

**Burnaby School District 41
Sustainability Profile
June, 2010**

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Embedding Sustainability...

Background

The Burnaby School District is the fourth largest school district in British Columbia with 40 elementary schools and 8 secondary schools. Highland Elementary School on the SFU campus scheduled to open in September will be built to a LEED Gold standard and becomes the 41st elementary school. Also, a Burnaby Central Secondary School is under construction. It will be built to a LEED Gold standard too. Total elementary student population (K-7) is 13,000, total secondary is 11,000.



THE BURNABY SCHOOL DISTRICT IS COMMITTED TO LEADERSHIP ON THE SUSTAINABILITY AGENDA

Burnaby District is committed to leadership on the sustainability agenda. Sustainability initiatives are integrated within educational instruction, facilities and operations and community relations

Key Initiatives

A) Policies, Plans, Reports

On March 23rd, 2010, the Board adopted Environmental Sustainability Policy # 7.70 (www.sd41.bc.ca/budgets_policies/pdf/policies/770.pdf) which states:

The Board is committed to environmental sustainability and recognizes the influence the district can have on student and employee behavior, district operations, the supply chain and the greater community.

The District's commitment to social sustainability and student development is embedded in its mission:

To prepare and support an inclusive, caring community of learners for the challenges of a changing tomorrow.

Provincial policy and legislation which impact all public school districts include the BC carbon tax and legislative requirements to be carbon neutral by 2010 (Bill 44: 1997). The District is active in the BC Power Smart Program which in turn is driven by goals set out in the BC Energy Plan. The District completes an annual carbon neutral report to the province (www.livesmartbc.ca/attachments/carbon_neutral_action_reports/SD41.pdf), and quarterly energy management reports to BC Hydro.

B.) Curricula (Gr. 5 – 12)

The District is committed to “support educational programs, activities, and initiatives that enable students to develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will sustain the environment.” (Policy 7.70). Curriculum is set by the provincial Ministry of Education. The BC ministry actively promotes the integration of sustainability education into curriculum which is described as follows.

Environmental education aims to integrate concepts and principles of the sciences and social sciences, such as ecology, biogeography, sociology, environmental chemistry, environmental psychology, politics, and economics (to name only a few) under a single interdisciplinary framework. (www.bced.gov.bc.ca/environment_ed/envisust.html)

The degree to which sustainability education is taught through traditional course offerings is largely instructor dependent. That is why both the ministry and District 41 emphasize supporting teacher resources and professional development. The District actively maintains a web-site with resources for teachers. Links to curricula are encouraged and supported with resources (www.checkyourhead.org and www.walkingthetalk.bc.ca). The ministry provides an on-line curriculum map (www.bced.gov.bc.ca/environment_ed/ele_curricmaps.htm) developed to support teachers in their efforts to deliver learning outcomes through sustainability education concepts.

C.) Extra-curricular Activities

These are most often school-based and include initiatives such as, school-based energy, water and waste audits and conservation programs, stream day-lighting and fisheries, tree planting, composting and recycling and community gardens. Of note is the Ministry of Education Sustainable School Best Practice Guide [[English](#) (PDF, 2.49MB) [French](#) (PDF, 2.87MB)]. This guide provides help to K-12 schools to take actions that support reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and encourages the wise use of resources such as water and energy.

**SCHOOL BASED
GREEN TEAMS ARE
ENCOURAGED TO
DESIGN AND
IMPLEMENT SCHOOL
AND COMMUNITY
PROJECTS**



The District also encourages and supports the formation of school based ‘Green Teams’ and an associated environmental sustainability action plan for the school and/or community. Green Team work and action plans are shared across schools. At the secondary level the District hosts an annual sustainability conference organized by students and staff.

D) School Operations

The District is committed to “integrating environmentally sustainable considerations into the operations and business decisions.” (Policy 7.70) This work is ongoing in some areas including, school based recycling and composting, green buildings, water and energy retrofits and management, greenhouse gas emissions reductions, alternative energy supply (geothermal in Burnaby Mountain) natural habitat restoration, green procurement (janitorial products). Areas for further development or development underway include scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions reduction (i.e. supply delivery schedules), greening administrative offices, enhancing the work of the green teams in schools and at the Board level, and food services.

The goal is also to continuously improve opportunities for integrating student learning and citizenship through hands-on operational sustainability. . The new energy specialist is tasked with the integration of operations and facilities and opportunities for learning.



**THE GOAL IS TO
CONTINUOUSLY
IMPROVE STUDENT
LEARNING AND
CITIZENSHIP
THROUGH HANDS-ON
SUSTAINABILITY**

Highlight Achievements

- The District claims to be the lowest consumers of energy per student in BC based on the ongoing energy and water conservation work by the facilities department.
- The district holds an annual sustainability forum involving students from across the district
- Students have demonstrated leadership, notably one student won a \$200,000 hybrid bus for the district
- Individual schools are champions, e.g. Brentwood Park Elementary – goal is to become the greenest school in British Columbia

Resource Commitments

Dedicated resources for sustainability include:

- A Director of instruction with responsibility for the educational and behavioral aspects of sustainability, and also for collaboration with the facilities branch to advance operational sustainability
- A Terasan Gas energy specialist to help with the behavioral and educational aspects
- A BC Hydro energy manager reporting to the head of facilities focuses on operational sustainability
- A dedicated environmental sustainability web-site
- Various District level, school and student sustainability committees.

Contact

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