



The Apple

Sustainable
Schools
News

Healthy Schools – Healthy Environments

December 2008-January 2009

SOSI working with ESDs

For the last several months SOSI has been building connections with Oregon's Educational Service Districts (ESDs). There are 20 in Oregon, which provide a service network that covers all of the state's school districts. Working together with the Linn-Benton-Lincoln ESD we have presented the concepts of Sustainability and Education for Sustainability at an Oregon Association of ESD (OAESD) meeting, and a follow up at the next meeting that included a discussion to assess areas of interest. Many of the ESD superintendents are interested in learning more, and are considering how they can support their component school districts.

After getting involved with SOSI the Linn-Benton-Lincoln ESD created a Sustainability Management Coordinator position. We will continue to work with them, and the other ESDs. As a next step we have defined a sustainability workshop which we hope to present to ESD teams in four areas of the state and pending funding, a number of ESDs have confirmed interest. Teams will learn more about sustainability, will explore how it should be included in the K-12 system to support upcoming career and job needs, and will identify opportunities for ESDs to support their districts in these areas.

Policies and the OSBA

A SOSI team has worked with the Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA) to develop a sample Sustainability Policy. We are pleased that there are now two sustainability policies that have been finalized by OSBA; EDDA G1, and EDDA G2. These can be accessed from the "Resource" section of the SOSI website at:

http://sustainableschools.org/resources/systems_services/manageother.htm.

At the "Take Action" section of the SOSI website you can also view several Sustainability Policies that have already been adopted by school districts:

<http://sustainableschools.org/action/stories.htm>.

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In the next year we will work with the OSBA to review existing sample policies in a variety of areas for opportunities to integrate sustainability concepts.

This and much more were presented at the November OSBA conference. That PowerPoint is available at the SOSI website, in the Previous SOSI Events section, accessed from the bottom of the Events page: http://sustainableschools.org/about/past_events.htm.

New Sustainability Education Listserve for K-12

Our last newsletter mentioned the national listserv for sustainability education in higher education institutions. Now the K-12 and Teacher Education sector of the U.S. Partnership of Education for Sustainable Development, with which SOSI is engaged, has launched the first

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>.

national listserv specifically for K-12 educators focused on the topic of Education for Sustainability. It has already become active, and educators involved with teaching students in any subject within the K-12 arena are encouraged to join. The goal of the Sustaink12 listserv is for educators to communicate and collaborate on strategies to integrate education for sustainability into the teaching and operations of U.S. K-12 schools. There are two ways to join the listserv: 1) Go to <https://listserver.itd.umich.edu/cgi-bin/lyris.pl?enter=sustaink12> and join; or 2) Send an email message to: sustaink12-request@umich.edu, with the word "subscribe" in the subject line of your message.

Starting the Sustainability Journey; Updates Along the Way

The "Take Action" section of the SOSI website offers a page for school districts and schools to share progress about their sustainability efforts. No organization has actually attained sustainability. In fact, those working on it usually find that the more they do, the more they recognize how much is yet to be done! The important thing is to start the journey, increasing knowledge about sustainability for all, and letting sustainability guide decision-making. SOSI is starting to collect occasional progress updates from schools and districts, to share via the website. Several school districts are included now, with several more to come very soon, so check back. <http://sustainableschools.org/action/stories.htm>. If you have a story to add, please send it to us. If it helps, start with the "School/District Template" which is also available from the website.

Read about SOSI in the Portland Business Journal

The Portland Business Journal recently included an article describing SOSI, along with the extensive sustainability efforts in the Gladstone School District. A copy is posted on the SOSI website http://sustainableschools.org/documents/Portland_Business_Journal_081121.pdf

New Special Report: Pesticides in Our Schools

The Oregon Toxics Alliance's (OTA) report, [WARNING! Hazards to Children: Pesticides in Our Schools](#), describes pesticide exposure to school children in classrooms, on playgrounds, on ball fields, and at bus stops. It notes that

forty-three cases have been reported in the past ten years, of which fourteen cases were serious enough to result in evacuation, require medical attention, and/or result in a citation from the state. The OTA states that a review of Oregon's pesticide complaint records reveals that our children are being exposed to highly toxic pesticides in our schools. These pesticides have been linked to cancer, reproductive problems, nervous system damage, and learning disabilities. The report looks at the sources of pesticide exposure and suggests solutions to protect our children's health. Find the complete report at the OTA website: <http://www.oregontoxics.org/pesticide/schools/whitepaper/pestreportWithMaps.pdf>.

