

EDUCATION: PROGRAMS

Policy 512.14.1-G (previously 602.14.1-G)

Sustainable Transportation Guidelines

Introduction

As humans we are dependent on environmental resources and with only one living planet we have a limit to the resources that are available to us. Clean air is a resource we all depend on, and it is continuously contaminated with our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Health effects including cancer, asthma, and respiratory problems have been linked to exposure to fossil fuel particulates in the air we breathe. The most effective way to support a sustainable transportation system is to reduce our GHG emissions – to use less through efficiencies and simply using less fossil fuel based transportation. The BC Government has a goal to reduce our GHG emissions by 33% by 2020.

Committing to being an environmental steward involves actions that lead to producing zero emissions from wasteful forms of transportation. Rethinking our options and how we get to and from school/work are part of the transportation guidelines, the remainder is related to the transportation of materials and services to and from schools. Education of effective practices is a means to bring action to the communities in which we live as stewards. The Richmond School District is recognized as a world leader for environmental education and our role to generate behavioural change requires a system-wide approach that requires people to lead the threshold of change agents required at each site.

Effective Sustainable Transportation Practices at the District Level

- Create a Five Year Action Plan for sustainable transportation that is coordinated with and integrated in to the district Five Year Sustainability Action Plan. Include roles and responsibilities, funding, savings projections, target setting, monitoring and verification, and reporting in the plan. Set annual performance reviews, and adjust/revise the plan to ensure goals are met
- Coordinate the Five Year Action Plan with the planning and requirements of other organizations including Metro Vancouver, Translink, and the City of Richmond
- Advocate on behalf of students to the City of Richmond to provide safe walkways and bike lanes to all schools
- Create and maintain supporting curriculum so that students are fully informed of and engaged in the Five Year Plan
- Provide a RideShare template for employees on RichNet
- Offer anti-idling signage at each site and support for school's Idle Free Campaigns
- Ensure no SD38 vehicle idles more then 10 seconds before being turned off. (Vehicles idling more than 10 seconds use more energy and costs more then stopping and re-starting the vehicle)
- Offer regular Pro-D on low-carbon motoring for staff who commute between sites (i.e. efficient speed, lightening the loads, avoid idling, using air-conditioning sparingly, and gradual starting/ stopping
- Consider fuel economy and alternative sources of energy when replacing SD38 fleet vehicles

- Right size our vehicles by reducing interior capacity on a duty-specific basis
- Offer regular Pro-D on bike safety for district staff (i.e. Pro-D workshops with VACC and HasteBC)
- Find a recognized course to allow for bicycle proficiency testing at a standard grade level (work with the City of Richmond and other partners to develop programs, specific to our regional road conditions and to promote bicycle and pedestrian safety)
- Where possible provide shower facilities for use by staff cyclists
- Encourage and enable staff and students to use teleconferences or video conferencing (i.e. Skype)
- Encourage the use of e-newsletters and electronic communication on RichNet to reduce internal mail truck deliveries
- Support the carpooling conference on RichNet to connect staff for ridesharing
- Consider working hours and work locations to accommodate carpooling opportunities
- Encourage staff to combine errands to reduce their total mileage
- Encourage use of public transportation (i.e. discounted monthly bus passes)
- Ensure that optimal routing practices are used at all times
- Promote education campaigns for parents who drop off and pick up students by car
- 10-15% of SD38 emissions is from transportation (without including parent commutes)

Effective Sustainable Transportation Practices in Schools/Sites

Collaboration

- Involve all stakeholders at your site who have involvement in transportation and material flow (students, teachers, custodians, administrators and parents)
- Invite the PAC to develop a plan

Continuous Improvement

- Incrementally aim to reduce emissions from transportation to and from your site
- Perform a S.T.A.R.S. (transportation audit) a city service from the City of Richmond
- Start with a few pilot projects for sustainable transportation and offer opportunities to have the participants share the challenges and successes and set targets for improvement
- Use the Eco-Wise Tool and then determine next steps

Commitment to the Triple Bottom Line Assessment

- Assess your plan and implementation strategies for Educational/Social impact:
 - How does your strategy connect to educational outcomes of social responsibility and the environmental stewardship curriculum?
- Assess your plan and implementation strategies for Environmental impact:
 - How is the environment concerns being addressed with the sustainable transportation strategies?
 - How will the local air quality improve as a result of your initiative?
- Assess your plan and implementation strategies for Economic impact:
 - How does your plan save on costs related to transportation?

