

GREEN TEAM DISCUSSION POINTS

Environmental Action Program for Schools

THIS NOTICE IS BEING SENT TO ALL SCHOOL PERSONNEL:
ADMINISTRATIVE, TEACHING, SECRETARIAL, FOOD SERVICE,
CUSTODIAL, MAINTENANCE AND ALL OTHER STAFF.

Our school is considering participating in the Environmental Action Program for Schools. Our school must complete four environmentally beneficial activities to become a Certified Environmental Action School. Join us!

WHAT IS THE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PROGRAM FOR SCHOOLS?

The **Environmental Action Program for Schools (EAPS)** is a program to help schools take actions that will help the environment. Most children and young people want to help preserve the environment and are often eager to make a difference. By participating in this program, we will be making a difference. To participate, individual schools, including students, teachers and staff, undertake activities that fall in four of the below Action Areas. The activities are designed to help instill new environmentally beneficial behaviors in students and all involved. Schools are certified as an 'Environmental Action School' when they have completed activities that help the environment in at least four of the Action Areas below.

EAPS ACTION AREAS:

- ✓ Recycle
- ✓ Letter Campaign
- ✓ Buy Recycled
- ✓ Environmental Curriculum
- ✓ Less Toxic
- ✓ Become a Collection Site (fundraiser)
- ✓ Waste Prevention
- ✓ School Composting

Schools can also design their own Action Area as a substitute for one or more of the above

IS IT A LOT OF WORK?

The EAPS program is designed to accommodate almost *any* level of effort. A school's Actions can be extremely simple or very comprehensive and challenging depending on how much time and energy can be devoted - simple and challenging sample programs are outlined below.

PROGRAM BASICS:

The [EAPS Guide](#) contains information on how to accomplish each of the eight Action Areas. It also contains detailed information on how to complete the suggested program steps.

We can choose to follow the Guide instructions precisely or simply complete the program in our own manner. However, to become a Certified Environmental Action School, we must complete four environmental activities and submit the completed Certification Report for approval.

OVER

PROGRAM STEPS - all are optional except those noted:

Assemble an EAPS committee or 'Green Team'
Announce EAPS to all school personnel
Find out how much trash our school is throwing away by conducting a Waste Assessment
Choose four Action Areas
Make plans on how to complete our four Action Areas
Announce EAPS to students
Hold a kick-off event
Complete four Action Areas (not optional)
Send in completed Certification and Summary of Actions Report (not optional)
Receive and display the Certificate of Completion and Summary of Actions

EXAMPLE OF A SIMPLE PROGRAM:

BUY RECYCLED: switch to recycled content paper cups, plates and napkins for class parties
LESS TOXIC: wipe up ants with soapy water instead of spraying them with insecticide first
SCHOOL COMPOSTING: use chicken wire to make a composting hoop and fill according to composting directions
WASTE PREVENTION: allow homework to be written on the back of used paper and set up swap area for used school supplies

EXAMPLE OF A CHALLENGING PROGRAM:

Kick off event: hire a school assembly group with a recycling theme to introduce the EAPS program.
Let student volunteers perform a skit about the program acting out the four actions the green team has selected
RECYCLE: recycle cardboard and food cans from the kitchen
BECOME A COLLECTION SITE: become a drop-off/collection site for California Redemption Value (CRV) containers including aluminum, plastic and glass
ENVIRONMENTAL CURRICULUM: do a four-week curriculum for the whole school
LETTER CAMPAIGN: conduct a school-wide letter campaign to manufacturers
Have a big Earth Day party honoring the hardest workers and raffle off recycled content sports equipment bought with some of the CRV proceeds

AFTER COMPLETION:

Our school, upon completion, will receive a Certificate of Completion framed for display. Along with the certificate, our school's specific actions will be written up in summary form. This is called the Summary of Actions, and it too will be framed for display for all to read and admire.

Regardless of how we achieve Certification, we want students to know what is being done and why. The more involved the students are, the more they will get from the experience. Changes in habits often become second nature with the passage of time. New environmentally beneficial habits that become second nature are one of the program's top goals.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BECOME AN ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION SCHOOL?

It means our school is committed to a process of improvement. An Environmental Action School has taken ownership of its responsibility to the environment and has chosen to act. A school that participates in this type of program may experience higher school morale and school spirit. A closer camaraderie among students and staff could be cultivated because working together for a good cause, as we all know, makes people feel good about themselves and each other. Some activities in the program could create fond memories that may last for years to come.

Perhaps one of the best outcomes of this program may be that kids (and adults) learn environmentally friendly habits. Such habits are needed, especially in children, so they can grow up with these habits ingrained in their behavior and carry them throughout their lives. If environmentally conscientious behaviors are learned now, it will make using them in the future easier. Our future, and especially our kids' future, will be better for it.