New from Facing the Future: Understanding Sustainability

- *A Two-Week Unit for Social Studies (Grades 9-12)*
How do economics, history, and democracy relate to sustainability? Students answer questions like these through hands-on lessons in *Facing the Future's* new high school social studies unit, *Understanding Sustainability*. Each lesson in the two-week unit is aligned to National Council for the Social Studies' curriculum standards for easy classroom integration. To download a free overview and the table of contents go to their website: <http://www.facingthefuture.org/Home/CurriculumDetails/tabid/131/Default.aspx?ItemID=NATUSHS-DN>

USA Today report: Toxic Air and America's Schools

USA Today used an EPA model to track the path of industrial pollution and mapped the locations of almost 128,000 schools to determine the levels of toxic chemicals outside. They have summarized their findings on a webpage which includes links to stories related to many facets of this issue. You can also enter your school's name or state, including Oregon, and search for those specific results. See the details at: <http://content.usatoday.com/news/nation/environment/smokestack/index>

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!

Where Do Your Recyclables Go?

A 13 minute video explaining what happens to recyclables after they leave the curb in Oregon was recently produced, and is available from the Marion County website, along with several other pieces that may be of interest. The video is called "*Saving Little Pieces of Our Earth*". It can be accessed here: <http://www.co.marion.or.us/PW/ES/video>

National Teach-In on Global Warming Solutions

Last year's event from Focus the Nation is being repeated this year by National Teach-In, on February 5th, 2009. The National Teach-In website includes sections for both K-8 and High School. Visit it for more details on materials and resources for the primary level, including links for the new book by Lynne Cherry and Gary Braasch: *How We Know What We Know About Our Changing Climate*.

http://nationalteachin.org/k8teachin_model.php

Radon Report

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer, hence it is an important consideration for Indoor Air Quality (IAQ). Terry Lindsey (terry.d.lindsey@state.or.us) is the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) section manager for radiation protection, and Brett Sherry (brett.w.sherry@state.or.us) is the radon coordinator. The DHS radon team promotes radon testing in homes, workplaces, and schools. A survey to determine which schools have been tested was conducted 4 years ago with only a 25% return. A major goal is to get more (all) schools tested. DHS's radon program is there to act as a resource – definitely contact them with questions and requests for literature. Radon test kits are available on a limited basis to schools. Older school buildings and those with deep basements are more likely to have higher levels of radon. Adjustments to school ventilation systems help decrease the level. Radon testing could even involve students, as part of a science education project.

<http://oregon.gov/DHS/ph/rps/radon/index.shtml>

University Presidents' Climate Commitment Annual Report

AASHE, ecoAmerica, and Second Nature, the three organizations that support the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment, have released the 2007 ACUPCC Annual Report. In addition to a snapshot of all signatory reports received by December 31, 2007, the 2007 Annual Report includes a collection of brief stories from select ACUPCC institutions describing exciting climate and energy successes on their campuses related to ACUPCC implementation, from which others can learn. In related news, AASHE, ecoAmerica, and Second Nature have also released an ACUPCC Reporting Snapshot that is current as of June 30, 2008.

http://www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org/reporting/annual_report.php.

