



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE STUDENTS, PARENTS AND COMMUNITY	
Effective:	March 21, 2023
Last Revised:	

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

1. PURPOSE

Rainbow District School Board provides environmental education to its students to foster life-long respect for the environment and a sense of urgency for its stewardship. Environmental education is education about the environment, for the environment, and in the environment that promotes an understanding of, rich and active experience in, and an appreciation for the dynamic interactions of:

- the Earth's physical and biological systems;
- the dependency of social and economic systems on these natural systems;
- the scientific and human dimensions of environmental issues; and
- the positive and negative consequences, both intended and unintended, of the interactions between human-created and natural systems.

It is the responsibility of Rainbow District School Board to model for all facilities, staff and students purposeful practices that will minimize our collective impact on the environment and to create a mandate to play an active role in protecting it.

2. DEFINITIONS

Ecological Footprint: The ecological footprint is a person's or an organization's cumulative impact upon the environment.

Sustainable Development: Sustainable development is defined by the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development as "meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

3. APPLICATION

All members of the educational community have a shared responsibility for minimizing their impact on the environment and taking an active role in protecting it.

PROCEDURES

4. Environmental Education

- 4.1 Environmental education is a whole system responsibility. In striving to prepare students in Rainbow schools to be responsible members of a democratic, sustainable, and just society, Rainbow District School Board supports curriculum initiatives across grades and subject areas that support this commitment to sustainable environmental, economic, and equity initiatives.

- 4.2 The board is committed to preparing students for the future. Students need to have the knowledge and skills that will enable them to understand and deal with complex issues that affect the environment now and in the future. They also need to be able to identify issues and perspectives, carry out research, communicate their ideas in meaningful ways and establish goals to implement strategies to reduce, reuse and recycle.
[Board Policy No. GOV-13 Environmental Sustainability and Stewardship]

5. Responsibilities Related to Environmental Education

5.1 All staff members will:

- 5.1.1 Adhere to sound environmental practices in their respective roles; and
- 5.1.2 Decrease the ecological footprint of the whole organization.
- 5.1.3 Eliminate the provision of water in harmful single-use plastic bottles where municipal or well-water sources are readily available.

5.2 Administrators, Principals and Managers will:

- 5.2.1 Embed environmental practices in facilities planning;
- 5.2.2 Foster collaborative opportunities for educators and facilities staff to develop and share activities, integrated approaches, and action research projects related to environmental education;
- 5.2.3 Provide opportunities for student focused, action oriented environmental education projects;
- 5.2.4 Support ALL staff and students in linking environmental knowledge and related skills and activities to the teachings of diverse communities, including First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples, and to principles of responsible citizenship; and
- 5.2.5 Encourage innovative interdisciplinary programs that focus on the environment and include field components.
- 5.2.6 Encourage staff and students to bring reusable bottles and access the water refilling station.

5.3 Teachers will:

- 5.3.1 Embed environmental education in all curriculum areas;
- 5.3.2 Prepare students with the knowledge, skills, perspectives, and practices they need to be environmentally respectful citizens;
- 5.3.3 Use the natural environment to create experiential learning opportunities for students; and
- 5.3.4 Develop learning opportunities that will help students understand the underlying causes, the multiple dimensions, and the dynamic nature of environmental issues.
- 5.3.5 Create opportunities for students to engage in action oriented environmental education Projects
- 5.3.6 Encourage students to bring reusable bottles and access the water refilling station.

5.4 Students Will:

- 5.4.1 Engage in action oriented environmental education projects
- 5.4.2 Gain knowledge, skills, perspectives and practices they need to be environmentally respectful citizens
- 5.4.3 Participate in initiatives to minimize their impact on the environment.
- 5.4.4 Where possible, bring reusable bottles and access the water refilling station.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS**Legal:**

Canadian Council of Ministers of Education (2008) *Learn Canada 2020*.

Ontario Ministry of Education (2009) *Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools*.

Board:

Board Policy No. GOV-11 Learning and Working Environment: Equity and Inclusion

Board Policy No. GOV-13 Environmental Sustainability and Stewardship

Administrative Procedure Equity and Inclusion Framework

Resources:

Ontario Ministry of Education (2007) *Shaping Our Schools, Shaping Our Future: Environmental Education in Ontario Schools*, Report of the Working Group on Environmental Education

Ontario Ministry of Education (2011) *Resource Guide. Environmental Education: Scope and Sequence of Expectations. The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1 to 8 and Kindergarten Programs*.

Ontario Ministry of Education (2011) *Resource Guide. Environmental Education: Scope and Sequence of Expectations. The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 to 12*.