

## EDUCATION: PROGRAMS

## Policy 512.14.1-G (previously 602.14.1-G)

### Waste Management Guidelines

#### Introduction

As everything in our ecosystem is interconnected, the Board of Education recognizes that by increasing efficiency and eliminating our waste we will improve our collective well-being. Committing to being an environmental steward involves actions that lead to producing zero waste through diversion and conservation. Targets, timelines and a goal for zero waste for the Richmond School District will provide direction and inspiration for the transition. Rethinking our options at school/work, before we get to the three R's, will reduce the energy intensive recycling processes and reduce our demand on materials.

Education of effective practices is a means to bring action to the communities in which we live as stewards. The Richmond School District is a recognized as a world leader for environmental education and our role to generate behavioural change requires a system-wide approach that requires everyone to do their part in generating the transition to reduced waste in schools.

#### **Effective Waste Management Practices at the District Level**

- Create a Five Year Action Plan for waste reduction that is coordinated with and integrated in to the district Five Year Sustainability Action Plan. Include funding, savings projections, target setting, 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 and the City of Richmond
- Ensure that legal and regulatory requirements of other levels of government are honoured
- Create and maintain supporting curriculum so that students are fully informed of and engaged in the Five Year Action Plan
- Create and maintain a system of uniform collection bins at each site with clear labeling for all types of waste and material to be recycled. Provide learning opportunities for all as to how and why the waste bins are set up
- Increase diversion rates by increasing the channels for managing additional types of waste streams. (E.g. processes to separate and divert organic waste, batteries, electronics, wood, construction debris etc.)
- When building or adding on to a District facility, consider expanding the area for sorting and storage of recycling and compost
- Measure waste diversion rates and share annual reports of waste diversion with all sites. Leverage waste diversion rates in the goal setting process
- Encourage use of reusable containers, cups, and cutlery in all facilities and at events.
- Negotiate contracts with companies that will assist our facilities to reduce their waste generation to zero:
  - Negotiate with waste management companies to periodically provide content analysis
  - Where possible negotiate in purchase contracts for suppliers to take back packaging that supplies come in

- Reduce the amount of paper waste generated in the District through the following:
  - Encourage online or email distribution of newsletters
  - Encourage the use of electronic communication on RichNet
  - Default all printers and photocopiers to the double-sided option
  - Leverage technology such as projectors and Smart Boards and encourage paperless meetings
  - Track paper consumption by site and share information on greenhouse gas generated as a result of paper consumption
- Continue to adjust frequency of waste and recycling pick-ups as diversion rates increase

## **Effective Waste Management Practices in Schools/Sites**

### **Collaboration**

- Involve all stakeholders at your site who have involvement in the waste management (students, teachers, custodians, administrators and parents)
- Present the results of initial waste audits at school assemblies or staff meetings, and accept feedback and invite others to upcoming action group meetings
- Determine areas around school for washing plastics and temporarily storing refundable containers

### **Continuous Improvement**

- Incrementally aim to reduce waste at your site, month by month (i.e. printing and photocopying)
- Start with a few pilot zero waste classroom and offer opportunities to have the participants share the challenges and successes of the pilot programs
- Offer rewards of reusable water bottles or containers for contests -
- As your site sustains a reduction in the weekly garbage, order smaller waste containers to reduce pickup and storage costs

### **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 environmental stewardship curriculum?
  - What is your strategy to educate students and staff about the options for food waste?
- Assess your plan and implementation strategies for Environmental impact:
  - How is the environment benefiting from the improved management?
  - How does the movement of e-waste from the schools/sites include options of local companies who repair electronics to be put back into circulation (i.e. Free Geek)
- Assess your plan and implementation strategies for Economic impact:
  - How does your plan save costs for waste/ recycling pickup?