Good Stories about Oregon School Food

Crow-Applegate-Lorane School District

Students in the rural Crow-Applegate-Lorane School District pioneered a program to learn about where food comes from, how to grow their own and the benefits of

eating fresh fruits and vegetables. The students have come to love even little-known vegetables. The plan approved by the board has five main steps:

- Create gardens and a greenhouse
- Take students on field trips to local farms
- Educate them about nutrition
- Set up subject-area studies using school gardens
- Integrate fresh food into the cafeteria menu

Learn more at:

<http://www.osba.org/salute/2007/sal0705.asp>

Portland Public Schools

The Portland Public School Food Program was recently featured in the Portland Tribune.

Kristy Obbink, director of nutrition services at Portland Public Schools, says that the district's Harvest of the Month and Local Lunch programs, which put farm-fresh produce on cafeteria plates twice a month, has her questioning the assumption that kids won't eat healthy foods. It turns out students kind of like parsnips. For details see the 12/11/08 article at:

http://www.portlandtribune.com/sustainable/story.php?story_id=122886579354434600.

School IAQ Newsletter for NW Schools

The Fall issue is available on the WSU Website, and includes the following:

- Idaho School Walk-throughs
- Environmental Health Lesson Plans
- Washington State IAQ Update
- It's Not Rocket Science
- Washington Green Schools
- Vacuum Cleaners and Suspended Particles in Schools and Homes
- Creating a Customized IAQ Program (A special four-page insert)

http://www.energy.wsu.edu/documents/building/iaq/nl/08_fall_iaq_nl.pdf

School Procurement Choices Contribute Greenhouse Gases

Burning fossil fuel is a big greenhouse gas culprit, but the manufacture and procurement of Things is also a large source of greenhouse gases and Oregon wants to track it. The stuff we buy is another big, but not as commonly considered source. Every product, from televisions to lunchtrays, takes energy to get to your site -- energy to mine raw materials, make the product and ship it--- yet that use goes unreported in Oregon's tracking of greenhouse gases and energy. And because Oregonians consume and throw away more stuff than ever, it amounts to a source that can't be ignored. Read more in a recent Oregonian article:

<http://www.oregonlive.com/news/oregonian/index.ssf?/base/news/1217566503179850.xml&coll=7&thispage=1>

UPCOMING EVENTS:

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

Upcoming SOSI Meetings:

SOSI Funding Committee:

January 13, 2009 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

SOSI Steering Committee:

February 10, 2009 1:00 pm to 4:00 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.

January 15 Webinar: Environmental Building in the Educational Sector

Listeners will learn about the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) green building rating system for schools. LEED is USGBC's voluntary, consensus-based national rating system for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings.
9:00-10:00 a.m. PST, on the Web. Info [here](#).

January 17 Salmonpeople

A one man tour de force that's equal parts science, humor, and art. Learn of salmon, people, culture, and the watersheds that tie them all together.
7:30-9:30 p.m. Coos Bay, Oregon. Tix and info [here](#).

January 21 School and Community Facility Policy Summit

Join statewide leaders from school districts, local and state government, along with experts in sustainability, community development, historic preservation, and housing groups to discuss school siting policy with a view to making it easier to walk and bike to school.
1:00-7:00 p.m. Salem, Oregon. More info [here](#).

January 29 Annual FSEL Lecture Series

Friends of Straub Environmental Learning Center presents the lecture, *Biomimicry: Innovation Inspired by Nature*, by Denise Deluca, Outreach Director for the Biomimicry Institute.
7:00-8:00 p.m. Salem, Oregon. More info [here](#).

February 5 National Teach-In on Global Warming Solutions

Nation-wide, grassroots educational event to engage learning institutions in a climate dialogue. More information, including K-8 and high school teaching models are available [here](#).

March 19-21 National Farm to Cafeteria

Conference The National Farm to School Network's fourth National Farm to Cafeteria Conference.
Portland. More information available [here](#).

October 7-10, 2009 NAAEE 38th Annual Conference

North American Association for Environmental Education presents on the theme, "The Power of Partnerships: Creative Leadership in Environmental Education".
Portland. More information available [here](#).

Visit the SOSI Website Events List for more listings:

<http://sustainableschools.org/about/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>.

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Silver Level:

Artemis Foods, Bank of America Charitable Foundation, 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*

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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.

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