



# 7 Steps to a Green School

*or*

*How to have fun, build community, save money and protect the planet all at the same time!*

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Green Schools Initiative

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**Our mission:**

**To engage and empower students  
through hands-on experiential curricula  
to reduce the environmental footprint  
of their school.**

# “Closing the Achievement Gap” Report by SEER:

...students learn more effectively within an environment-based context than within a traditional educational framework....



# Green Schools & Student Achievement

David Sobel's Research, Director of Teacher Certification Programs and the Center for Place-Based Education at Antioch New England:

- Ø 10 years researching place-based inquiry-based learning
- Ø Paired 70 schools doing EE with 70 without; 78% of the time schools with EE programs outperformed those without

*"Green schools are BETTER than No Child Left Behind approaches for improving academic achievement, AND students become civically engaged" -- David Sobel*

# How to Create Green Schools



1. Green Team
2. Environmental Vision Statement
3. Environmental Audit
4. Action Plan
5. Curriculum
6. Monitoring & Evaluation
7. Informing, Involving & Celebrating!

Adapted from: Eco-Schools International

# Green Schools Recognitions

- Washington Green Schools
- Maryland, Kentucky, Oregon
- Bay Area Green Star Schools
- Eco-Schools USA
- Green Business Certification
- CHPS, LEED
- Project Learning Tree
- Green Ribbon Schools  
*NEW!*



# Step 2: Green School Policies

## Comprehensive Policies

- Emery USD, Santa Cruz City Schools, Ojai, Piedmont, Ventura

## Purchasing Policies

- Barstow, Ojai, Santa Cruz School Districts
- Many counties, cities, states



## High Performance School Policies

- Los Angeles, San Francisco, Palo Alto: [www.chps.net](http://www.chps.net)

## Sample Policies

- [www.greenschools.net/action.html](http://www.greenschools.net/action.html)

# Step 3 & 5: Integrate Inquiry-Based Learning Into Curricula

- Introduce environmental topic principles
- Do environmental audit to analyze school's footprint
- Students take action to reduce environmental footprint
- Educate and reach out – assemblies, Earth Day, displays
- Reflect and celebrate



# Paper Audit

- Estimate school paper use by:
  - Weighing paper recycled
  - Interviewing office staff about paper purchased
- Analyze costs and benefits of different strategies for reducing paper waste, increasing recycling, and buying recycled paper
- Implement solutions
- Monitor ongoing paper use and estimate costs and benefits of savings