### **Leadership**

- Create a sub-committee of your Green Team to engage in waste reduction strategies at your site
- Waste Audit your school/floor/room and find improvements to lessen the waste generated from all sources
- Change your school's lunch program to the "reverse lunch model" where students eat after they come inside

- Record what type of beverage container recycling program is in place and share those successes

## **Learning for All**

- Offer a site location for postings of recycling information in your region
- Post photos or lists of items that have been incorrectly placed in waste/ recycling bins and provide the correct location for these
- Make staff aware of upcoming changes at regular staff meetings (i.e. changing printers to default to duplex printing)
- Research projects on latest developments in product responsibility programs, where the manufacturers commit to lifetime stewardship (cradle to cradle) responsibility for their products and packaging
- Research projects on effective practices of recycling and conservation
- Student involvement in "Green Job" career opportunities, such as technology research and skill training during the upgrading of the local Waste Treatment Facilities to higher treatment levels

## **Project Plan for Waste Management Initiatives**

These guidelines support the successful development of waste management 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 waste management initiative(s)

**Step 2:** Collaborate with stakeholders and partner groups

**Step 3:** Develop the project plan (vision, scope, resources, education, funding, assessment, etc)

**Step 4:** Collective endorsement of the project plan

**Step 5:** Implement the project plan

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

## **Appendix 1 – Practical Actions for Waste Management**

- Perform initial waste audits (from both a classroom and a hallway trash bin) to start the conversation and to directly see the trends for the problem behaviours at your site.
- Conduct monthly garbage audits (i.e. school wide) with reports from each class/ department at coordinated times with the custodian work schedule.
- Develop a working relationship with the custodian team to get statistics on how often your large garbage and recycling bins are emptied and a rough estimate of at what capacity/ percentage are filled and record this number for transfer to a graphical poster as part of an educational campaign and for a source of celebration and goals
- Collect E-Waste that is generated in schools, along with batteries, and other items that are challenging to recycling into “classroom sorting stations”
- Compost organic waste and provide a site of school grounds to improve the soil
  - Promote worm-composting, EM Bokashi, and school wide composting
- Provide a location for cell phone, battery, and electronic drop off with a regular action to take these products to recycling centres or call for pickup
- Offer clubs that promote activities that have waste-reduction benefits such as sewing, electronics or small motor repair. As a society we are losing the art of fixing our materials. Taking apart electronics allows for the learning of the components and the order of taking things apart and putting them back together
- Offer refillable whiteboard marker sets and inform users where to get the fluid when refilling is necessary (i.e. pilot these in the staffroom)
- Reduce the amount of paper waste generated in the District through the following:
  - Set up a process for drying and recycling paper towels,
  - Send school newsletters electronically and post on the school’s website
  - Post newsletters online,
  - Have scrap paper bins in every room,
  - Use only portions of a page for handouts and notices (e.g. 4 per page print options – front and back), Reuse posterboards and coloured poster
  - Link paper use to the environmental stewardship curriculum
- Collaborate with local charities such as Richmond Shares, when furniture or other good are being disposed of
- Share waste management resources with your students and staff, from funding sources, competitions, and online support like [www.metrovancouverrecycles.org/](http://www.metrovancouverrecycles.org/)
- Invite your community to hold a schoolyard garage sale as a way to integrate the neighbourhood into the solutions
- Generate a site specific list of recommended “reusable” student materials and circulate the revised version at the beginning of each school year
- Stimulate paperless campaigns in your site, through announcements, videos and flashmobs

## Appendix 2 - Template for a School/Site Garbage Audit

**School/Site Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Project Contact(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Details:** Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Check List

<b>Task</b>	<b>Completed</b>	<b>Date</b>
Garbage Audit Committee Formation		
Collaboration with the Custodian about the plan		
Collect the bin and remove the contents onto a tarp		
Sort the like materials		
Recycle everything possible and return the bin and tarp for use again		
Assess the weight, volume and source of contents		
Create a graph of the results		
Determine a plan of action to manage the generated waste		