

FACILITIES

Facilities and Transportation Services

Environmental Stewardship

This policy supersedes Policy 8542.

I. PURPOSE

The world's leading scientists agree that human-induced greenhouse gas emissions are a significant contributor to global warming and that reducing those emissions is one of the most significant challenges confronting the world today. Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) is committed to continue to take innovative and cost-effective steps to help our country achieve climate stabilization. This policy is intended to prioritize the practices to be developed and implemented by staff members in order to address global warming and to meet other important environmental stewardship initiatives. We are also committed to educating students and staff members in environmental stewardship responsibilities and to encouraging them to use their critical-thinking skills and communication skills to debate the appropriate measures we need to take in order to be responsible stewards of our environment.

II. SUMMARY OF CHANGES SINCE LAST PUBLICATION

In section IX., wording has been revised to add fluorescent light bulbs.

III. DEFINITION

Environmental stewardship is defined as those policies that reduce energy use and water consumption and result in a smaller carbon footprint. Responsible environmental stewardship enhances the overall environment as well as the classroom environment by reducing noise and improving air quality. Sound policies focus on minimizing pollution and refuse, reducing facility operating costs, and promoting a healthy environment for citizens, students, and staff members.

IV. MISSION

Operating and infrastructure design policies shall be focused on supporting all environmental initiatives approved by the School Board. FCPS shall collaborate and coordinate with local and regional initiatives in an effort to produce an overall positive community impact on the environment.

V. CARBON REDUCTION

Carbon reduction is the most important environmental concern, and FCPS is committed to reducing energy consumption wherever possible both to take advantage of its benefits to the environment and to reduce energy expenses. Energy-efficient heating and cooling equipment, as well as energy-saving lighting and controls, will be employed to

meet this goal. We will continue to look for further opportunities to institute programs adding climate control systems, and initiating window replacements.

V. CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Building design will focus on improving student achievement by reducing ambient noise, optimizing classroom acoustics, maximizing natural lighting, and improving air quality. Staff members will help educators develop sustainable curricula by using features and systems of the school facility as teaching aids in order to educate students in the art and science of sustainable design. In this regard, FCPS recently established new academic goals to include the expectation that students understand and model attributes that contribute to an effective and productive community and to the common good of all. FCPS also set the expectation that students be skilled in environmental stewardship.

VI. INDOOR AIR QUALITY

FCPS is committed to establishing and maintaining a healthy environment conducive to effective learning. FCPS has established new ventilation standards to ensure that temperature and humidity are maintained at comfortable levels. During renovations, indoor air quality (IAQ) is tested before construction in order to establish a baseline and is monitored regularly to ensure that quality levels are maintained. During renovations, FCPS observes more stringent IAQ standards than are required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). FCPS has adopted green cleaning practices for FCPS facilities in order to minimize negative effects on IAQ. We have instituted the use of filtration devices on our buffers and vacuums, the use of special entryway mats at all entrances to prevent the spread of dust, the use of treated dust mops, and the use of microfiber cleaning cloths. In the near future, we will phase in the use of Green Seal cleaning products and products with low to no volatile organic compounds (VOC) as new commodities contracts are let.

VII. OUTDOOR AIR QUALITY

To do its part to improve general air quality in the region, FCPS will maximize the use of school buses with green diesel technology using ultra low sulfur diesel fuels and, when replacing vehicles, FCPS shall give preference to vehicles with improved fuel economy and reduced emissions.

VIII. WATER USE AND MANAGEMENT

Plumbing systems will be designed to minimize water consumption through use of low-flow fixtures and metering faucets. New technologies for recycling gray water and rain water for building use and field irrigation shall be evaluated for incorporation into design standards.

IX. RECYCLING

Schools and centers will have mandatory recycling programs for paper products, cans, bottles, and fluorescent light bulbs. Construction waste materials will be separated and

recycled. Local recycled-content and rapidly renewable materials will be used in new schools and renovations when readily available.

X. GROUNDS AND LANDSCAPING PRACTICES

Drought-resistant landscaping will be used to conserve water, and maintenance-free landscaped areas will be installed wherever practical to reduce energy consumption and emissions incurred due to mowing and other maintenance activities. Artificial turf will be installed at schools wherever possible. These fields will result in the savings of millions of gallons of water, minimize the introduction of harmful chemical fertilizers into the ecosystem, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions caused by mowing.

XI. PURCHASING

Acquisition of products and services will be done in accordance with state and local laws, and in support of environmental stewardship, whenever possible. Purchasing decisions will include environmental considerations such as reducing waste and greenhouse gas emissions, minimizing environmental impacts, and using products made with recycled materials.

XII. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Staff members shall create an inventory of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and implement policies, programs, and operations to further achieve measurable reduction and help contribute to regional reduction targets. Annual performance measures shall be instituted.

Policy
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Reviewed and
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