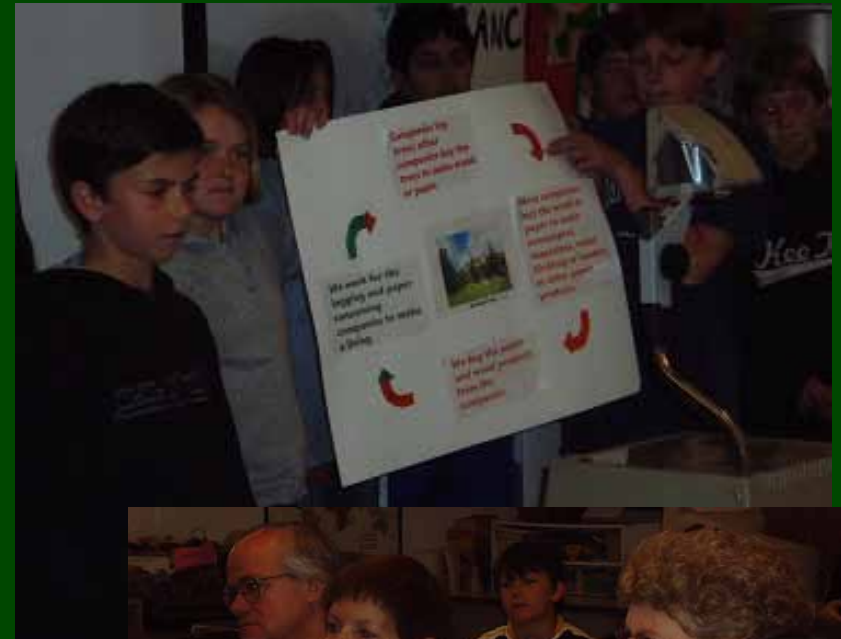


# Results of Paper Cost-Benefit Analysis

	Current – 0% recycled paper	30% recycled paper	100% recycled paper
<b>Cartons per year</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>Price per carton</b>	<b>\$34.99</b>	<b>\$35.99</b>	<b>\$45.99</b>
<b>Price per year + tax</b>	<b>\$4,339</b>	<b>\$4,463</b>	<b>\$5,703</b>
<b>Difference</b>		<b>\$124</b>	<b>\$1,240</b>
<b>Trees used</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Energy used</b>	<b>119 mil BTUs</b>	<b>103 mil BTUs</b>	<b>67 mil BTUs</b>
<b>GHG emitted</b>	<b>17.6K lbs CO2 eq</b>	<b>15.6K lbs CO2 eq</b>	<b>11.1K lbs CO2 eq</b>

Sources: prices from Staples; resource uses from [www.papercalculator.org](http://www.papercalculator.org) by Environmental Defense.

# Using results to test ideas, influence decisions





**5<sup>th</sup> graders raised \$375 from hand-made recycled paper cards and donated to school to defray cost of switching to recycled paper and to groups protecting ancient forests!**

# Step 4: Create Action Plan to Green Facilities & Operations

- Transportation & Outdoor Air Quality
- Energy & Climate
- Water Quality & Conservation
- Waste Reduction & Recycling
- Toxics & Indoor Air Quality
- Green Schoolyards & Food



# Duplexing Printers & Copiers

Save money on paper, postage and document storage

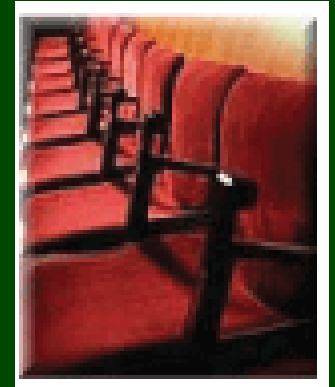
**CASE STUDY:** Columbia University saved \$105,000 in one year by defaulting to 2-sided printing in its computer center

Requires vendors to ship with duplex default on and train employees in duplex use



**CASE STUDY:** In 2000, Penn State saved \$120,000 by narrowing margin widths from 1.25 inches to .75 inch

# Furniture Repair Services



## CASE STUDY

NYC saved over \$100,000 by contracting with a local firm (for \$15,000) to repair its furniture

- 1000 pieces, 66 tons recovered in 2 years
- \$10,000/year in disposal costs avoided
- Local jobs created

# Green Cleaners Save \$

## Opportunities to cut costs by:

- u Reducing variety of products used

*Replacing 20 different cleaning products with a single Green Seal certified product saved \$280,000 per year at the Riverside Military Academy in Gainesville, Georgia*



- u Reducing amount of chemicals used via best practices, dilution equipment

*Palm Beach schools saving \$360,000/yr*

- u Purchasing with procurement contracts

*Waxie offers 45% discounts,  
US Communities, State of California*



# Break Up with Your Bottle

- La Costa Canyon H.S. campaign
- 1.5 million barrels of oil used to make plastic water bottles
- Break Up with your plastic bottle...buy a reusable one!
- Video contest:  
[www.quantumshift.tv/v/1207008311](http://www.quantumshift.tv/v/1207008311)



# Cut Catalogs Contest



5,356 kids in 13 states have canceled 28,054 unwanted sales catalogs so far... <http://www.parkschool.org/>

# Junk Mail Tree



Chronicle / Darryl Bush

The tree educates people about forest destruction and how to stop junk mail

# Petition Drive



Students could organize a petition to the county advocating for commercial compost facility

# Step 7: Educate, Celebrate!

- Earth Day Fair & Celebration
- Assembly Series
- Parent, Teacher & Staff Events



# EARTH DAY FAIR



# Create Your Workplan

- What is a topic at your school that you are inspired to address with your students?
- How can you do an audit to analyze the problem?
- What actions could students take? How will you measure progress?
- How will you communicate with your school community? How will you celebrate your accomplishments?
- Start small and succeed! Success is infectious...



# Common Questions

- What are some key tips for starting a Green Team?
- How do you keep a Green Team sustained over time?
- How do you find time in the busy school schedule?
- Where do you find funding?
- How are greening efforts integrated into the curriculum and standards?
- What are some key strategies Green Teams can use to communicate their

Those who say it can't be done  
Should not interrupt those already doing it

-- Chinese proverb



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