Leadership

- Create a sub-committee of your Green Team to engage in sustainable transportation strategies at your site
- Perform a Transportation Audit at your site and vow to find improvements to lessen the emissions being generated from all sources
- Acknowledge the support of volunteers (i.e. Walking School Bus)

Learning for All

- Offer workshops for the school community
- Offer a site location for postings of transportation information in your region and local fieldtrips and parks in the surrounding area

Project Plan for Developing Sustainable Transportation Initiatives

These guidelines support the successful development of transportation projects by site-based Green Teams as they create local plans of action that align with the District Sustainability Action Plan. The following steps provide a template for this process:

Step 1: Determine your site-based transportation initiative(s)

Step 2: Collaborate with stakeholders and partner groups

Step 3: Develop the project plan (vision, roles and responsibilities, scope, resources, education, funding, assessment, succession activities etc)

Step 4: Collective endorsement of the project plan

Step 5: Implement the project plan, assess project regularly, identify next steps, and report findings

Step 6: Celebrate and determination of next steps for continuous improvement

Appendix 1 – Practical Actions for Sustainable Transportation

- Make use of the Rolling Green Fund to direct cost savings from energy conservation to sustainable transportation initiatives
- Organize walking fieldtrips and a “walking school bus” to teach pedestrian safety
- Fundraise to purchase bike racks to cover the busiest months of cycling traffic to your site
- Purchase a fully electric bus (to be stored and charged at the Worksyard) for use by Richmond schools and staff that have fieldtrips that are to environmental stewardship related venues, such as local farms and a potentially new SD38 Outdoor School
- “This blue, green and white planet is everything that means anything to us.” Inform other sites on the sign messaging that engages new members
- Offer rewards of bicycle equipment for students and bike racks for schools
- Perform initial waste audits (from both a classroom and a hallway trash bin) to start the conversation and to directly equate the emissions released from the frequency and weight being picked up and transported to landfills and recycling centers
- Reduce paper use so that less material has to be transported and equipment related to paper copying, scanning, printing, etc. will require less service calls
- Compost organic waste into school grounds to improve the soil and reduce the transportation of food scraps to the landfill
- Provide a location for the drop off of cell phones, batteries, and electronics at schools, to reduce the single trips to recycling centres
- Perform and present the finding for visible exhaust emissions research (experiment: using white socks over tailpipes of a diverse selection of cars in your parking lot) - safety first!
- Invite your community to hold a schoolyard garage sale as a way to integrate the neighbourhood into the solutions of sharing and swapping goods for reuse
- Encourage students and staff to walk or wheel to school. With rising fuel costs and sources of affordable housing, staff will begin to settle down in the community that they work in as a way to personally reduce their ecological footprint and fuel costs
- Host bike-to-school-week events to promote cycling safety in the neighbourhood
- Provide incentives for carpools by granting them preferential locations for drop off and pick up, in the idle free zones
- Build up and store a class sets of bikes for use with cycling fieldtrips
- Negotiate contracts with companies that will assist our schools to reduce their transportation emissions to zero (i.e. growing large amounts of food on site)
- Work with the city to close street access to vehicle traffic around schools to promote safe walkways and an expanded bike lane network
- Knowing our greenhouse gas emissions data and how to reduce it as a District, we have a similar responsibility to reduce the emissions from indirect sources (i.e. student drop off and pick up)
- Provide a link to our CNAR commitment and the statistics of Canada’s transportation industry accounting for over 27% of our total emissions
- Provide fuel efficient vehicles for staff use (allow promotional opportunities to sponsor an electric vehicle and charging station)