



Niagara Catholic District School Board

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP POLICY

STATEMENT OF POLICY

400 – Educational Programs

Policy No 400.6

Adopted Date: May 24, 2011

Latest Reviewed/Revised Date: June 19, 2018

In keeping with the Mission, Vision and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, the Board recognizes the sacredness and connectedness of all God's creation and the responsibility to promote a reverence for the environment and to encourage sustainability through the effective stewardship of all resources.

The Board believes that environmental education and the effective stewardship of God's gifts is a shared responsibility of students, staff and community members, and:

1. supports the teaching of the Church in *Laudato Si*, the encyclical letter of Pope Francis on the care for our common home, May 24, 2015:
"...Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her."
2. supports the message of Saint John Paul II on the occasion of the World Day of Peace, January 1, 1990:
"The ecological crisis is a moral crisis," and "the responsibility of everyone." "Care for the environment is not an option. In the Christian perspective, it forms an integral part of our personal life and of life in society. Not to care for the environment is to ignore the Creator's plan for all creation and results in an alienation of the human person."

The Board is committed to preparing students to meet the social and environmental challenges of the future, through the following goals:

- All students will acquire knowledge, skills and perspectives that foster understanding of their fundamental connections to each other, to the world around them, and to all living things.
- Increase student engagement by fostering active participation in environmental projects and building links between schools and communities.
- Increase the capacity of system leaders to implement evidence-based environmental education programming, practices, and operations.

The Director of Education will issue Administrative Procedures in support of this policy.

References

- [*Pope Francis Encyclical Letter Laudato Si \(May 24, 2015\)*](#)
- [*Ontario EcoSchools*](#)
- [*Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools, Ministry of Education, 2009*](#)
- [*Environmental Protection Act, R.S.O. 1990 and its Regulations*](#)
- [*Green Clean Program Resource Guide, Ontario Ministry of Education, March 2010*](#)
- [*Green Schools Resource Guide: A Practical Resource for Planning and Building Green Schools in Ontario, Ministry of Education, 2010*](#)
- [*Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations, 2nd Edition 2011, Institute for Catholic Education*](#)

- [*Ready Set Green! Tips, Techniques, and Resources from Ontario Educators, Ministry of Education, 2007*](#)
- [*Shaping Our Schools, Shaping Our Future: Environmental Education in Ontario Schools, Report of the Working Group on Environmental Education, Ministry of Education, 2007*](#)
- [*You love all that exists...all things are yours, God, lover of life, A pastoral letter on the Christian Ecological Imperative from the Social Affairs Commission, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, October 4, 2003, Feast of St. Francis of Assisi \(Patron Saint for Ecology\)*](#)
- *Niagara Catholic District School Board Policies/Procedures*
 - [*Bottled Water Policy \(701.5\)*](#)



Niagara Catholic District School Board
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ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

400 – Educational Programs

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TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

1. The Niagara Catholic District School Board will endeavour to increase student knowledge and develop skills and perspectives in students that foster environmental stewardship.

Board Staff will:

- Use relevant curriculum resource documents to support implementation of revised curricula;
- Support staff and students in linking environmental knowledge and related skills and activities to the teachings of diverse communities and to principles of responsible citizenship.

Schools will:

- Provide opportunities for students to acquire knowledge and skills related to environmental education in all subject areas, and encourage them to apply their knowledge and skills to environmental issues through action-based projects;
- Challenge students to develop skills in systems thinking and futures thinking that they will need to become discerning, active citizens.

2. The Niagara Catholic District School Board will endeavour to model and teach environmental education through an integrated approach that promotes collaboration in the development of resources and activities.

Board Staff will:

- Foster collaborative opportunities for educators to develop and share activities, integrated approaches, and action research projects related to environmental education;
- Encourage innovative interdisciplinary programs that focus on the environment and include field components.

Schools will:

- Develop learning opportunities that help students understand the underlying causes, the multiple dimensions, and the dynamic nature of environmental issues;
- Develop professional learning communities to share effective practices about pedagogical strategies that support learning and teaching about the environment.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS STRATEGIES

1. The Niagara Catholic District School Board will endeavour to build student capacity to take action on environmental issues.

Board Staff will:

- Engage student leaders in the design and delivery of environmental education projects at the board level;
- Share school and student projects across the board that demonstrate engagement in environmental stewardship;
- Encourage environmental learning for all students inside and outside the classroom;

- Support students, on a system-wide basis, as they develop skills and act as decision makers to effect positive environmental change.

Schools will:

- Engage student leaders in the design and delivery of environmental education at the school level;
 - Encourage students to enrich their learning by using information technology to access resources, connect with others, and create e-communities that focus on environmental issues;
 - Encourage action research that promotes partnerships and the innovative implementation of environmental education concepts and principles;
 - Create opportunities for students to address environmental issues in their homes, in their local communities or at the global level;
 - Work with Catholic School Councils in promoting environmental education;
 - Encourage students to plan environmental education activities for all students;
 - Encourage all students to participate in environmental education activities on school grounds.
2. The Niagara Catholic District School Board will provide leadership support to enhance student engagement and community involvement.

Board Staff will:

- Offer community-linked experiences and programs, such as a Specialist High Skills Major focused on the environment;
- Encourage the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee to provide advice on the implementation of environmental education;
- Share information about local resources that support environmental awareness and protection, energy conservation, waste management, protection of the biosphere, and outdoor education;
- Share links and partnerships with community organizations to help extend engagement in and responsibility for environmental education to the broader community.

Schools will:

- Work with parents, the Catholic School Councils, community groups, and other educational stakeholders to provide awareness and foster appropriate environmentally responsible practices;
- Enrich and complement students' classroom learning by organizing out-of-classroom experiences and activities as appropriate;
- Encourage students to consider ways of completing their community service requirements that involve addressing environmental issues in their communities.

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES

1. The Niagara Catholic District School Board will endeavour to increase the extent to which environmental education is integrated into Board policies, procedures and strategic plans.

Board Staff will:

- Participate in environmental programs such as the Ontario EcoSchools certification program;
- Embed environmental education as a priority ;
- Develop and implement a plan for integrating sustainable environmental practices into each of the Board's operational services;
- Integrate environmental education into staff development for all employee groups;
- Encourage staff, students and parents to adopt and promote environmentally appropriate practices

Schools will:

- Create an implementation plan that aligns with the Board Environmental Stewardship Policy;
 - Adopt environmentally responsible management practices that are consistent with Board Policy and consider the advice of members of the school community on these matters;
 - Share expertise and knowledge through existing networks.
2. The Niagara Catholic District School Board will endeavour to enhance the integration of environmentally responsible practices into the management of resources, operations and facilities.

Board Staff will endeavour to:

- Implement strategies, programs and procedures to protect and conserve the environment, while ensuring that school and workplace environments are safe and healthy;
- Develop environmentally responsible purchasing practices, while considering quality, price and service;
- Renew facilities utilizing energy efficient replacement components;
- Ensure maximum building utilization;
- Design and construction of new facilities and additions to “Green Building” standards.

Schools will:

- Encourage staff to participate in school or school board sessions on environmental sustainability and the role of staff in preparing and implementing the school and/or Board action plan;
- Plan an environmentally responsible approach to managing resources and operations.