

**Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board**



Section: Schools

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE:  
PR SC: 19 Environmental  
Education**

<b>NUMBER:</b>	PR SC: 19
<b>EFFECTIVE:</b>	July 27, 2010
<b>AMENDED:</b>	
<b>RELATED POLICIES:</b>	See References
<b>REPEALS:</b>	
<b>REVIEW DATE:</b>	2017 - 2018

**1.0 OBJECTIVE:**

1.1 The purpose of this administrative procedure is to support the requirements of the Board’s Environmental Education Policy.

**2.0 GUIDELINES:**

2.1 **Environmental education** is education about the environment, for the environment, and in the environment that promotes an understanding of rich and active experience in, and an appreciation for the dynamic interactions of:

- The Earth’s physical and biological systems
- The dependency of our social and economic systems on these natural systems
- The scientific and human dimensions of environmental issues
- The positive and negative consequences, both intended and unintended, of the interactions between human-created and natural systems.

To this end, the Board undertakes the following actions as standard practices generally categorized under Catholic Teaching and Learning; Student Engagement and Community Connections; and, Environmental Leadership.

**2.2 Catholic Teaching and Learning**

To increase student knowledge and develop skills and perspectives that foster environmental stewardship of God’s creation, the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board shall:

- i. Develop and maintain curriculum materials which invite students to discover that they are deeply related to the ecological and social system of our planet and that their concern for the fate of the earth is inherently a sacred concern. The connections among environmental issues, social justice concerns, consumerism and individualism will be recognized in curriculum.
- ii. Ensure that all environmental education and practice are incorporated into the context and methodology of the instructional program in all divisions and subject areas, as appropriate, through the use of relevant curriculum resource documents.
- iii. Support staff and students in linking environmental knowledge and related skills and activities to the teachings of diverse communities, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, and to principles of responsible citizenship.

- iv. Encourage schools to provide opportunities for students to acquire knowledge and skills related to environmental education in all subject areas.
- v. Deepen students' connection to the natural world by expanding innovative interdisciplinary, experiential programs focussing on the environment.
- vi. Promote environmental leadership and provide encouragement for community-based, system-based, and school-based programs, projects, and special events designed to enhance environmental awareness and action in regard to local and regional environmental issues.
- vii Support schools in modeling and teaching environmental education through an integrated approach that promotes collaboration in the development of resources and activities.
- vii 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 (e.g., loss of biodiversity, climate change, waste reduction, and energy conservation) through action-based projects.
- ix. Schools will develop learning opportunities that will help students understand underlying causes, the multiple dimensions, and the dynamic nature of environmental issues.
- x. Students will be challenged to develop skills in systems thinking and futures thinking that they will need to become discerning, active citizens who are actively aware of their responsibilities toward environmental protection and stewardship of God's creation.

### **2.3 Student Engagement and Community Connections**

To increase student engagement by fostering active participation in environmental projects and building links between schools and communities, the Board will:

- i. Engage student leaders in the design and delivery of environmental education projects at the Board and school level.
- ii. Support students on a system-wide basis, as they develop skills and act as decision-makers to effect positive environmental change.
- iii. Share school and student projects across the Board that demonstrate engagement in environmental stewardship (e.g., science fair).
- iv. Encourage Catholic School Councils to provide advice on the implementation of environmental education and to work with the larger educational community to promote environmental awareness and foster appropriate environmentally responsible practices.
- v. In working with community partners to help extend engagement in and responsibility for environmental education to the broader community, share information about local resources that support environmental awareness and protection, energy conservation, waste management, protection of the biosphere, and outdoor education.

At the school level, students will be encouraged to enrich their learning, by:

- vi. Using information technology to access resources, connect with others, and create communities that focus on environmental issues.
- vii Addressing environmental issues in their homes, in their local communities, or at the global level.
- vii For secondary students, considering ways of completing their community service requirements that involve addressing environmental issues in their communities, in a manner consistent with Board policy.
- ix. Encouraging students to plan and participate in environmental education activities.

## **2.4 Environmental Leadership**

The Board will promote leadership and encouragement for community-based, system-based, and school-based programs, projects, and special events designed to promote environmental awareness and conservation. In order to enhance the extent to which environmental education is integrated into Board policies, procedures, and strategic plan, the Board will:

- i. Encourage staff to act as exemplar role models and endeavour to create climates in which positive environmental action has an increased value and a priority status within the classroom, school, on Board property and in the community.
- ii. Create a system-wide Environmental Education Committee who will develop and annually review, a system-level Environmental Plan.
- iii. Embed environmental education as a priority in the Board's long-term System Priorities and annual strategic planning.
- iv. Develop and implement a plan for integrating sustainable environmental practices into the Board's operational services and similarly support schools in adopting environmentally responsible management practices that are consistent with Board policy.
- v. Implement strategies, programs, and procedures to protect and conserve the environment, while ensuring that schools and workplace environments are safe and healthy.
- vi. Develop environmentally responsible purchasing practices, while considering quality, price and service.
- vii Encourage all stakeholders to adopt and promote environmentally appropriate practices.
- vii Integrate in-service opportunities related to environmental education into staff development for all employee groups, in order to increase the capacity of staff to implement evidence-based environmental education programming, practices, and operations.

Schools will develop, using the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board Environmental Education Policy and the Board's Environmental Plan, local priorities focused on environmental education. Schools will encourage staff to develop knowledge and skills related to environmental education and responsible environmental practices as

well as encourage mentoring opportunities and sharing opportunities through existing networks.

## **2.5 Environmental Plan**

- i. The Environmental Education Committee will develop and annually review, a system-level Environmental Plan that will be communicated to stakeholders.
- ii. The Environmental Plan will include specific goals, the strategies and actions required by the Board and schools to attain these goals, and a means of measuring progress towards achieving the annual goals.

The goals of the Environmental Plan will include, but are not restricted to:

- A. Goal 1: As stewards of God’s creation, by the end of Grade 12, 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.
- B. Goal 2: Increase student engagement by fostering active participation in environmental projects and building links between schools and communities.
- C. Goal 3: Increase the capacity of system leaders to implement evidence-based environmental education programming, practices and operations.

## **3.0 REFERENCES:**

Education Act, R.S.O. 1990 and its Regulations

Environmental Protection Act, R.S.O. 1990 and its Regulations

Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools (*Ministry of Education, 2009*)

Shaping Our Schools, Shaping Our Future - Environmental Education in Ontario Schools (*Report of the Working Group on the Environmental Education, Ministry of Education, 2007*)

Board Policy SC:19 Environmental Education