

Policy

CONSERVATION SUSTAINABILITY AND GREEN INITIATIVES

Introduction

The Board of Education recognizes that responsible environmental stewardship is an integral part of its mission in ensuring that schools are well run. The board supports conservation and sustainable planning, operations and maintenance, and shall endeavor to implement *green initiatives in all day-to-day district operations. *Sustainability is defined as meeting the needs of the present while not compromising the future. The Board recognizes that sustainability through the adoption of green initiatives in all day-to-day district operations will only succeed with the cooperation and support of the board, the students, the parents/guardians and the community. The district shall endeavor to engage all members of the school community in the conservation and green initiatives of the district.

The Board directs the chief school administrator or his or her designee(s) and other key stakeholders to contribute and oversee the districts programs for conservation and green initiative including but not limited energy efficient practices, recycling, sustainable programs and business practices within the district, environmental assessments, green construction within school facilities, and education and training programs for students, staff and the community.

The Board will introduce consider sustainability goals and objectives as part of strategic planning process. Sustainability goals and objectives shall be reviewed and adjusted as part of the regular strategic planning process.

The district shall endeavor to implement a 3E approach to sustainability:

- A. **Economy** – actions to reduce operating cost, save money and redirect saving towards school improvement.
- B. **Education** – actions to train district staff members and engage students in the academics of the districts sustainability initiatives increase student’s connections to an Integrative Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (*STEM) process thereby increasing student achievement.
- C. **Environment** – actions to create healthy and safe places for students and staff to learn work and play.

Target Areas/Goals

A sustainable environmental future means that the board will assess, devise and implement initiatives focused on achieving the following goals:

- A. Implementing strategies that improve conservation of resources by managing and minimizing waste, reducing the amount of waste generated and maximizing district recycling efforts. This may include paper, plastic, glass, metal, textile and electronics recycling, paperless management and classroom procedures, and investigating and implementing plans for composting, storm water runoff reuse, and school gardens;
- B. Promoting energy management to reduce energy consumption and costs, expand the scope of school and district energy audits, and maximize the use of renewable energy resources. This may include energy efficient lighting and light bulbs, sun and daylight management, solar panel technology, well timed and controlled air conditioning devices, and geothermal wells and heat;

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- C. Promoting environmentally sustainable business practices including EPP (environmentally preferred purchasing) of products and shared services agreements that improve efficiency and reduce cost and waste all areas in school operations;
- D. Requiring that new construction use more sustainable and recycled options. This may include green building materials and practices in all construction, reducing the use of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and replacing them with healthier options, and utilized regional resources;
- E. Implementing health and wellness strategies to improve personal fitness and healthy living such as initiatives to create toxin free indoor air quality, low emission and fuel consuming transportation options, safe management of chemical use and disposal, physical activity in the educational program, heat acclimation procedures for school athletics and healthy nutrition.
- F. Articulating the school sustainability, energy conservation and waste reduction programs and health and wellness initiatives in the implementation of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, and extracurricular activities;
- G. Deploying teaching strategies through an Integrative Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM) approach throughout the curriculum to encourage problem-solving on how to improve conservation, sustainability and green initiatives;
- H. Providing staff training and development related to behavior modification that will impact all areas of the board conservation, sustainability and green initiatives as necessary and appropriate;
- I. Promoting environmentally responsible and sustainable business practices in collaboration with the local municipality that improves operations and maintenance in areas such as, but not limited to, energy conservation and management, renewable energy, waste management, water conservation, green purchasing and indoor air quality measures.

School District Green Team

A district Green Team may be appointed by the chief school administrator with approval by the school board. The team may include teaching staff members, administrators, board members, facility staff members, community members including experts from the local municipality, students, and parents/guardians. The team shall be responsible for investigating and proposing district wide sustainability audit, conservation and green initiatives for day-to-day operations and practices that promote a sustainable environment that is conducive to learning and lowers the operational cost of the district. The Green Team will also oversee:

- A. The assessment of the current district practice's and operation's impact on the environment;
- B. The implementation of learning and participation opportunities for students in the areas including audits in the areas of energy, water and materials and general resources, conservation measures, recycling, and composting;
- C. The implementation of curriculum components that supports the district conservation and green initiatives;
- D. Employee, student and community engagement;
- E. The development of goals and objectives for improving the district's sustainability, conservation and green initiatives.

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- F. The creation of a strategic plan or action plan to achieve district goals and objectives.
- G. Advising the school board and making recommendations.
- H. Review contractual agreements with vendors that reflect the districts sustainability plan.

Recycling, Composting and Waste Management

Each building principal may designate staff to investigate, develop and/or implement the following:

- A. Recycling initiatives in every school room that are appropriate to the materials used in each school setting. Every classroom and every room in the school shall have a highly visible and convenient recycling bin. If recyclables require separation, bins shall be provided and clearly labeled. The placement of the recycling bins shall be reviewed at the end of each term. All staff shall report repairs or replacements as needed;
- B. Staff and student training aligned to local municipality programs and processes on the materials that are recycled, the rules for recycling, and the appropriate method for the disposal of recyclable materials (i.e. requirements for rinsing, cleaning, or removal of staples, paperclips, etc.);
- C. Recycling and environment workshops and events are scheduled to maintain knowledge and awareness amongst the students and wider school community;
- D. Training for cafeteria and maintenance staff regarding recycling. Staff shall have ready access to recycling bins and shall be trained to dispose of food, packaging, and other recyclable waste appropriately;
- E. Electronic waste recycling as appropriate including the proper handling of electronic waste which may include hazardous waste;

Waste reduction procedures (such as by going paperless to the extent possible) throughout the educational program, to the extent possible. Hazardous waste materials won't be commingled with non-hazardous materials in any district recycling programs.

