

Environmental Education and Sustainability Procedure

Procedure Number:	5002a
Procedure Owner:	Learning Support Services
Effective Date:	2000 June 27
Amendment Dates:	2010 October 12, 2018 March 27, 2025 October 20
EIE Review Date:	2025 March 19
Resources:	• The Education Act, RSO 1990, c E.2 • The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8 and Kindergarten Program: Environmental Education Scope and Sequence of Expectations, 2017 and The Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-12: Environmental Education Scope and Sequence of Expectations 2017 • Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow. A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools, 2009 • Shaping Our Schools Shaping Our Future B Environmental Education in Ontario Schools. Report of the Working Group on Environmental Education, June 2007 • Environmental Protection Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.19 ○ Ontario Regulation 102/94 Part X ○ Ontario Regulation 103/94 • Electricity Act, 1998, S.O. 1998, c. 15, Sched. A ○ Ontario Regulation 25/23 • TVDSB Environmental Education and Sustainability Policy (5002)

- Thames Valley District School Board Sustainability Framework
- Environmental Education and Sustainability Committee Terms of Reference
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, SC 2021, c 14 UNDRIP – Articles 25, 26
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2015) TRC call to action #92
- Statement of Environmental Values: Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

1. Intent

- 1.1. The intent of this procedure is to provide clear and actionable steps to effectively implement and comply with the Environmental Education and Sustainability Policy 5002 of the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB). This procedure outlines the roles, responsibilities, and specific actions required to promote environmental stewardship and sustainability within our schools and community.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. **Sustainability** is the ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It encompasses social, economic, and environmental aspects and requires action to promote long-term well-being for future generations. Sustainability aims to reduce negative impacts on the planet and its resources, promote economic growth and social inclusion and create resilient communities.
 - 2.1.1. **Sustainability within TVDSB** will involve integrating core environment and sustainability concepts into the curriculum, community collaboration, extracurriculars, school design, supply chain, and much more.
- 2.2. **Treaties** in Canada are agreements made between Indigenous Nations and with the Crown and/or Federal Government. They outline the rights, responsibilities, and relationships between the parties involved and establish how Nations would co-exist.

Treaties were negotiated on the basis of mutual respect and the principles of peace and friendship and determined how lands and resources are to be shared and sustained.

2.3. **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; and
- the positive and negative consequences, both intended and unintended, of the interactions between human created and natural systems.

Note: This definition comes from: Shaping our Schools, Shaping our Future Pg. 6

3. Objective of Procedure

3.1. The objective of this procedure is to define the specific actions to be taken by TVDSB staff to comply with the Environmental Education and Sustainability Policy in the areas of teaching and learning, student engagement and community connections, and environmental leadership. These actions align with the TVDSB Sustainability Framework and the Multi-Year Strategic Plan.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1. The TVDSB's Environmental Education and Sustainability Committee will meet to collaborate on initiatives and report on action items that are listed in this procedure, as per the Environmental Education and Sustainability Committee Terms of Reference.

5. Indigenous Peoples and Environmental Stewardship

5.1. The TVDSB recognizes and honours the unique relationship that Indigenous Peoples have with the land, water, and all living things. Our Environmental Education and Sustainability Policy is guided by the principles of respect, reciprocity, and responsibility, ensuring that Indigenous knowledge systems and perspectives are

integral to our treaty responsibilities as related to environmental education and sustainability practices.

6. To Support Teaching and Learning, Learning Support Services will:

- 6.1. Support schools to embed environmental stewardship into all curricula such as:
 - 6.1.1. Using targets listed in the TVDSB Sustainability Framework to support conscientious decision-making;
 - 6.1.2. Understanding environmental racism and discrimination;
 - 6.1.3. Promoting the sustainable use of natural resources;
 - 6.1.4. Learning about local treaties and understanding treaty responsibilities;
 - 6.1.5. Promoting awareness of Indigenous land, water, and air protectors;
 - 6.1.6. Incorporating Indigenous perspectives and two-eyed seeing, prioritizing local context whenever possible; and
 - 6.1.7. Acting to minimize environmental impacts in the classroom (e.g., proper disposal of chemicals)
- 6.2. Provide curricular resources and develop learning opportunities in classrooms, school properties, and at TVDSB Environmental Education Centres to help students understand the causes, dimensions, and dynamic nature of environmental issues. Learning opportunities will also promote our fundamental connections to each other and to the world around us through our relationship to food, water, energy, air, and land, and our interaction with all living things.
- 6.3. Provide opportunities to engage students in the design and delivery of environmental education projects at the school and board level.
- 6.4. Promote the adoption of in-school environmental certifications (e.g. Eco-Schools, Blue Schools, Learning for a Sustainable Future Green Schools, a locally developed certification) and TVDSB Environmental Education Centres and programs as resources for schools to utilize in developing environmental responsibility.
- 6.5. Develop and promote professional development opportunities related to

environmental sustainability.

- 6.6. Encourage and promote innovative interdisciplinary programming that focuses on the environment and includes field-based components for all staff and students, in cooperation with the home, local organizations, and the community.

7. To Support Teaching and Learning, Organizational Support Services will:

- 7.1. Provide resources, as requested, to support Environmental Education in the form of:
 - 7.1.1. Facility data on energy use, waste production, waste diversion, water consumption, and storm water management; and
 - 7.1.2. Regularly updated website dedicated to explaining how energy conservation, waste reduction, and responsible water use can be achieved at TVDSB.
- 7.2. Support school communities in the implementation of environmental initiatives related to energy conservation, waste reduction, and responsible water use according to the TVDSB Sustainability Framework.

8. To Support Student Engagement and Community Connections, TVDSB will:

- 8.1. Facilitate the sharing of school and student projects across the board and community that demonstrate engagement in environmental stewardship (as outlined in 6.1) in the annual report and other opportunities as available.
- 8.2. Build relationships with local First Nation Communities and agencies, providing opportunities for collaborating on sustainability projects, initiatives, and solutions.
- 8.3. Collaborate with all Conservation Authorities that encompass TVDSB facilities (Upper Thames, Lower Thames, Ausable-Bayfield, St. Clair, Catfish Creek, Kettle Creek, Long Point Region, and Upper Grand).
- 8.4. Offer community-linked experiences, experiential learning, and programs such as a Specialist High Skills Major focused on the environment, cooperative education, and work experience opportunities that are relevant to environmental education.

9. To Support Environmental Leadership, TVDSB will:

- 9.1. Promote and support having an Environmental Leader in each school and each

Board site.

- 9.2. Encourage proper waste, energy, and water management procedures in all facilities aligned with the appropriate regulations and TVDSB Sustainability Framework.
- 9.3. Incorporate environmental design principles in the location, design, and construction of new facilities, renovations, and school ground greening projects.
- 9.4. Adopt purchasing practices which incorporate procurement of products and services that are environmentally preferred and that also support energy conservation and waste minimization, where feasible.
- 9.5. Identify budget requirements and funding opportunities to support the TVDSB's commitment to environmental sustainability.
- 9.6. Commit to using native plants and preserving the natural environment during land preparation for renovations and new builds, where feasible.

10. Monitoring and Review

- 10.1. An annual report will be prepared according to the Environmental Education and Sustainability Committee terms of reference and shared with the designated Superintendent. The report will be reviewed by the committee and an action plan will be recommended.
- 10.2. To support data-tracking and reporting, Learning Support Services will:
 - 10.2.1. Maintain a database of Environmental Education related student learning and engagement data as outlined in the TVDSB Environmental Education and Sustainability Committee Terms of Reference.
 - 10.2.2. Prepare Environmental Education related student learning and engagement data for reporting.
- 10.3. To support data-tracking and reporting, Facility Services will:
 - 10.3.1. Maintain a database to track data related to TVDSB Sustainability Framework goals.
 - 10.3.2. Prepare waste, water, and energy data for annual reporting.