



## Professional Development for Sustainability

5 Points 10 Points 15 Points 20 Points Bronze Priority Silver Priority School District

Quality professional development of staff and board members facilitates the effective transition to sustainability planning and practices for schools and districts. Enhancing the knowledge of school personnel about the benefits and requirements of sustainability practices in a school setting will increase the likelihood of a successful integration of sustainability into the district's operations, and promote shared ownership of the outcomes. This action recognizes schools and districts that provide professional development on topics related to sustainability to board of education members and to staff from all levels and departments, from superintendents, business administrators, and supervisors to teaching staff, custodians, educational support professionals, nurses, and food service staff. Schools and districts earn points depending on the number of individuals receiving at least two hours of training on sustainability topics of importance in the district. To qualify for points, the training must have taken place no more than 24 months prior to the January submission deadline. This variable point training action will award: 5 points for 5 personnel; 10 points for 10 personnel; 15 points for 15 personnel; and 20 points for 20 personnel.

For a district to earn points for this action, the individuals receiving training should represent a cross section of school board members, district, and school-level staff.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Any training submitted for points under another action or any training highlighted below may not be included in the submission for this action:

- *Green Building Training Program*
- *Green Cleaning Training & Education Programs*
- *iSTEAM Professional Development Plan*
- Asthma training required for Asthma Friendly School award (see *Asthma Friendly School* action)
- Indoor Air Quality PEOSH training required for designated persons (see *Indoor Air Quality Review* action)
- IPM training required for School IPM Coordinators (see *Integrated Pest Management - Education & Organic Lawn Care* action)

### Why is it important?

District leadership and staff educated in the concepts and language of sustainability, in the implementation of sustainable practices, and in the incorporation of sustainability into the curriculum, can serve as an impetus to the adoption and integration of sustainability throughout the district. Having a core leadership group, along with a broad cadre of personnel who can support the process to infuse sustainability into the district's operations, policies, and into the curriculum, will foster success and give a clear signal that the district is serious in its commitment.

### Who should lead and be involved with this action?

District leadership (staff and board) and the Green Team should take the lead in identifying training needs and in planning for training. All personnel, including teaching staff, school board members, the superintendent, the business administrator, facilities staff, nurses, and food service staff should have the opportunity to receive training and education

to raise their awareness of the value of a sustainable school district, and to enhance their capacity to perform their functions sustainably. Some personnel with relevant expertise may be tapped to serve as trainers. The school or district should assess whether outside expertise may be needed to complete the training.

## **Timeframe**

Sustainability training is available in various formats and time frames. Training may be as simple as a one-hour presentation or may involve a comprehensive week-long training program. It may take just a few weeks for Green Team members to organize a presentation or viewing of a webinar. Taking courses and studying to prepare for a certification exam may take months. The district or school will need to take timing into account if it plans to seek training from an outside source, as some trainings are only offered at certain times. Consideration should be given to on-going training, which may take more time to organize.

## **Project costs and resource needs**

Resource requirements for training on sustainability topics vary depending on the type and extent of the training. An in-house presentation/webinar may have no costs aside from staff and/or Green Team member time. Other training will be more resource-intensive and may require funds. Fees for speakers and classes can easily run in the hundreds of dollars. Weekend and week-long retreats will often exceed \$1,000 per person. Thus, the district or school should assess the financial resources available for sustainability training before committing to a plan. The Resources section of this action includes information on free webinars and training programs.

## **What to do, and how to do it ("How to")**

This section provides guidance and recommendations for implementing the action. A school/district does not need to follow this guidance exactly as long as it meets the requirements for earning points for this action.

1. To earn points under this action, at least five individuals, including school board members, district administration, district staff, and school staff (teachers and educational support) need to participate in a minimum of two hours of professional training on sustainability topics. Please note that training that focuses on Green Cleaning Training & Education and Green Building Training should be submitted for points under the appropriate program action.
2. Professional development for sustainability should provide a general understanding of the benefits of sustainable schools to board members, district leadership, and school staff, as well as specific information and guidance on undertaking some aspect of sustainability practice, from planning to operations.
3. The Green Team, school board members, district leaders, and school staff members should work together to identify board and staff members that would benefit from training on sustainability topics. Training needs could be determined based on plans to maintain, implement or expand sustainable practices in the school or district.
4. Once the training needs have been identified, various professional development offerings should be reviewed and evaluated to determine the learning concepts that will be included, the educational methods that will be incorporated, and the professional skills that will be imparted. Professional development that incorporates sustainability concepts across subject areas in the teaching curriculum should be a key consideration, as educating for sustainability lays the foundation for sustainable thinking and practice among students, staff, and the broader community.
5. The school or district may choose to train multiple personnel on a particular sustainability topic, either by hosting the training internally or by sending a group to an external training event such as a professional association meeting. Outside experts or internal staff with expertise in sustainability can also be utilized to provide the training. The training hours can also be completed through webinars, online courses, or workshops. Individual staff or board members may be trained in different sustainability topics as relevant to their official role in the district.
6. The school will need to provide sustainability training documentation that identifies the names and position of the (5, 10, 15, or 20) individuals receiving training, along with the following course information: date, instructor or course provider, course description or syllabus, and course length. When estimating course training time please exclude time for breaks and meals from the two-hour training requirement. Please note that the two hour of training requirement does not have to be completed at a single event. For example, two one-hour training sessions or three forty-five-

minute sessions would meet the time requirement. The training hours must have occurred in the twenty-four months prior to submission for certification.

