

Toronto District School Board

Policy P028

Title: **THE ENVIRONMENT**

Adopted: June 28, 2000

Revised: **February 3, 2010**

Reviewed: March 2012

1.0 OBJECTIVE

To state the Board's commitment to the focus areas for sustaining the environment: mitigation, adaptation, and education.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITY

Chief Facilities Officer

3.0 DEFINITION

The Environment Policy commits the Board to an ongoing alignment between teaching and learning and the operation of schools to develop whole school ecologically literate communities whose goal is building a healthy, sustainable society. Special emphasis is given to climate change, its mitigation and adaptation. A multi-stakeholder inter-departmental process sets and reviews targets and implementation, as well as documentation and communication of results, as part of offering community leadership in decision-making and action that reflects a shared concern for protecting the environment.

4.0 POLICY

- 4.1. The Board recognizes the interdependence of the environment, the economy and society, and the challenge of balancing all three in building a healthy, sustainable future. To achieve this goal, the Board adopts the concept of sustainable development as defined by the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development as "meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."
- 4.2. The Board acknowledges its responsibility to help prepare students to meet this challenge. Therefore, environmental literacy for all students is integral to the Board's mission to help prepare our students to become responsible members of a democratic society. The Board will develop and support curriculum initiatives across grades and subject areas that lead to this result and ensure that an environmental education component is incorporated into school planning processes.

- 4.3. The Board aims to develop environmentally sound practices consistent with what students are learning in the classroom. In this way, curriculum and board operations become part of a single organization dedicated to learning how to live more sustainably.
- 4.4. To enable and coordinate this learning throughout the organization, the Board is committed to achieving continual, measurable improvements in environmental educational and operational practices within its control.
- 4.5. The Board further acknowledges that climate change has emerged as one of the greatest challenges of the 21st Century—one that needs to be addressed by all sectors of society, and particularly by school boards, because students are the future leaders in building an environmentally sustainable future.
- 4.6. To respond to climate change, focus shall be on three critical areas as an important basis for planning and decision making: mitigation, adaptation, and education, as follows:
 - (a) climate change shall be mitigated by reducing the Board's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by amounts that exceed the Kyoto Protocol targets.
 - (b) activities to adapt to climate change shall be undertaken, such as increasing tree planting and partnering with local organizations to establish pilot market gardens on some of the large suburban school grounds; and
 - (c) as knowledge and experience of climate change deepen, education essential to our students' knowledge shall continue to be at the heart of the Board's Mission. In the terms used by the Ministry of Education, we must educate "in, about, and for" a climate-changed world.
- 4.7. To enable and coordinate this learning throughout the organization, the Board is committed to achieving continual, measurable improvements in environmental educational and operational practices within its control. The Board will develop a focused, results-oriented framework for setting and reviewing environmental objectives, targets and implementation effectiveness. The framework will set out an annual interdepartmental, multi-stakeholder process:
 - (a) for identifying priorities;
 - (b) for timely setting of achievable objectives, targets and indicators;
 - (c) for developing a funding plan to achieve objectives and environmental targets;
 - (d) for developing action plans;
 - (e) for assigning responsibility for implementation;
 - (f) for providing staff development and resources as required; and
 - (g) for monitoring, documenting, reporting, and recognizing results and communicating these to staff, students, parents and the community.

- 4.8. In being environmentally responsible and accountable, the Board offers community leadership in decision making and action that reflects a shared concern for protecting the health of the natural environment on which a healthy economy and society depend.

5.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

The Director is authorized to issue operational procedures to implement this policy.

6.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Operational Procedure

PR701: Green Cleaning

Other

Go Green: A Climate Change Action Plan