



The Apple

Sustainable
Schools
News

Healthy Schools – Healthy Environments

September 2008

Share Your Sustainability Story!

Has your school or district begun the sustainability journey? Have you wondered how others gained momentum? Now you can share your story and learn from other's experiences via the SOSI website. Every school/district must find their own unique beginnings but it helps to know what's working for others. Please consider submitting a [School District Sustainability Overview](#), and we'll post the information on our website.

SOSI Endorsement Form for Schools/Districts

We invite schools, school districts and associated individuals to provide an endorsement of the Sustainable Oregon Schools Initiative. Your endorsement helps us demonstrate interest as we seek funding to help us, help you. It's also the means with which we can establish longer term contact with you. You can download an endorsement form from the endorsement page of our website, or [here](#). We also have a standard endorsement form for non-school entities, also on the website.

Managing Your Sustainability Effort

A SOSI topic team has been investigating how to manage the overall sustainability effort in a school or district. To read about managing the effort, go to the "[Schools and Districts](#)" page of the SOSI website's "Take Action" section. Also, visit the "[Managing Sustainability](#)" section of the "Resource" web page.

The team has now posted several of its work items, described below, and continues to develop other resources. This group plans to continue as a monthly peer group. If you're interested in joining in-person or by phone, let us know.

Evolution of Sustainability Matrix

Every organization will take its own route toward sustainability, some starting one thing earlier and another moving faster with

In this Issue:

- *Share Your Sustainability Story!*
- *SOSI Endorsement Form for Schools/Districts*
- *Managing Your Sustainability Effort*
- *List of Sustainability Awards for Students*
- *4-H Wildlife Stewards Program*
- *Professional Development on Global Sustainability*
- *Website for Kids: "The Greens"*
- *New ODE "Quake Safe Schools" Website*
- *Newsletter Links*
- *Highways Impact School Air Quality*
- *Next Steps for Focus the Nation*
- *Annual Sustainability Review in Higher Education*
- *The Story of Stuff, and Secret Life of Paper*
- *Upcoming Events*
- *Thank You to our Supporters*

something else. However eventually the same general stages need to be traveled and achievements made. The team found that an Evolution of Sustainability matrix was helpful to get an overview of what needed to be done, and a sense of where any particular district is in the journey. Six evolutionary stages are recognized. Any given school or district probably falls into several stages, dependent on the activity.

1. Green Initiatives: Every district has at least some green practices in place. At this stage they're not integrated into district activities and are typically not documented.

2. Beginning stages of the sustainability journey: Much is starting at this stage, including Sustainability Policy, Sustainability Advisory Committee, district visioning, baseline development, some sustainability training, student involvement, and curriculum consideration.

Support SOSI and The Apple!

If you find this newsletter helpful, please help support it with you tax deductible donation today! To learn about individual donation opportunities and corporate sponsorship visit <http://www.sustainableschools.org/about/support.htm>.

Use your credit card to make a secure on-line contribution or, send a check to:

Zero Waste Alliance
One World Trade Center, Suite 210
121 SW Salmon St, Portland, OR 97204

Thank you!

The Apple is the newsletter from the Sustainable Oregon Schools Initiative (SOSI). This and past newsletters are available in PDF form at <http://www.sustainableschools.org/about/newletter.htm>.

3. **Integrating Sustainability:** At this stage a Sustainability Management System is being created and decisions consider all three aspects of sustainability (economic, social and environmental). There is some dedicated staff time for the sustainability effort. Training and student involvement increase.
4. **Sustainability is Fully Integrated:** A full sustainability management system is in place, annual sustainability reports issued, all staff are trained in sustainability, sustainability is fully integrated into the curriculum. Each site has a designated sustainability coordinator.
5. **Sustainable (mostly not possible today):** Activities result in no negative impacts to sustainability. All students and staff fully involved.
6. **Restorative:** District activities result in net positive impacts, beginning to correct past damage.

The Evolution of Sustainability matrix can be accessed from several pages of the SOSI website in the "Take Action" and "Resources" sections, and [here](#).

Sustainability Management System (SMS)

When it's ready, a school / district should create a sustainability management system in order to integrate and manage all its activities with potential sustainability impacts, just as a financial management system allows for proper financial management.

The SOSI team is creating a model Sustainability Management System (SMS), which is derived from the ISO 14001 international environmental management standard. It's adapted for schools/districts and broadened to include all aspects of sustainability. A [synopsis of the SOSI SMS](#) is posted on the website. The full SMS documents are still being processed. The team hopes to pilot this system in several districts. If your district might be interested, let us know!

