usable water bottles rather than disposable bottles.
- Encourage attendees of meetings to bring their own reusable coffee mugs and containers. Consider providing these items for participants.
- Provide drinking glasses and water in jugs for meetings.

**MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES****Checklist:**

- Reuse or recycle name tags, binders, pens and other materials from each meeting.
- Consider holding meetings by tele- or video-conferencing. This would avoid travel and the associated environmental and financial costs.
- Car pool.

**PLANTS IN YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT****Checklist:**

- Optimally, water the lawn/gardens between 7:00 and 10:00 a.m. This does not include playing fields.
- If at all possible plant ecofriendly grass which can be purchased through your local garden store.
- Switch to automatic watering – there are a number of devices now available. This reduces workload and can save water.
- Plant gardens with indigenous and drought-resistant plants to promote a healthy local ecosystem.
- Use a variety of native species to provide both beauty and habitat.
- Plant trees that are drought-resistant and indigenous to the area (deciduous are best).
- Discuss placement with Facility Services and Maintenance Supervisor.