Energy

Each building principal may designate staff to develop and implement a resource conservation and management plan consistent with the district's educational goals incorporating energy, water and/or resource conservation strategies. The plan may include:

- A. Assessments to determine energy and water use. Monitoring and reporting on use of energy, HVAC and water will be incorporated in normal operations, linked to other efforts to increase awareness of opportunities to reduce energy use and water use, such as using rain barrels for school gardens.
- B. The application of best practices for resource management that encourage efficient use of electricity, natural gas, gasoline, water, full utilization of materials prior to disposal, limited use of disposable materials, non-biodegradable products and promote recycling efforts;
- C. Procedures to maintain energy usage and energy costs at the lowest level that is reasonably achievable and consistent with an efficient learning environment in schools;

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- D. Assessment and application of best practices in resource conservation technology for monitoring and operating district buildings;
- E. Resource conservation technologies and alternative energy sources such as solar panels incorporated in all new construction or remodeling projects;
- F. Assessment to determine if joint efforts can be coordinated to include the school and the municipality in conservation and renewable energy projects;
- G. Participation in LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) and use of LEED standards when applicable.

The resource conservation and management plan shall also include procedures for the director of facilities to administer the plan to maintain resource conservation, efficient buildings and provide training and recognition for students, custodians, teachers, principals and others as appropriate to ensure conservation accountability.

The effectiveness of the district's resource conservation and management plan will be continually revised as needed to reflect conservation innovations and shall include recognition for student and staff special efforts toward the goal of resource conservation.

Environmentally Sustainable Business Practices

The district will establish business procedures that give a premium to environmentally sustainable practices. The district staff may be designated to implement and oversee the following strategies where feasible:

- A. The reduction of the waste of energy, water, paper, food and other resources by maintaining a resource conservation management program;
- B. The efficient use of resources, recycling waste, and the reduction of the demand for materials and resources like paper, energy and water;
- C. Purchasing practices based on long-term environmental and operating costs that include whenever possible environmentally sustainable product purchases, such as “green cleaning” products;
- D. The purchase of products that are durable, reusable, made of recycled materials and non-toxic;
- E. The reduction of air pollution through strict enforcement of “idling” regulations and the purchase and operation of school vehicles that have low level emissions;
- F. Business partners to develop and support conservation and sustainability programs and initiatives;
- G. The purchase of green cleaning supplies;
- H. Implement an integrated pest management program that includes the following practices (see board policy 3510 Operation and Maintenance of Plant):
 1. Reduce and eliminate where feasible, the use of chemical pesticides;
 2. Seek practical alternatives to the use of pesticides;
 3. Report annually on practices.

Curriculum Component

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Opportunities to introduce sustainability best practices will be used as “teachable moments” for students:

- A. STEAM (Integrative Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) and related curriculum initiatives will be linked to problem-solving on how to improve conservation, sustainability and green initiatives;
- B. Career and Technical Education will be linked to the district’s conservation, sustainability and green initiatives (New Jersey’s Department of Education Green Program of Study);
- C. Link green initiatives to teaching and learning practices that focus on 21st century skills (workplace preparedness) 8.1 Educational Technology, 8.2 Technology Education, Engineering and Design, Next Generation Science Standards, project and problem based leaning and design based pedagogy;
- D. As the New Jersey Student Learning Standards are implemented in the district, components of the curriculum will include elements on conservation, sustainability and green initiatives whenever possible;
- E. Professional Development will be linked, in part, utilizing the building as a learning lab and aligned to district wide facility sustainability initiatives;
- F. Consider participation in certification and recognition programs such as – Sustainable Jersey for Schools, Eco Schools, NJDOE Green Ribbon Schools and other education for sustainability programs.

Community engagement

The board will communicate its sustainability efforts to the community including that healthier schools have lower operating expenses. The board will invite community involvement and participation.

Implementation

The chief school administrator will oversee, to an extent that is reasonable and appropriate:

- A. Staff and students receive the necessary notification of and training on new procedures that are implemented for the district’s conservation, sustainability, and green initiatives;
- B. The district and the local municipality coordinate and include educational program opportunities for community members;
- C. The district’s staff development program includes opportunities for staff development and training in teaching strategies aligned with the district’s conservation, sustainability, and green initiatives, including STEM;
- D. The school business plan, technology plan, facilities plan and curriculum align with and support the resource conservation and management plan,

The chief school administrator shall report regularly to the board at a regular public meeting on the implementation and effectiveness of all district conservation and green initiatives.

Adopted: March 2017

Key Words

CONSERVATION, SUSTAINABILITY AND GREEN INITIATIVES (continued)

Sustainability, Conservation, Green Policy, Green Initiative, Environment, Environmental, Recycling, Solar

Possible

<u>Cross References:</u>	*1100	Communicating with the public
	*1330	Use of facilities
	*2130	Evaluation of principals
	*3100	Budget planning and preparation
	*3320	Purchasing procedures
	3508	School gardens
	*3510	Operation and maintenance of plant
	*3516	Safety
	*3542.1	Wellness and nutrition
	*4112.4/4212.4	Health
	*4115	Supervision
	*4116	Evaluation of teaching staff members
	*4131/4131.1	Staff training and development
	*4215	Supervision
	*4216	Evaluation
	*4231/4231.1	Staff training and development
	*5141	Student health
	*5142	Student safety
	*6010	Goals and objectives in instruction
	*6114	Emergency and disaster preparedness
	6142.15	STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math)
	*7110	Long-range facilities plan

*Indicates the policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual.

*Green – Anything environmentally friendly

*Sustainability - Sustainability is based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations.

*STEM - An interdisciplinary or Trans-disciplinary and applied approach that is delivered through a project or problem based learning and focused on real-world problem solving.