



Greening Your School: Checklist for Getting Started

Schools can take many actions to reduce their environmental impact and create ongoing sustainability programs. Green Schools Initiative has compiled this checklist to help your school get started. Please visit www.greenschools.net to get more details, examples, and resources.

School Administration

- Form a Green Team or Eco-Committee with power to act
- Adopt an Environmental Policy or Mission Statement
- Undertake an environmental audit of your school
- Develop an Action Plan to reduce your impact with goals like Zero Waste or Carbon Neutral
- Communicate and inspire: create a regular feature in school newsletter
- Support professional development for sustainability
- Use the summer to plan for next school year
- Get certified as a Green Business or High Performance School

Strive to be Toxics Free

- Switch to Green Seal certified cleaners
- Avoid using pesticides; promote Integrated Pest Management
- Improve Indoor Air Quality with adequate ventilation; reduction in dust, mold and contaminants; and environmentally-friendly building materials
- Eliminate PVC and PC plastic (avoid #3, #7)
- Protect against lead in drinking water and old chipping paint

Use Resources Sustainably

- Adopt an Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) Policy and buy products with fewer toxic chemical ingredients and more recycled content
- Reduce food waste at lunch and compost food scraps; use reusable foodware at events
- Reduce paper waste: maximize electronic communications; defaults to double-sided; buy

recycled copy paper and bathroom supplies, "think before you print"

- Switch to energy-efficient lightbulbs; "turn it off" motto for lights, printers, faxes, and monitors
- Encourage "safe routes to school" for walking and biking; promote carpools and "no idling"
- Integrate green building practices for new construction; use facilities as teaching tools

Create Green Schoolyards; Serve Healthy Food

- Create time in schedule for outdoor play
- Evaluate options for removing asphalt for creating a school garden
- Consider container gardens for short-term gardening options
- Integrate natural elements: sundial, wood blocks and slices, cob benches and sculptures
- Serve fresh fruit and vegetables for snacks and lunch
- Buy local and organic; partner with local farmers and community gardens

Teach Stewardship

- Survey the curricula for ways of integrating principles of eco-literacy
- Learn and capitalize on the passions and interests of students, teachers, and parents
- Identify one hands-on activity to integrate into existing curricula (math, humanities, science, art, technology)
- Commit to at least one project per year
- Have students do school audits and monitoring on waste, paper, purchasing, energy, water
- Establish a school-wide Earth Day celebration
- Use parent volunteers and local experts