List of Sustainability Awards for Students

We are continually adding to the SOSI website. One of this month's additions is a list of Student Sustainability Awards. Go to "Take Action" → "Students" → "Sustainability Awards". The awards presented offer just a small portion of the opportunities students of all ages have to demonstrate their commitment to a sustainable world and in turn win great prizes! View list at: http://sustainableschools.org/action/s_award.htm

4-H Wildlife Stewards Program

The 4-H Wildlife Stewards Program helps to rebuild the connection between students' lives and the natural world. The program trains volunteers to help teachers, students and parent groups turn tired patches of school

grounds — tired lawn or even old asphalt — into thriving natural habitats for birds, beneficial insects and other wildlife. Ponds, native plants, trees, bushes and interpretive signs sprout where gravel and weeds once ruled. Soon butterflies, frogs and birds follow. Students then use those habitats as a natural laboratory for learning everything from conservation, biology and botany to math and mapping skills. The program, which began 10 years ago, now operates in 54 schools in 19 counties throughout Oregon. This program recently won a new award, the 2008 Fish and Wildlife Service — 4-H Natural Resources Conservation Award. The 4-H Wildlife Stewards Fall Training takes place on October 9-11. See the website for details. <http://www.4hwildlifestewards.org/index.htm>

Professional Development on Global Sustainability

This online, independent continuing education course for grade 5-12 educators is offered by the Heritage Institute. It uses Facing the Future's standards-based, hands-on lessons, curriculum, and website content, and is designed to build upon teaching expertise and to think creatively about how to integrate global issues, sustainability, and local solutions into curricula. http://www.hol.edu/view_course.cfm?cid=2114

Website for Kids: "The Greens"

MeetTheGreens.org is a new kids' site about looking after the planet. Kids can watch The GREENS' cartoon adventures and discover related green games, news, downloads, a blog, action tips, links, and much more. The new Activity Guide pairs hands-on activities to deepen kids' understanding of topics like recycling and global warming with campaigns to reduce junk mail and get drivers to stop idling cars. This innovative, web-only project comes from WGBH in Boston. <http://www.meetthegreens.org/>

New ODE "Quake Safe Schools" Website

The last SOSI newsletter included a piece about earthquake risk and schools in Oregon. The release last year of the Department of Geology and Mineral Industries' (DOGAMI) report on public buildings raised many questions about the safety of some schools in the event of an earthquake. In order to help districts and communities assess their risks and plan for needed improvements, the Oregon Department of Education has now created a new [Quake Safe Schools](#) web page.

This page contains information on:

- Oregon's earthquake risks
- Structural vs. non-structural risks
- DOGAMI's Seismic Needs Assessment report, including how buildings were assessed and links to building-specific reports
- Ten simple things schools and communities can do to help prepare for an earthquake

- Resources and links for more information on preparing for, understanding, and teaching about earthquakes

In addition to the "Quake Safe Schools" page, there is also a new [Emergency and Information Planning](#) page on the ODE website with links and resources on emergency preparedness, designed to help schools prepare for emergencies and natural disasters.

Newsletter Links

- The latest Green Schools Initiative newsletter, *A Green Back to School*, is packed with information on shopping green for the start of the new school year. <http://www.greenschools.net/news/BacktoSchoolTips.htm>
- Facing the Future: <http://facingthefuture.cmail4.com/e/495287/6dd1j17d/>

Highways Impact School Air Quality

One third of American public schools are in an "air pollution danger zone," researchers at the University of Cincinnati found in a new study to be published in the *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*. They defined danger zones as areas within a quarter-mile of heavily trafficked highways. Diesel particles and other pollutants from highways can heighten kids' risk for asthma and respiratory problems later in life. "This is a major public health concern that should be given serious consideration in future urban development, transportation planning, and environmental policies," said lead investigator and UC environmental health professor Sergey Grinshpun. Past research in this area has focused on where kids live, not taking into account the fact that they spend a third of their day at school. Grinshpun says schools need to be built further from highways, and those currently in danger zones should get good air-filtration systems. Learn more here: <http://healthnews.uc.edu/news/?/7358/>

Next Steps for Focus the Nation

Some of you may have participated last year in Focus the Nation, which culminated on one day in January, and worked to focus schools on global warming. Now this effort is moving forward through two groups.

Moving forward under the Focus the Nation name there's an effort to empower young people to accelerate the transition to a just and prosperous clean energy future in four ways:

- Community education on clean energy
- Sustained engagement with elected officials
- Networking youth initiatives
- Developing clean energy leaders

Learn more at <http://www.focusthenation.org/index.php>

A national educational initiative similar to last year's "Focus the Nation" is being continued under a new name: The National Teach-in on Global Warming Solutions or "National Teach-In" for short has designated February 5th as the culmination day. The 2009 National Teach-In will focus specifically on recommendations from [The Presidential Climate Action Project](#). Once again, young people will engage national political leaders and other key decision-makers in critical face-to-face dialogues about their future. For information on building a Teach-in at your institution, see <http://www.nationalteachin.org/index.php>.

