



## YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

BOARD POLICY	
<i>Policy Section</i> <b>Facilities</b>	<i>Policy Number</i> <b>710</b>
<i>Former Policy #</i> <b>813</b>	<i>Page</i> <b>1 of 5</b>
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**POLICY TITLE: ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION: OUR SACRED EARTH**

### SECTION A

#### 1. PURPOSE

The York Catholic District School Board recognizes its moral responsibility to uphold the two principles of ‘sacredness of the earth’ and ‘living in harmony with God’s creation.’ The Board shall educate its students to become socially responsible global citizens and maintain learning and working environments which promote a reverence for the environment and encourage sustainability through the effective stewardship of all resources.

The purpose of this policy is to affirm the Board’s belief that environmental education and effective stewardship of God’s gifts are shared responsibilities of students, parents, staff and community members. This policy provides direction with respect to the implementation of programs and curriculum initiatives that deepen and broaden student engagement and learning about the environment.

#### 2. OBJECTIVE

It is the policy of the York Catholic District School Board to promote learning about environmental issues and solutions. Students, parents, staff and community members shall be actively engaged in environmentally responsible practices throughout the education system so that all stakeholders are dedicated to living more sustainably in harmony with God’s creation.

#### 3. PARAMETERS

3.1 Environmental education and ecological literacy shall be fostered throughout the Board.

- 3.2 The Board shall endeavour to enhance the design and integration of environmentally responsible practices into the effective management of resources, operations and facilities.
- 3.3 The Board shall implement strategies, programs and procedures to protect and conserve the environment, while ensuring that school and workplace environments are safe and healthy.
- 3.4 Regard for the environment shall be one criteria for decision making.
- 3.5 Attention shall be given to environmental principles and energy efficiency in the siting, design, operations and maintenance of all facilities, grounds and equipment.
- 3.6 Where appropriate, staff shall cooperate and support environmental programs developed by local municipalities, agencies and the coterminous Board.

#### **4. RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### **4.1 Board of Trustees**

- 4.1.1 To set direction that promotes environmental literacy and environmentally responsible practices in the management of resources, operations and facilities as reflected in the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan, policies and procedures.
- 4.1.2 To receive and consider reports and related recommendations from Administration regarding environmental education and environmental management practices.

##### **4.2 Director of Education**

- 4.2.1 To oversee compliance with the Environmental Education: Our Sacred Earth policy.
- 4.2.2 To provide leadership that supports environmental education as part of every student's learning and that fosters environmentally responsible management practices as reflected in the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan.
- 4.2.3 To ensure that appropriate resources are directed towards environmental education and environmentally responsible management practices as reflected in the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan.

##### **4.3 Superintendents and Senior Managers**

- 4.3.1 To support the Strategic Commitments reflected in the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan relating to the effective stewardship of our resources.
- 4.3.2 To support the goals of the Ontario Ministry of Education's *Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow* framework.
- 4.3.3 To implement strategies, programs and procedures to protect and conserve the environment, while ensuring that school and workplace environments are safe and healthy.
- 4.3.4 To develop environmentally responsible purchasing practices, while considering quality, price and service.
- 4.3.5 To develop processes and procedures that support energy efficiency, maximum building utilization and the design and construction of new facilities and additions to "Green Building" standards.
- 4.3.6 To support the coordination and integration of professional development opportunities related to environmental education and environmentally

- responsible practices.
- 4.3.7 To increase the capacity of system and school leaders to implement evidence-based environmental education programming, practices and operations.
  - 4.3.8 To promote collaboration with community, municipal, regional and provincial representatives to advance environmental education and environmental sustainability.
  - 4.3.9 To support staff and students in linking environmental knowledge and related skills and activities to the Catholic ecological teachings of Indigenous culture and environmental sustainability and the principles of responsible citizenship.
  - 4.3.10 To maintain a focus on the effective stewardship of God's gifts including living in harmony with creation and reverence for the environment as reflected in the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan.

#### **4.4 Principals**

- 4.4.1 To promote and sustain an environmentally responsible school climate in the School Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-Being and in support of the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan.
- 4.4.2 To assist teachers with the integration of environmental education across the curriculum and to link Catholic social teachings, environmental knowledge, related skills and activities to program delivery.
- 4.4.3 To support staff and students in making connections to the principles of socially responsible global citizenship.
- 4.4.4 To provide environmental leadership and learning opportunities for students, staff, parents and community members.

#### **4.5 Teachers**

- 4.5.1 To use relevant environmental education curriculum resources to promote Catholic social teachings and to support curricula as appropriate.
- 4.5.2 To increase student engagement and learning by fostering active participation in environmental projects within the school, Board and community or on a global level where appropriate.
- 4.5.3 To provide students with opportunities to develop critical thinking skills and knowledge of environmental systems to become discerning believers and socially responsible global citizens.

#### **4.6 Parents**

- 4.6.1 To participate in opportunities which promote Catholic social teachings and sustain positive environmental habits in their homes and communities.
- 4.6.2 To consider ways for their child(ren) to become involved with environmental issues within their communities and/or on a global level.
- 4.6.3 To support the school's efforts with the promotion and sustainability of environmentally responsible practices and learning opportunities.

#### **4.7 Students**

- 4.7.1 To acquire the knowledge, skills and perspectives that foster a Christian understanding of their fundamental connections to each other, to the world around them, and to all living things created by God.
- 4.7.2 To enrich their learning by participating in environmental projects or addressing environmental issues in their school, home, community or at the global level.
- 4.7.3 To consider environmental impact when making decisions.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

### 5.1 Environment

Everything which makes up our surroundings and affects our ability to live on the Earth. The natural world which sustains all people, plants and animals.

### 5.2 Environmental Education / Ecological Literacy

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:

5.2.1 The Earth's physical and biological systems.

5.2.2 The dependency of our social and economic systems on these natural systems.

5.2.3 The scientific and human dimensions of environmental issues.

5.2.4 The positive and negative consequences, both intended and unintended, of the interactions between human created and natural systems.

### 5.3 Environmental Stewardship

The philosophy and accompanying actions of valuing and protecting God's creation as something held in trust for future generations.

### 5.4 Environmental Sustainability

The long-term maintenance of ecosystems and other environmental systems for the benefit of future generations.

## 6. CROSS REFERENCES

[Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools](#)

[Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations](#)

[Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8, Environmental Education: Scope and Sequence of Expectations](#)

[Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-12, Environmental Education: Scope and Sequence of Expectations](#)

*Ready, Set, Green Tips, Techniques and Resources from Ontario Educators*  
[Shaping our Schools, Shaping our Future: Environmental Education in Ontario Schools](#)

YCDSB Policy 802 [Purchasing, Lease & Rental of Goods & Services](#)

YCDSB Guideline - [Purchasing Reference Guideline](#)

YCDSB Independent Procedure - [Selection of Architects](#)

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