

## **Sample Discretionary Policy\***

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*\*Sample discretionary policies are not required for compliance with law or state monitoring (NJQSAC). Discretionary policies adopted by the board should reflect actual district programs and practices.*

### CONSERVATION, SUSTAINABILITY AND GREEN INITIATIVES

#### Introduction

The board of education recognizes that responsible environmental stewardship is an integral part of its mission in ensuring that schools are well run. The board supports conservation and sustainable planning, operations and maintenance, and shall endeavor to implement green initiatives in all day-to-day district operations. Sustainability is defined as meeting the needs of the present while not compromising the future. The board recognizes that sustainability through the adoption of green initiatives in all day-to-day district operations will only succeed with the cooperation and support of the board, the students, the parents/guardians and the community.

The board directs the chief school administrator or his or her designee(s) and other key stakeholders to contribute and oversee the district's programs for conservation and green initiatives including but not limited to energy efficient practices, recycling, sustainable programs and business practices within the district, environmental assessments, green construction within school facilities, and education and training programs.

The district shall endeavor to implement a 3E approach to sustainability:

- A. **Economy** – actions to reduce operating costs, save money and redirect saving towards school improvement.
- B. **Education** – actions to train district staff members and engage students in the academics of the district's sustainability initiatives to increase students' connections to an Integrative Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (iSTEAM) process thereby increasing student achievement.
- C. **Environment** – actions to create healthy and safe places for students and staff to learn, work and play.

#### Definitions

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions shall apply:

“Green” refers to any practice, program or product that is environmentally friendly.

“Sustainability” is based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations.

“STEM” (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) is a design-based learning approach that intentionally integrates the concepts and practices of science and/or mathematics education with the concepts and practices of technology and engineering education. It is enhanced through further integration with other school subjects such as language arts, social studies and art.

CONSERVATION, SUSTAINABILITY AND GREEN INITIATIVES (continued)Target Areas/Goals

A sustainable environmental future means that the board will devise and implement initiatives focused on achieving the following goals:

- A. Implementing strategies that improve conservation of resources by managing and minimizing waste, reducing the amount of waste generated and maximizing district recycling efforts. This may include paper, plastic, glass, metal, textile and electronics recycling, paperless management and classroom procedures, and investigating and implementing plans for composting, storm water runoff reuse, and school gardens;
- B. Promoting energy management to reduce energy consumption and costs, expand the scope of school and district energy audits, and maximize the use of renewable energy resources. This may include energy efficient lighting and light bulbs, sun and daylight management, solar panel technology, well timed and controlled air conditioning devices, and geothermal wells and heat;
- C. Promoting environmentally sustainable business practices including EPP (environmentally preferred purchasing) of products and shared services agreements that improve efficiency and reduce cost and waste all areas in school operations;
- D. Deploying teaching strategies through an Integrative Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEM) approach throughout the curriculum to encourage problem-solving on how to improve conservation, sustainability and green initiatives;
- E. Providing staff training and development related to behavior modification that will impact all areas of the board conservation, sustainability and green initiatives as necessary and appropriate;
- F. Promoting environmentally responsible and sustainable business practices in collaboration with the local municipality that improves operations and maintenance in areas such as, but not limited to, energy conservation and management, renewable energy, waste management, water conservation, green purchasing and indoor air quality measures.

School District Green Team

A district Green Team may be appointed by the chief school administrator with approval by the school board. The team may include teaching staff members, administrators, board members, facility staff members, community members including experts from the local municipality, students, and parents/guardians. The team shall be responsible for conservation and green initiatives for day-to-day operations and practices that promote a sustainable environment that is conducive to learning and lowers the operational cost of the district. The Green Team will also oversee:

- A. The assessment of the current district practice's and operations impact on the environment;
- B. The development of goals and objectives for improving the district's sustainability, conservation and green initiatives;

CONSERVATION, SUSTAINABILITY AND GREEN INITIATIVES (continued)Recycling, Composting and Waste Management

Each building principal may designate staff to investigate, develop and/or implement the following:

- A. Recycling initiatives in every school room that are appropriate to the materials used in each school setting. Every classroom and every room in the school shall have a highly visible and convenient recycling bin. If recyclables require separation, bins shall be provided and clearly labeled. The placement of the recycling bins shall be reviewed at the end of each term. All staff shall report repairs or replacements as needed;
- B. Waste reduction procedures (such as by going paperless to the extent possible) throughout the educational program, to the extent possible.

Hazardous waste materials shall not be commingled with non-hazardous materials in any district recycling programs.

Environmentally Sustainable Business Practices

The district will establish business procedures that give a premium to environmentally sustainable practices. The district staff may be designated to implement and oversee the following strategies where feasible:

- A. The efficient use of resources, recycling waste, and the reduction of the demand for materials and resources like paper, energy and water;
- B. Purchasing practices based on long-term environmental and operating costs that include whenever possible environmentally sustainable product purchases, such as “green cleaning” products;
- C. The purchase of green cleaning supplies;
- D. Implement an integrated pest management program that includes the following practices (see board policy 3510 Operation and Maintenance of Plant):
  - 1. Reduce and eliminate where feasible, the use of chemical pesticides;
  - 2. Seek practical alternatives to the use of pesticides;
  - 3. Report annually on practices.

Curriculum Component

Opportunities to introduce sustainability best practices will be used as “teachable moments” for students:

- A. iSTEAM (Integrative Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) and related curriculum initiatives will be linked to problem-solving on how to improve conservation, sustainability and green initiatives;
- B. Link green initiatives to teaching and learning practices that focus on 21<sup>st</sup> century skills (workplace preparedness) 8.1 Educational Technology, 8.2 Technology Education, Engineering and Design, Next Generation Science Standards, project and problem based learning and design based pedagogy;

CONSERVATION, SUSTAINABILITY AND GREEN INITIATIVES (continued)Community engagement

The board will communicate its sustainability efforts to the community including that healthier schools have lower operating expenses. The board will invite community involvement and participation.

Implementation

The chief school administrator will oversee, to an extent that is reasonable and appropriate:

- A. Staff and students receive the necessary notification of and training on new procedures that are implemented for the district's conservation, sustainability, and green initiatives;

Adopted:

Key Words

Sustainability, Conservation, Green Policy, Green Initiative, Environment, Environmental, Recycling, Solar

**Possible**

<b><u>Cross References:</u></b>	*1100	Communicating with the public
	*1330	Use of facilities
	*2130	Evaluation of principals
	*3100	Budget planning and preparation
	*3320	Purchasing procedures
	3508	School gardens
	*3510	Operation and maintenance of plant
	*3516	Safety
	*3542.1	Wellness and nutrition
	*4112.4/4212.4	Health
	*4115	Supervision
	*4116	Evaluation of teaching staff members
	*4131/4131.1	Staff training and development
	*4215	Supervision
	*4216	Evaluation
	*4231/4231.1	Staff training and development
	*5141	Student health
	*5142	Student safety
	*6010	Goals and objectives in instruction
	*6114	Emergency and disaster preparedness
	6142.15	iSTEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering' Art and Math)
	*7110	Long-range facilities plan

\*Indicates the policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual.