



## YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

### ***Policy #235.0, Environmental Responsibility*** ***Procedure #235.1, Reusable Beverage Containers***

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The Environmental Responsibility policy and its related procedures reinforce the Board's commitment to embracing environmental responsibility in Board practices.

#### **Who has responsibilities?**

- Director of Education
- Chief Financial Officer
- Senior Staff Members
- Superintendents
- Administrative Services
- Purchasing Services
- Principals, Vice-Principals, Managers and Supervisors
- Parents and Students
- All Staff

#### **How is this policy and/or procedure related to Board priorities?**

The Environmental Responsibility policy and related procedure directly support the stewardship of Board resources and the Board's commitment to environmentally responsible practices. It encourages the modeling of continuous environmental sustainability.



# Board Policy #235.0 Environmental Responsibility

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## Policy Statement

The York Region District School Board recognizes the interdependence of the environment, the economy and society and the challenge of balancing all three in building a healthy and sustainable future. A healthy and sustainable future is the right of each student. The Board believes that all learners, leaders and community members have a shared responsibility for minimizing their impact on the environment and for taking an active role in protecting it. The Board is committed to ensuring that all stakeholders are environmentally literate and understand their fundamental connection to each other and to the world around them. Environmental education is a whole system responsibility and the Board will promote changes in organizational practices as an organization that will result in reducing our ecological footprint. The Board is dedicated to increasing student engagement by fostering participation in environmental activities that build meaningful links between schools, homes and communities.

## Responsibilities

*The Board of Trustees is responsible for:*

- setting direction that promotes environmental literacy and environmentally responsible practices in the management of resources, operations and facilities as reflected in Board policies and the Multi-Year Plans;
- receiving and considering reports and related recommendations regarding environmental education and environmental management practices;
- reviewing the Environmental Responsibility policy in accordance with the priorities in the Trustees' Multi-Year Plan and the approved policy review cycle; and
- understanding and communicating with members of the community about the Environmental Responsibility policy.

*The Director of Education is responsible for:*

- implementing and operationalizing the Environmental Responsibility policy; and
- sustaining the direction for environmental education and environmentally responsible practices by;
  - providing leadership that supports environmental education as part of every student's learning and that fosters environmentally responsible management practices,
  - ensuring that appropriate resources are directed toward these priorities, and
  - assigning leadership responsibility for environmental education to a supervisory officer.

*The senior staff member identified to support environmental education is responsible for:*

- supporting the goals of the Ontario Ministry of Education's [Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools: Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow](#);
- building system capacity by providing leadership to superintendents;
- ensuring that environmental education addresses the particular needs of staff and students as they relate to cultural background, language, ability and other aspects of diversity; and
- ensuring Board appreciation programs include opportunities to recognize responsible environmental leadership at all levels of the organization.

*Superintendents are responsible for:*

- supporting the goals of the Ontario Ministry of Education's [Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools: Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow](#);
- building system capacity by providing leadership to principals and managers;
- ensuring that environmental education addresses the particular needs of students as they relate to cultural background, language, ability and other aspects of diversity;
- supporting the coordination and integration of professional development opportunities related to environmental education and environmentally responsible practices for all employee groups; promoting collaboration with community, municipal, regional and provincial representatives to advance environmental education and environmental sustainability.

*Principals are responsible for:*

- promoting and sustaining environmentally responsible classrooms and schools as reflected in the School Improvement Plan;
- assisting teachers to integrate environmental education across the curriculum and to link environmental knowledge and related skills and activities to program delivery;
- supporting staff and students in making connections to the principles of responsible citizenship; and
- providing environmental leadership and learning opportunities for learners, school staff and community members.

*Teachers and other staff who support students in a school or classroom setting are responsible for:*

- providing opportunities for students to acquire the knowledge, skills and perspectives that foster environmental stewardship;
- using relevant environmental education curriculum resource documents to support curricula as appropriate;
- increasing student engagement by building student capacity to take action for positive environmental change in their schools, homes, local communities, or at the global level; and
- striving for continuous improvement in personal and professional growth in the area of environmental education to support student achievement and success.

*Parents and students are responsible for:*

- taking opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to develop and sustain positive environmental habits in their classrooms, homes and school communities; and
- working collaboratively with schools to reduce the Board's ecological footprint.

*Managers are responsible for:*

- establishing and sustaining environmentally responsible workplaces;
- considering environmental impact when making decisions;
- promoting environmental responsibility as reflected in the Department Improvement Plan; and
- collaborating with municipal, regional and provincial representatives to develop partnerships and to share environmentally responsible practices, where applicable.

*All staff members are responsible for:*

- striving for continuous improvement in professional growth to support environmentally responsible service delivery.

## **Definitions**

### *Ecological Footprint*

A person's or organization's cumulative impact upon natural resources.

### *Environment*

Everything which makes up our surroundings and affects our ability to live upon the earth. The natural world which sustains all people, plants, and animals.

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

*(Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools, Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009 and Shaping Our Schools, Shaping Our Future: Environmental Education in Ontario Schools, Report of the Working Group on Environmental Education (Toronto: June 2007), p. 6.)*

### *Environmental Literacy*

Students need to have the knowledge and skills that will enable them to understand and deal with complex issues that affect the environment now and in the future. For example, students need to develop skills in problem solving, inquiry, decision making, action planning, higher-level thinking, systems thinking, and critical literacy. They also need to be able to identify issues and perspectives, carry out research, and communicate their ideas in meaningful ways. In short, they need to develop the knowledge and skills that will enable them to become informed, engaged, and responsible citizens who are concerned about diverse environmental issues. (*The Ontario Curriculum: Environmental Education Resource Guide, 2008*)

### *Environmental Sustainability*

An environmentally sustainable organization seeks to balance economy, society and environment within its operations. Through seeking balance, an organization may better steward natural and economic resources taking into account the needs of future generations. (*Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools, Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009*)

## *Student Engagement*

Student engagement involves active participation, a strong student voice in decision making and involvement in school and community in meaningful ways. (*The School Effectiveness Framework*, Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat, 2008)

### **Related Policy**

[Policy #218.0, Healthy Schools and Workplaces](#)

### **Department**

Director's Office

### **Policy History**

Approved 1997

Revised 2002

Revised 2011

Working Document March 2016

Revised December 2016

*It is the expectation of the York Region District School Board that all employees, students and persons invited to or visiting Board property; or partaking/volunteering in Board or school-sponsored events and activities will respect the policies and procedures of the Board. The term "parents" refers to both parents and guardians in all Board policies and procedures.*



# Board Procedure #235.1 Reusable Beverage Containers

This procedure reinforces the Board's commitment to modeling continuous environmental sustainability. Students, staff members and community partners are encouraged to use reusable beverage containers.

## **Responsibilities**

*The Director of Education shall:*

- allocate staff and resources to support the *Reusable Beverage Containers* procedure.

*The Chief Financial Officer shall:*

- ensure service providers adhere to the Environmental Responsibility policy, the Ministry of Education's School Food and Beverage Policy and other Ministry directives; and
- promote changes in organizational practices that will result in reducing the Board's ecological footprint.

*Superintendents shall:*

- ensure all departments, offices and schools encourage the use of reusable beverage containers;
- endeavour to eliminate the use of single-use containers wherever safe drinking water from municipal or well water sources is available;
- review any contractual agreements regarding the sale of water in plastic bottles; and
- ensure accessible water sources for all students, staff and visitors, at all Board sites.

*Principals, Vice-Principals, Managers and Supervisors shall:*

- ensure that refreshments for meetings, events and fundraising activities are consistent with all applicable Board policies and procedures;
- encourage proper hydration of all students and staff members in accordance with the [Healthy Schools and Workplaces](#) policy and procedure;
- ensure that members of their workplace and school communities are aware of the *Reusable Beverage Containers* procedure; and
- promote and encourage the use of reusable beverage containers by all staff members, parents, students and other members of the community.

*Teachers and other staff members who support students in a school or classroom setting shall:*

- provide opportunities for students to acquire the knowledge, skills and perspectives that foster environmental stewardship;
- promote the use of reusable containers by all students;
- encourage proper hydration of all students in accordance with the [Healthy Schools and Workplaces](#) policy and procedure; and
- encourage the use of reusable water bottles instead of single-use plastic water bottles.

*Staff members, Parents, Students, and Community Partners shall:*

- take opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours needed to develop and sustain positive environmental habits in their workplaces, classrooms, homes and school communities;

- use reusable containers on workplace and school sites, in support of the Board's environmental priorities, wherever possible; and
- increase awareness of and practice proper hydration, wherever possible.

*Administrative Services shall:*

- request that permit holders conform with the Board's waste management and environmental practices, are aware of the Reusable Beverage Containers procedure; and
- promote the use of reusable containers.

*Plant Services shall:*

- maintain accessible water sources for all students, staff and visitors, at all Board sites (including well-water sites);
- facilitate the replacement or retrofitting of existing water fountain hardware with hardware that provides easy access for filling refillable containers, where possible, and within budget; and
- promote reusing and recycling opportunities.

*All Staff members and Students shall:*

- use reusable containers, wherever possible; and
- encourage the use of reusable water bottles instead of single-use plastic water bottles.

**Department**

Plant Services  
Education and Community Services  
Business Services

**Procedure History**

Approved June 2012  
Working Document March 2016  
Revised December 2016

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