

Policy 3510: Green School Operations

The Governing Board believes everyone has a responsibility to be a steward of the environment and desires to integrate environmental accountability into all district programs and operations. The Superintendent or designee shall develop strategies to promote district use of "green" school principles and practices in order to conserve natural resources, reduce the impact of district operations on the environment, and protect the health of students, staff, and the community.

In developing such strategies and assessing the environmental conditions in district facilities and operations, the Superintendent or designee shall involve staff at all levels and with varying job responsibilities, including administrators, certificated staff, and classified staff. As appropriate, the Superintendent or designee may also consult with health professionals; representatives of local governmental agencies, utilities, solid waste and recycling companies, and community organizations; and/or others with expertise.

In selecting and prioritizing strategies, the Superintendent or designee shall give consideration to long-term potential cost savings, initial costs, feasibility of implementation, quality and performance of the product or service, health impacts, environmental considerations, and potential educational value.

District operations shall also incorporate climate-resilience and environmental health measures, including heat-mitigation strategies, shade structures, tree canopy expansion, and procedures for wildfire smoke events and poor air quality days.

District strategies may include, but are not limited to:

1. Reducing energy and water consumption, and using renewable and clean energy technologies and alternatives when available
2. Establishing recycling programs in district facilities
3. Reducing the consumption of disposable materials by reusing materials and by using electronic rather than paper communications when feasible
4. Using environmentally preferable products and services whenever practical, including, but not limited to, products that:
 - a. Minimize environmental impacts, toxins, pollutants, odors, and hazards

- b. Contain postconsumer recycled content
 - c. Are durable and long-lasting
 - d. Conserve energy and water
 - e. Reduce waste
- 5. Using least toxic, independently certified green cleaning products when feasible, as well as high-efficiency cleaning equipment that reduces the need to use chemicals
- 6. Providing professional development to maintenance staff in the proper use, storage, and disposal of cleaning supplies
- 7. Using effective, least toxic pest management practices for the control and management of pests
- 8. Ensuring that any construction of new facilities complies with green building standards pursuant to 24 CCR 101.1-703.1, and focusing on sustainability and student health in the design and implementation of facilities modernization projects
- 9. Reducing vehicle emissions by:
 - a. Encouraging students to walk or bicycle to school or to use district or public transportation
 - b. Using reduced or zero emission school buses and vehicles and providing accompanying infrastructure such as charging stations
 - c. Limiting unnecessary idling of school buses in accordance with 13 CCR 2480
 - d. Limiting unnecessary idling of personal vehicles by encouraging parents/guardians, through signage or other means of communication, to turn off their vehicles when parked on and around school grounds

10. Implementing green school practices in the district's food service programs by:

- a. Providing fresh, locally sourced, unprocessed, organic food, including plant-based options, when available
- b. Reducing food packaging and using packaging that is recyclable and/or biodegradable
- c. Utilizing reusable products
- d. Encouraging zero-waste lunches when food is brought from home
- e. Maintaining a system for food waste, such as composting
- f. Providing sharing tables where unused cafeteria food items may, in accordance with Health and Safety Code 114079, be returned for student use or donated to a food bank or other nonprofit charitable organization

11. Ensuring proper handling, reduction, and disposal of hazardous waste, electronic waste, and universal waste in compliance with federal, state, and local regulations

12. Incorporating sustainability criteria into procurement and contracting practices, including vendor requirements for environmentally preferable products, packaging reduction, and take-back or recycling programs when feasible

13. Actively pursuing available state, federal, and local grants, rebates, and incentive programs that support green operations and reduce long-term operational costs

14. Integrating green school practices and activities into the educational program by providing instruction to students on the importance of the environment, involving students in the implementation and evaluation of green school activities and projects as appropriate, and utilizing green school activities and projects as learning tools