7. Qualifying training includes courses or workshops on a topic related to sustainability in schools, from leadership, planning, policy, and curriculum development to teaching, enrichment, food service, transportation, and facilities management. There are many recognized training providers that cover sustainability topics related to schools included in the resources section of this action. You may also want to check with your professional associations for the most current sustainability course offerings.
8. When submitting the action documentation, please select the action point value that corresponds to the number of individuals that met the two-hour training requirement on sustainability topics. Five individuals earns 5 points, 10 individuals earns 10 points, 15 individuals earns 15 points and 20 or more individuals earns 20 points.

Please note that points will not be awarded in this action for training activities that would be eligible to earn points under the Green Cleaning Training & Education Program and Green Building Training program actions.

### **What to submit to earn points for this action**

To earn points under this action at least five individuals, including school board members, district administration, and school staff must each participate in a minimum of two hours of professional development on sustainability topics, no more than 24 months prior to the January submission deadline. The following documentation must be submitted as part of the online certification application in order to verify that the action requirements have been met.

1. Description of Implementation. In the text box provided on the submission page for this action, provide a short narrative (about 300 words or less) of sustainability professional development training activities.
2. Upload documentation showing that at least five, ten, fifteen, or twenty (number will determine points awarded) individuals each received at least two hours of training. Provide the name, staff title and school, along with the following course information: date, instructor or course provider, course description or syllabus, and course length/time. When estimating course training time, please exclude time for breaks and meals from the two-hour training requirement. Please note that the two hours of training requirement does not have to be completed at a single event. For example, two one-hour training sessions or three forty-five-minute sessions would meet the time requirement. The training hours must have occurred in the twenty-four months prior to submission to be eligible to earn points in the certification program cycle. Be sure the documentation clearly shows the training dates.

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### **IMPORTANT NOTES:**

There is a limit of six uploaded documents per action and individual files must not exceed 20 MB. Excerpts of relevant information from large documents are recommended.

All action documentation is available for public viewing after an action is approved. Action submissions should not include any information or documents that are not intended for public viewing.

## Spotlight: What NJ Schools are doing

### Hazlet Township Public School District

In October, 2016, members of the Green Team attended workshops on Sustainable best practices at the NJSBA Convention. Workshops that focused on green purchasing and different ways to fund sustainable projects were attended. View the approved submission [here](#).

## Resources

The following resources may be helpful in completing this action.

**The Association for Science Teacher Education** hosts international conferences and provides links to resources for members. <http://theaste.org/resources/environmental-education-resources/>

**Canvas Network** offers free online courses by educators around the world. <https://www.canvas.net>

**The Cloud Institute for Sustainability Education** provides consulting, professional development, and coaching services for sustainability education curriculum development and implementation. <http://cloudinstitute.org/>

**Creative Change Educational Solutions** provides resources and professional development sessions to support sustainability education in schools. <http://www.creativechange.net/home/>

**International Facility Managers Association** provides classroom and online courses, as well as on-demand recorded webinars and other resources on multiple sustainability-themed topics including green roofs, green cleaning, energy savings, and indoor air quality. <http://www.ifmacredentials.org/sfp>

### **The National Wildlife Federation's Eco School Program**

<http://www.nwf.org/eco-schools-usa.aspx>

**New Jersey Association of School Administrators** provides training for members on diverse topics. [www.njasa.net](http://www.njasa.net)

**New Jersey Association of School Business Officials** provides workshops and seminars for professional development of its members. [www.njasbo.com](http://www.njasbo.com)

**New Jersey Buildings & Grounds Association** provides training on various green building maintenance-related topics including indoor air quality, integrated pest management, and effective cleaning. <http://njsbga.org/index.htm>

**New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, SEEDS** (State Environmental Education Directory, Speakers Program): Schools can request speakers to talk about air quality, going green in schools, and other environmental topics. <http://www.nj.gov/dep/seeds/speak.htm>

**New Jersey School Boards Association** provides in-person and online training on diverse topics relevant to school board members. Courses on Sustainability/STEM are also offered as part of the Master Board Member program. <http://www.njsba.org>

**Rutgers Center for Government Services/NJ Educational Facility Management** offers professional development courses for school facilities managers, including one titled "Environmental Stewardship, Code Compliance and Sustainability." <http://cgs.rutgers.edu/efm>

**Rutgers Center for Green Building** provides links to resources for green building professionals. <http://rcgb.rutgers.edu/green-building-professionals/>

**The North American Association for Environmental Education** hosts online professional development opportunities through its eePRO platform. <https://naaee.org/eeepro/learning>

### **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**

- **Creating Healthy Indoor Environments in Schools** includes links to resources, information and webinars about indoor environmental issues including cleaning and maintenance. <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/webconferences.html>

- Environmental Education Resource page includes information for teachers and staff. <http://www2.epa.gov/education>

### **U.S. Green Building Council**

- Center for Green Schools offers the Green Classroom Professional Certificate and online webinars. <http://centerforgreenschools.org/utility-nav/Resources/webtrainings.aspx>
- NJ Chapter, Speakers' Bureau <https://usgbcnj.org/resources/speakers-bureau/> for general presentation or for speakers with expertise in the following areas (fees vary):
  - Sustainable Sites
  - Water Efficiency
  - Energy & Atmosphere
  - Materials & Resources
  - Indoor Environmental Quality
  - Overall LEED certification process