

BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE	
<i>Administrative Procedure</i>	<i>Administrative Procedure Number</i>
Environmental Education	AP-308
<i>Directional Policy</i>	
Student Achievement and Well-Being	

Title of Administrative Procedure:

Environmental Education

Date Approved:

January 25, 2022

Projected Review Date:

January 25, 2027

Directional Policy Alignment: Student Achievement and Well-being

The Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board serves the common good by applying the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church in the context of a culturally, religiously, and regionally diverse society. Thus, this administrative procedure aims for comprehensive environmental education for our community of learners to understand interconnections between regions, processes, and systems, to engage with Indigenous voices as principal dialogue partners, to seek personal and communal ecological conversation, and to take action in, with, and for the environment.

Alignment with Multi-Year Strategic Plan:

The Environmental Education Administrative Procedure supports our vision for achieving excellence in Catholic Education by ensuring the Board has clearly outlined the procedures for

protecting the environment in accordance with the Ministry of Education and Board policy and Directives.

This administrative procedure aligns with the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan in the following areas:

Protecting the Environment to create greater ecological sustainability in all of the Board's educational, strategic, and corporate practices and to act on the urgency expressed in Pope Francis' Encyclical on the Environment *Laudato Si'*.

[PVNCCDSB Board Vision, Mission and Strategic Priorities](#)

Action Required:

As a Board, we are committed to:

- Prioritizing environmental education learning expectations in all schools by providing the necessary staff training to build capacity among teachers and leaders, ensuring that environmental topics in the current K-12 curriculum documents be taught and assessed for all students.
- Striving to certify all schools in an environmental education program.
- Developing short and long-term environmental plans for the Board, creating a multi-disciplinary resource committee on the environment and reporting to the Board of Trustees twice per year to assess the progress being made toward the established goals.

CURRICULUM: Ministry of Education curriculum policy clearly states what students should know and be able to do, as well as the perspectives they need to consider as responsible citizens in a changing world. While environmental education rests on a foundation of knowledge from both science and social studies/geography, this knowledge will be applied across the curriculum. Environmental education will be reflected in an age-appropriate way throughout the K-12 curriculum through strands, topics, and expectations, and will be recognized as a board priority.

TEACHING: All teachers will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to effectively model and teach environmental education, individually and in collaborative practice. Teachers will have access to the professional development required to build their competence and confidence in delivering environmental education. The board will partner with organizations to provide professional learning opportunities for teachers.

LEARNING: Environmental education will draw on effective learning strategies - including deep inquiry learning, problem solving, critical thinking, and assessing alternatives - that engage students personally in their own learning, connect them to the world they live in, and give them the systems thinking and futures thinking they will need to become discerning believers and active citizens. Outdoor Education opportunities will be provided to students to ensure a deeper appreciation of our natural environment.

SCHOOLS: In order to facilitate the effective design and delivery of environmental education, schools will adopt innovative policies for school culture, curriculum, facilities, and operations. Environmental education will involve collaboration among students, teachers, parents,

administrators, and the community, and foster a habit of mind that sees, and seeks out, the interconnections in life and across subject areas and disciplines.

LEADERSHIP: The board will drive and support the development of environmental leadership at all levels of the system, and specifically, will incorporate the six pillars outlined in the Eco-Schools certification process. Schools will demonstrate their commitment to environmental responsibility through their practices and operations, and engage students to actively apply their learning as environmentally responsible members of the school and broader community.

ACCOUNTABILITY: The effectiveness of environmental education in PVNC schools will be measured both on a system level and against clearly defined student achievement outcomes. The goals and content of and approaches taken to environmental education will likewise be subject to cyclical review, to ensure that they remain dynamic and relevant in a changing world.

Adapted from: [Shaping our Schools, Shaping our Future, 2007](#).

Responsibilities:

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- Ensuring alignment with the [Student Achievement and Well Being Directional Policy](#).
- Reviewing the Environmental Education Administrative Procedure as part of its regular policy and procedure review cycle.

The Director of Education is responsible for:

- Prioritizing a commitment to environmental education is prioritized in our multi-year strategic plan
- Maintaining the commitment to prioritize environmental education and outdoor education for all students.

Superintendents of Schools and System Portfolios are responsible for:

- Fostering authentic connections between the *Framework for Environmental Education Policy*, board administrative procedures, the *Catholic Social Teachings* (ie. *Laudato Si*) and frameworks such as the *Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework*.
- Embedding environmental education within the [Catholic Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-Being](#) and in each school's Catholic School Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-being.
- Supporting community-connected opportunities, such as Specialist High Skills Majors focused on the environment, cooperative education placements and work experiences that are relevant to environmental education.

