

# SAMPLE SCHOOL BOARD RESOLUTION:

## BLUEPRINT FOR HEALTHY, ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND SCHOOLS

Whereas—Schools have the potential to make positive, tangible environmental change in the world while teaching students to be stewards of their communities, the earth and its resources;

Whereas—Our current school systems often suffer from inadequate facilities that frequently use energy, water and other resources unsustainably; use pesticides, cleaning agents and other chemicals that pose health risks; and can result in “sick building syndrome” from indoor air pollution and poor ventilation;

Whereas—Many schools across the nation are sited on or near toxic waste dumps, environmentally hazardous facilities, and other sources of pollution;

Whereas—Schools are important consumers of natural resources, including energy, water, food, and paper, and generators of waste materials, including garbage, runoff, and air emissions, which contribute to the world’s larger environmental problems like global warming, water and air pollution, and habitat destruction.

Whereas—Children, teachers, and staff are regularly exposed to toxic chemicals at school, are offered poor and unhealthy food choices, and use and manage resources unsustainably resulting in negative impacts on their health and their ability to teach and learn.

Whereas—This district expends considerable financial resources on chemical pest control, cleaning supplies, energy, water, office and school supplies, and educational activities (resolution could include specific statistics from the district on funds spent on specific resources);

Whereas—This district has a considerable opportunity through its purchasing power to improve both the environment and its financial bottom line.

Whereas—Many options and choices exist for schools to use natural resources more efficiently; to reduce, reuse, and recycle; to follow “Healthy, High Performance School Guidelines” for construction; to ban junk food

and soda and produce healthy lunches through local farm-to-school partnerships; to eliminate toxic chemicals; and to purchase (or produce) clean energy and recycled paper to protect our global environment.

Whereas—There is a tremendous opportunity to teach children about ecological sustainability, environmental health and nutrition; meet math, science and social studies standards; integrate environmental education into curricula; and support students to become leaders in making their own school a healthier and more ecologically friendly place;

Whereas—The Precautionary Principle has been adopted by a growing number of cities, as well as the Los Angeles Unified School District as a proactive approach to promote the safest, lowest risk way to protect people’s health, the environment, and property;

Recognizing all the excellent work already underway in the district in X, Y and Z, undertaken by parents, teachers, administrators, janitors, nurses and others;

Recognizing that this framework creates a long-term, inspiring vision that integrates and strengthens many efforts in our district.

Further recognizing that fully implementing this resolution will take time, and must be achieved in stages.

Be it resolved that to promote healthier, more environmentally sustainable schools and teach environmental leadership, the School Board hereby:

1. Adopts the Precautionary Principle as the foundation for its environmental policy. The Precautionary Principle includes the following elements: \*Anticipatory Action; Right to Know; Alternatives Assessment; Full-Cost Accounting; Participatory Decision Process [see: City of San Francisco, Precautionary Principle Ordinance]
2. Calls on the district to develop an action plan to implement a proactive environmental policy based on the Precautionary Principle

that includes the following to be prioritized and implemented step by step:

- 2.1 The development and adoption of an Integrated Pest Management program and other policies to minimize or eliminate the use of hazardous pesticides and herbicides in schools.
- 2.2 An audit of cleaning materials used in district schools and the development of a plan to use the least toxic substances.
- 2.3 Mechanisms to ensure that new schools are not sited near or on environmental health hazards.
- 2.4 A program to ensure that new schools are built and existing schools refurbished following Healthy, High Performance school building criteria that mandate the use of environmentally sound building material, efficient use of energy, water and other resources, and the creation of a healthy learning environment for children.
- 2.5 A district-wide plan to improve

the energy efficiency of schools, to increasingly rely on clean, renewable energy sources to power the district's facilities, and to ultimately transform schools into independent power producers by investing in clean renewable technologies such as solar and wind.

- 2.6 The creation of district-wide recycling and composting programs, along with the procurement of recycled office and classroom supplies.
- 2.7 Follow and build upon the examples of New York City, Chicago, Nashville, San Francisco and others and ban soda, candy, junk food and fast food from all school grounds.
- 2.8 Evaluate the district's school lunch program to ensure good nutrition and consider developing a farm-to-school program.
- 2.9 Encourage the development of school gardens and green schoolyards as hands-on learning tools that promote good nutrition, stewardship of the land, and that teach to standards.
- 2.10 Adopt frameworks that meet state standards and integrate environmental education and student participation into school-wide environmental initiatives, using partnerships with environmental education providers (non-profit and public agencies).



Source: "The Little Green Schoolhouse: Thinking Big About Ecological Sustainability, Children's Environmental Health and K-12 Education in the United States." [www.greenschools.net](http://www.greenschools.net)