



## Sustainable Oregon Schools Initiative **BENEFITS for Schools**

### **Supports Academic Performance**

- Reduced energy, water and material needs leave more money for instruction.  
*(In 2004-5 the Gresham-Barlow School District saved over \$1 million, the equivalent of 22 teaching positions, with energy conservation measures<sup>1</sup>)*
- Better-designed classrooms (ie. daylighting, proper HVAC) improve academic performance<sup>2</sup>.
- Environment-based programs improve student performance, particularly in science areas<sup>3, 4</sup>.
- Improved student and staff health increases attendance and concentration.
- Sustainability education fosters critical thinking, complex decision-making skills and community service.

### **Benefits Health**

- Improved indoor air quality decreases student and staff absenteeism<sup>5</sup>.
- Leads to healthier transportation opportunities.
- Leads to healthier food choices.
- Leads to safer chemical choices and handling within schools.

### **Provides Financial Benefits**

- A district-based approach to resource conservation optimizes cost savings.
- Maintained buildings avoid costly future repairs.
- Increased staff satisfaction means lower staff turnover rate.

### **Makes Sustainability Accessible for Schools**

- Provides a single point source for information and resources related to the multiple, interconnected aspects of sustainability.
- Provides a common understanding about what sustainability is and how to achieve it.

### **Produces Students Ready for the Future**

- Provides the knowledge, thinking, and skills that students will need to join the workforce and lead the move toward a sustainable future.

<sup>1</sup> Oregon Department of Energy case study: <http://egov.oregon.gov/ENERGY/CONS/RCM/docs/GBSD.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Heschong Mahone Group Studies, 2003, <http://www.h-m-g.com/projects/daylighting/summaries%20on%20daylighting.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Bi-annual report 2001-2002, Environmental Learning in America, National Environmental Education and Training Foundation, [www.neetf.org/pubs/NEETF\\_Annual\\_Report\\_2001.pdf](http://www.neetf.org/pubs/NEETF_Annual_Report_2001.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Understanding Environmental Literacy in America, May 2004, [www.neetf.org/roper/ELR.pdf](http://www.neetf.org/roper/ELR.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> EPA School Indoor Air Quality site, <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/scfaqs.html>



## Sustainable Oregon Schools Initiative

# **BENEFITS for Businesses**

### **Oregon's Businesses Benefit from the Initiative**

#### **Workforce**

- Helps meet demand for an educated workforce that understands and can apply sustainable practices.
- Complements simultaneous sustainability efforts within Oregon's community colleges and universities to ensure excellent preparation for tomorrow's workforce.
- Fosters internship programs that provide businesses with student and teacher interns, who can assist those businesses in their move toward sustainability.

#### **Markets**

- Product and service needs of sustainable schools will increase Oregon's markets for sustainable products and services.

#### **Recognition**

- It will help Oregon's schools be recognized nationally for excellence, which will attract businesses and workers.

### **Oregon's Businesses can help the Initiative**

#### **Provide Knowledge**

- Identify knowledgeable employees to participate on topic teams.
- Provide sustainability mentors for local school districts.

#### **Provide Opportunities for Experience**

- Provide sustainability-related internship opportunities for students and staff, to deepen their understanding and provide experience they can apply in their schools.

#### **Provide Resources**

- Provide meeting space, teleconferencing, web design and support, or graphics and marketing expertise.
- Provide funding to support the Initiative.