Superintendent of Environmental Education is responsible for:

- Facilitating professional learning that supports learning and teaching *about* the environment, *for* the environment, and *in* the environment.
- Supporting staff and students in building partnerships and relationships that facilitate outdoor education and strengthen environmental awareness (e.g. First Nations and Métis communities, organizations, agriculture, industries, etc).
- Supporting students, on a system-wide basis, as they develop skills, act as decision makers and demonstrate care to effect positive environmental change.
- Sharing the board's work on environmental education with the Board of Trustees 2 times each year

Manager of Communications is responsible for:

- Communicating inspirational school and student environmental education achievements.

Principals and Vice-Principals are responsible for:

- Using relevant Environmental Education policy frameworks and curriculum documents to support classroom and school-wide practices.
- Supporting a school culture that encourages student leadership and participation in environmental activities that demonstrate care for creation in their local communities or at the global level.
- Encouraging outdoor learning and outdoor play in a variety of weather conditions when it is safe to do so.
- Promoting Specialist High Skills Major programs at the secondary level, where enrollment permits, focused on the environment, agriculture, forestry or other areas that promote an appreciation of and protection for the natural world.

Staff are responsible for:

- Making explicit connections between our relationship with the natural world and the Catholic Graduate Expectations.
- Teaching and assessing expectations from the [Environmental Education Scope and Sequence Grades 1-8 and the Kindergarten Program](#). (elementary).
- Teaching and assessing expectations from the [Environmental Education Scope and Sequence Grades 9-12](#). (secondary).
- Engaging all students in acquiring and applying knowledge, skills and perspectives related to environmental education in all subject areas both indoors and outdoors.
- Facilitating deep inquiry-based learning opportunities that promote partnerships and leverage use of digital tools that address environmental issues in their homes, in their local communities, or at the global level.
- Delivering effective environmental education, and modeling environmentally responsible practices.

Students are responsible for:

- Demonstrating knowledge, skills, and perspectives related to responsible citizenship as it pertains to the environment at the local, national, and global level.
- Taking action on environmental issues by planning and participating in environmental education activities and outdoor action projects (such as naturalization of the school yard, water walks, organic gardening, etc.).
- Caring for each other and all living things.

Parents are responsible for:

- Supporting environmental education opportunities (e.g. through Catholic school councils, volunteering, etc.).

Progress Indicators:

- Prioritizing environmental education learning expectations in all schools by providing the necessary staff training to build capacity among teachers and leaders, ensuring that environmental topics in the current K-12 curriculum documents be taught and assessed for all students.
- Striving to certify all schools in an environmental education program.
- Developing short and long-term environmental plans for the Board, creating a multi-disciplinary resource committee on the environment and reporting to the Board of Trustees twice per year to assess the progress being made toward the established goals.

Definitions:

Environmental Education: 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 our social and economic systems on these natural systems.
- The scientific and human dimensions of environmental issues.
- The positive and negative consequences, both intended and unintended, of the interactions between human-created and natural systems.

Environmental Literacy: A way of being able to understand and discuss environmental issues. An environmentally literate student will have the knowledge and perspectives required to understand public issues and place them in a meaningful environmental context. Thus, environmental literacy requires a mix of knowledge, vocabulary, key concepts, history, and philosophy.

Outdoor Education: Is likewise seen as a distinct and critical component of environmental education, concerned with providing experiential learning in the environment to foster a connection to local places, develop a greater understanding of ecosystems, and provide a unique context for learning.

Integral Ecology: The bond between humans and the natural world requires an integrated approach to environmental and social justice ([source](#)). An integral ecology includes taking time to recover a serene harmony with creation, reflecting on our lifestyle and our ideals, and contemplating the Creator who lives among us and surrounds us, whose presence “must not be contrived but found, uncovered.”

References:

- Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace (2017). [Living Out Laudato Si](#). Ottawa, Ontario.
- EcoSchools Canada (2019). Certification Guide - For Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum schools. Retrieved from <https://ecoschools.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Standard-Certification-Guide.pdf>
- Francis (2015). [Laudato Si](#). 1st ed. [Vatican City]: [Vatican Website].
- PVNC Eco-Champion Student Presentation (2020). February 25 PVNC Board Meeting Minutes.
- Ontario Ministry of Education. (2006). [Shaping our schools, Shaping our Future: Environmental Education in Ontario schools](#). Toronto, Ont.: Ontario Ministry of Education.