

PURPOSE

To ensure that all staff and students of the Halton Catholic District School Board promote and follow a path of environmental stewardship within the context of our Catholic faith in all educational programs, activities and operational procedures

APPLICATION & SCOPE

This policy applies to all educational programs and departmental operations in the Halton Catholic District School Board.

PRINCIPLES

As followers of Jesus Christ, the Halton Catholic District School Board supports the promotion of core values of honesty, integrity, responsibility, caring, equity, dedication, and respect for self, others, and the environment.

In accordance with church teaching and papal encyclicals, the Halton Catholic District School Board is committed to:

- maintaining respect for human life within society, from conception to natural death;
- asserting the dignity of the person;
- recognizing the unique mission of the family where one is trained in love of neighbor and respect for nature;
- creating an awareness that creation is God's gift to his people. As God's people, we are called to be stewards in this regard;
- promoting environmental literacy in all staff and students;
- providing leadership for developing a knowledge of and respect for the balance between Earth's ecosystems and human impact on them;
- promoting life-long learning about our earth linking environmental education to different areas of the curriculum;
- encouraging active, responsible citizenship emphasizing care and protection of the environment; and
- promoting critical thinking skills and a culture of inquiry in each classroom.

Therefore, the Board will establish a management team that will facilitate the implementation of the following strategies within available resources:

- in cooperation with the home, parish, Catholic School Councils, local organizations and the educational community, promote environmental values and literacy for all staff and students which acknowledge the environmental principles of:
 - protecting the biosphere,
 - sustainable use of natural resources,
 - reduction and disposal of waste,
 - responsible use of energy, and
 - reduction of risk to health and safety

PRINCIPLES cont'd.....

- provide appropriate curricular resources and in-services that support the environmental principles for studies both in school and in the outdoors;
- use purchasing practices that evaluate the acquisition and disposal of products according to the following criteria:
 - Reduce
 - Reuse
 - Recycle, and whenever possible, select products and services that meet the above criteria and are environmentally friendly, or
 - alternately, refuse products.
- model environmentally appropriate practices by staff and students, including teaching students how to minimize their ecological footprint on the Earth;
- promote federal, provincial, regional, civic, school and family initiatives that acknowledge environmental principles;
- provide a work environment for all staff and students that meets government and environmental protection and health and safety regulations and codes;
- base the design and construction of new facilities and renovations on environmental principles, including sustainability and environmental impact.

REQUIREMENTS

1. The Halton Catholic District School Board, under the direction of the Director of Education, will form a system-wide Environmental Stewardship Committee to provide advice and direction to the Board in implementing the Requirements listed in this policy. The committee membership will consist of administration, trustee(s), parents, teachers and other community stakeholders as deemed appropriate by the Director of Education.

2. Focus Area A: Teaching and Learning**Strategy:**

Increase student knowledge and develop skills and perspectives that foster environmental stewardship of God's gifts of nature.

Board Responsibility:

- use relevant curriculum resource documents to support implementation of revised curricula, as appropriate;
- support staff and students in linking environmental knowledge and related skills and activities to the teachings of the worldwide Catholic community and other diverse communities, including First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples, and to principles of responsible citizenship.

School Responsibility:

- to 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 critical thinking skills to determine the impact and action required to evaluate and respond to environmental issues through action-based projects;

REQUIREMENTS cont'd.....

- to challenge students to develop critical thinking skills in systems thinking and futures thinking that they will need to become discerning, active citizens.

Focus Area B: Student Engagement and Community Connections

Strategy:

Build student capacity to take action on environmental issues.

Board Responsibility:

- 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;
- encourage the study and application of sound scientific principles of investigation and analysis.

School Responsibility:

- to engage student leaders in the design and delivery of environmental education at the school level;
- to 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;
- to encourage action research that promotes partnerships and the innovative implementation of environmental education concepts and principles;
- to create opportunities for students to address environmental issues in their homes, in their local communities, or at the global level
- to work with their Catholic School Councils in promoting environmental education;
- to encourage students to plan environmental education activities for all students;
- to encourage all students to participate in environmental education activities on school grounds.

3. Focus Area C: Environmental Leadership

Strategy:

Increase the extent to which environmental education is integrated into Board policies, procedures, and strategic plans.

Board Responsibility:

- develop or revise a Board environmental education policy that promotes environmental literacy and environmentally responsible management practices;
- in connection with the Board's policy development and implementation process:
 - create a system-wide environmental education and management committee;
 - embed environmental education as a priority in the Board's strategic plan;
 - develop and implement a plan for integrating sustainable environmental practices into each of the Board's operational services;

REQUIREMENTS cont'd.....

- develop an environmental action plan that is annually reviewed, renewed, and communicated to all Board employees and trustees;
- review existing Board recognition programs for opportunities to include recognition of responsible environmental leadership;
- integrate in-service opportunities related to environmental education into staff development for all employee groups;
- focus energy and environmental management practices to better support students and school initiatives;
- provide resources for schools to engage in environmental practices and initiatives;
- participate in partnerships with other community, municipal and regional organizations in regards to environmental projects and initiatives; and
- encourage all Board personnel, CPIC (Catholic Parent Involvement Committee), students, parents and Catholic School Councils to adopt and promote environmentally appropriate practices.

School Responsibility:

- to create or revise an implementation plan that aligns with the Board environmental education policy;
- to adopt environmentally responsible management practices that are consistent with Board policy and consider the advice of members of the school community on these matters;
- to encourage staff to develop knowledge and skills related to environmental education and responsible environmental practices and encourage mentoring opportunities;
- to facilitate sharing of staff expertise and knowledge through existing networks.

APPROVED : Regular Meeting of the Board

AUTHORIZED BY :
Chair of the Board