Annual Sustainability Review in Higher Education

The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) has released a major annual publication that compiles all of the campus sustainability news in the US and Canada. Collected from the previous year, the 230 page *AASHE Digest 2007* includes over 800 stories, which can provide ideas and inspiration on sustainability. It is organized into 24 chapters spanning education, research, campus operations, administration, and finance. "By any yardstick, sustainability in higher education hit new milestones of success in 2007," said Judy Walton, AASHE's Executive Director.

Digest stories also document the emergence of ranking and rating systems that compare campuses on sustainability criteria. There were at least 6 separate attempts to evaluate campus sustainability performance in 2007, ranging from the Sustainable Endowments Institute's College Sustainability Report Card to *Grist* magazine's "15 Green Colleges and Universities." AASHE entered the field as well with the release of the first draft of its Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS).

The report can be downloaded at:

<http://www.aashe.org/highlights/digest07.php>.

The Story of Stuff, and Secret Life of Paper

This great new resource will help understand "more of the story". From its extraction through sale, use and disposal, all the stuff in our lives affects communities at home and abroad, yet most of this is hidden from view. *The Story of Stuff* is a 20-minute, fast-paced, fact-filled look at the underside of our production and consumption patterns. *The Story of Stuff* exposes the connections between a huge number of environmental and social issues, and calls us together to create a more sustainable and just world. It'll teach you something, it'll make you laugh, and it just may change the way you look at all the stuff in your life forever. It's all available from the website: <http://www.storyofstuff.com/>

"*The Secret Life of Paper*," is a five-minute video about paper waste. It's from Inform, a New York City-based environmental non-profit. See it at: <http://www.secret-life.org/paper> .

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Check the SOSI website for details and updates: <http://www.sustainableschools.org/about/events.htm>.

SOSI Meetings:

Upcoming SOSI Topic Team Meetings:

Managing Sustainability Topic Team

- October 20, 2008 9:30 am to 12:00 pm
- November 17, 2008 9:30 am to 12:00 pm

SOSI Steering Committee: October 21, 1 - 4 PM

Related Events:

Many events that help support sustainable schools occur throughout the year. This information is provided as a service. Listing on this page does not necessarily imply endorsement by Zero Waste Alliance or the Sustainable Oregon Schools Initiative.

Oct 2 Green Building: The New Revolution is Here

Jerry Yudelson presents a compelling business case for green buildings and shares building projects that demonstrate environmental excellence, within conventional budgets.

7:00pm-8:30pm, Willamette University, Salem.
For more info call Andrea Foust at (503) 370-6654.

Oct 2 - 3 Connecting Communities Conf.

Conference for people working in community-based organizations, who want to improve their ability to reach and engage Latino community members.

Location: Corvallis. Info at:

<http://oregonstate.edu/conferences/connectingcommunities2008/>

Oct 3 Collaborative Approaches to Achieving Zero Waste

Part of the Fall UO Sustainability Leadership Program. 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. UO Portland. See [course key](#).

Oct 4 Northwest Conference on Teaching for Social Justice

Workshops, discussions, and displays by teachers, students, and parent activists.

9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. Seattle.

More info at: <http://www.nwtsj.org/>

Oct 7 - Dec 9 Climate Masters at Work

U of O program to educate organizational leaders in resource efficiency and risk management, reduce costs and increase productivity, while also making smart environmental choices.

11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Tuesdays, Eugene. Info at:

<http://climlead.uoregon.edu/programs/businessclimatemaster.html>

Oct 9 - 11 4-H Wildlife Stewards Skills Share Conference

Workshops on garden art, site monitoring, science inquiry, eco roofs, cob building, native plant fundraisers and more. Portland. See details [here](#).

Visit the SOSI Website Events List for MANY more listings: <http://www.zerowaste.org/schools/events.htm>

BE A SUPPORTER!! Contributions from you and your organizations make this initiative happen.

Please consider contributing. Details at <http://www.sustainableschools.org/about/support.htm>.

**** Thank You to our supporters ****

Platinum Level:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Gold Level:

Bonneville Power Administration*, Coastwide Laboratories*, Dolphin Software*, Ecoworks Foundation, Oregon Community Foundation – Schamp Family Fund, Oregon Department of Administrative Services, Oregon Department of Energy, Oregon School Employees Association*, Portland General Electric*

Silver Level:

Artemis Foods, Community Development Student Group, Energy Trust of Oregon, Metro Regional Government*, Northwest Natural, Oregon Department of Education, Portland Center Stage, Siltronic Corporation*, The Catlin Gabel School*

Bronze Level:

Bill Blosser, Boora Architects*, City of Portland Office of Sustainable Development, The Food Alliance, Harry & David*, Hot Lips Pizza, Johnson Controls, Neil Kelly*, Trane Oregon

* Honor Roll Sponsors have contributed for more than one year.

To unsubscribe, please contact Lori Porter Stole, lstole@zerowaste.org. Thank you!