

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 shall endeavor to create a sustainability program that fosters respect and responsibility for the preservation of our planet's resources, health and ecosystems. The sustainability program shall include conservation and sustainable planning, sustainable practices in operations and maintenance, and impact of sustainable practices on global climate change and the mitigation of global climate change. The board 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 all aspects of the sustainability program and 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 to and oversee the district's programs for conservation and green initiatives including but not limited to 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 consider sustainability goals and objectives as part of the strategic planning process. Sustainability goals and objectives shall be reviewed and adjusted as part of the regular strategic planning process.

School District Green Team

A district Green Team may be appointed by the chief school administrator. The team may include teaching staff members, administrators, board members, staff members, community members including experts from the local municipality, students, and parents/guardians. The team shall be responsible for investigating and implementing practices that promote a sustainable environment that is conducive to learning.

School Gardens

The board of education encourages and supports the development of school gardens. Each school garden is a tool for hands-on, student-centered learning. School gardens have many practical applications to the educational program in areas such as wellness and nutrition, planning and design, mathematics and measurement, sustainability, science, and physical activity.

All school garden projects shall be in compliance with other board policies.

- A. School gardens benefit classrooms and students by:
1. Addressing multiple learning styles/opportunities concerning:
 - a. Natural processes;
 - b. Tools and their proper use;
 - c. Where food comes from;
 - d. Global food security;
 2. Linking farm to school, in the Garden State;
 3. Improving environmental awareness;

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4. Demonstrating best practice sustainable design;
5. Teaching the value of compost as a soil supplement, plus reducing landfill disposal of waste;
6. Promoting garden foods and good nutrition;
7. Increasing physical activity;
8. Teaching patience and responsibility;
9. Teaching students to work cooperatively;
10. Improving social skills, socializing;
11. Building classroom relationships and school spirit;
12. Supporting interdisciplinary education;
13. Creating an appreciation for teamwork;
14. Increasing self-esteem and self-worth;
15. Linking gardens to green collar agricultural careers;
16. Serving as an outdoor science lab to teach about:
 - a. Seed germination;
 - b. Composting;
 - c. The life cycle of plants;
 - d. Pollination and the parts of a flower;
17. Saving money while improving nutrition;
18. Beautifying the school environment.

B. Location and Design

The location and design of each school garden will be approved by the chief school administrator, the school principal and the director of buildings and grounds. Special consideration will be given to access to clean water (or stored rainwater), good drainage, storage of tools, sunny orientation, blockage of harsh winds from the north and northwest, beautification of school grounds, access by students, and student safety. The garden design will promote accessibility and will include some seating.

Consideration will be given to creating raised bed gardens that include sections for herbs, garden vegetables, flowering garden plants that bloom while school is in session, a small composting area, and a small cold-frame to extend the growing season of the garden.

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Key Words

Sustainability, Conservation, Green Policy, Green Initiative, Environment, Environmental, Recycling, Global Climate Change, Global Warming, Mitigation, 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

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*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
*7110	Long-range facilities plan

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