

PRESS RELEASE

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Emeryville School District Passes First, Comprehensive "Green Schools" Resolution in California

Emeryville, CA (May 10, 2005) - The **Emery Unified School District Board** (EUSD) passed the first, comprehensive framework resolution among schools in California that creates a broad vision to make Emeryville's schools healthy and environmentally-sound places to work and learn. The resolution is based on the work of the **Green Schools Initiative**, a new organization with a mission to improve the health and ecological sustainability of schools in the U.S.

"We are a school district that wants to make a difference," said **Forrest Gee, President of the EUSD Board of Education**. "Kids and teachers spend most of their day at school and we want our environment to foster their health and well-being – from the food they eat, to the air they breathe, and even to the paper and pencils and energy they use," added Gee.

EUSD Superintendent Tony Smith noted that "this resolution creates a long-term, inspiring vision for us." "The resolution also integrates and strengthens many efforts already underway in our district, such as recycling efforts and our partnership with Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory on a sustainable development project in Ghana," said Smith.

Deborah Moore, Co-Director of the Green Schools Initiative, said "We are pleased to see the Emeryville School District show such leadership by passing this resolution and we hope this sparks interest among more and more school districts. Imagine if all schools in California become toxics-free, use recycled paper, conserve energy and serve healthy food – it would make such a difference in our kids' health and the planet's health!"

The **Green Schools Initiative** recently released a report, "*The Little Green Schoolhouse: Thinking Big about Ecological Sustainability, Environmental Health, and K-12 Education in the USA.*" The report and website (www.greenschools.net) document how unhealthy and unsustainable schools are today and provide a framework for transforming our schools based on Precautionary Principle, which advocates a policy of anticipatory action to prevent harm. The Emery School District resolution is based on this framework.

"We think that adopting a 'green schools' resolution and action plan can save school districts money, protect children's environmental health, and improve student achievement by providing kids hands-on learning opportunities in their own schools and communities," said **Josh Karliner, Green Schools Initiative Co-Director**. "We hope that a diversity of school officials, teachers, staff, parents, and local groups will join forces and work together on making this vision a reality."

EUSD Board President Gee said "We already have ideas for our first steps: gardens at each school tended by science class students; buying recycled office and paper supplies; getting toxics out of our cleaners and garden chemicals; and doing an energy audit. All this work will culminate for us in several years as we design and build our new Emeryville Center for Community Life. We hope people in the Bay Area will join with us to make this sustainable future happen."

The final text of the "Resolution for Healthy, Environmentally-Sound Schools" can be found at <http://www.emeryusd.k12.ca.us/>

For more information and to download a copy of the report, please visit the Green Schools Initiative website at www.greenschools.net

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