

Washoe County School District



Purchasing Department Green Efforts Report

May 13, 2021

<http://www.washoeschools.net/Domain/65>



In December 2009, the Washoe County School District's (WCSD) Purchasing Department adopted the following environmentally-friendly purchasing policy:

The Washoe County School District's Purchasing Department embraces the responsibility to environmentally preferable purchasing (EPP). To support the effort of EPP the Purchasing Department will give preference to environmentally superior products where quality, function and cost are equal or better. In addition, the Purchasing Department will seek opportunities to increase sustainable and recycled product sourcing.

Over the past 12 years, WCSD has taken great strides towards the goal of sustainability and environmentally preferable purchasing. The following is a summary report of these endeavors.

OFFICE SUPPLIES & RECYCLED PAPER PRODUCTS

WCSD's end-users purchase a wide variety of recycled and/or environmentally-friendly office supplies that are provided under contract with various awarded suppliers. In addition, WCSD gives preference to recycled paper products when such product meets standards, costs no more than a comparable non-recycled product and can be substituted for a comparable non-recycled product. Purchases made on recycled/environmentally-friendly office supply products that include recycled paper products are as follows:

FY19 7/1/18 to 6/30/19	FY20 7/1/19 to 6/30/20	FY21 7/1/20 to Current
\$887,775.72	\$649,937.33	\$585,174.88

RECYCLED TONER CARTRIDGES

WCSD has continued to partner Office Depot-Max to provide remanufactured/recycled printer ink and toner cartridges to end-users of WCSD. In addition to the continued use of this contract, the Purchasing Department with Office Depot-Max and Hewlett-Packard collaboratively launched a district-wide, no-cost, recycling program for used printer ink and toner cartridges. This project is considered a team effort towards understanding the significance of our environment and our united roles in protecting it.

PHOTO VOLTAIC PROJECTS (SOLAR)

WCSD has installed 40 solar photovoltaic systems at 36 of its schools for a total of 4,191 kilowatts. The systems generate 6,599,562 kilowatt-hours (kWh) per year or 12% of WCSD's entire electricity usage. The systems are estimated to save the WCSD more than \$690,000 per year. Several of the systems were built as shade structure to cover student and employment parking. Most of the cost of the systems were covered by federal grants and utility rebates leaving very little out-of-pocket expenditures for WCSD.

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MAJOR ON-GOING DISTRICT-WIDE PROJECTS

WCSD initiates and supports a multitude of projects that are environmentally preferable and while Purchasing is involved with managing solicitations and/or contracts to successfully launch these projects. These projects provide value to WCSD and benefit our ecosystem. A sampling of projects currently in use include:

- WCSD's Board of Trustees adopted a *Conservation and Sustainability Policy (Board Policy 7400)* on June 6, 2017. The Policy states, "The Board of Trustees ("Board") is committed to the implementation of effective, comprehensive, and sustainable initiatives and programs. All Washoe County School District ("District") schools and other facilities shall implement programs and practices which are not harmful to or which limit the depletion of natural resources, create a culture that accepts fiscal responsibility for these goals, enhance building/facility performance, and foster a sense of citizenship in students by encouraging a focus on conservation and sustainability. Such programs are designed to achieve and maintain levels of conservation which protect human health and safety, prevent injury to plant and animal life, prevent damage to property, and preserve the visibility, scenic, and esthetic values of the community. A program of environmental consciousness is vital to the overall health and safety of students, faculty/staff, and visitors to the District's properties.
- The Transportation Department uses a computerized route manager program called "VersaTrans" which computes and utilizes the shortest safest routes. This saves fuel and road time, which in turn reduces WCSD's carbon footprint.
- The Transportation Department, School Police, and the Truancy Department utilize a GPS system through Zonar Systems, Inc., which provides efficient adjusted pre-trip inspections for various vehicles (e.g. buses), reduction in idle-time that decreases exhaust released into the atmosphere, and reductions in manual paperwork completion, which is provided via electronic reporting features. Total annual cost savings to WCSD for the use of this program is estimated (at minimum) of \$210,000 per year.
- The Facilities Management Department has established a dashboard to track energy and water usage to better monitor and control use. Facilities Management and Capital Projects have conducted a district-wide energy audit and is implementing energy efficiency projects in every school. In total, WCSD will invest \$33.1 million dollars to convert all lighting to LED lighting, connect all mobile classroom thermostats to the central control system, improve interior water efficiency and upgrade exterior irrigation systems. The upgrades will reduce annual energy use by 13,841,939 kWh and 161,544 therms as well as annual water use by 96,729 thousand gallons. All of the savings will reduce utility costs by ~\$2.5 million per year.
- The Maintenance Department's HVAC Division of WCSD utilizes a computerized "Energy Management System" to control heating and cooling temperatures throughout WCSD. Furthermore, the Maintenance Department is working closely with NV Energy to obtain reimbursements for "boiler tune-up" costs, which has multiple benefits. The projects save money and provide rebates while it assists in WCSD conserving natural gas consumption, which again, decreases WCSD's carbon footprint.

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- The Capital Projects Department has also contributed in the “go green” effort by completing several window replacement projects as part of WCSD’s revitalization rollouts to various elementary, middle, and high schools. These windows are more energy efficient, create better light for the students, and also are operable for teachers to control air in their classrooms. Of the 93 schools in WCSD, 49 meet the Criteria to be EPA Energy star schools. The most recently constructed new schools have been built to LEED Silver standards, though not certified. Eight (8) WCSD schools have been built with geo-exchange systems that provide a well field for heating and cooling that reduces the energy from 18.6 kBtu/sf to 5.6 kBtu/sf, a 70% saving.

WCSD ECO-FRIENDLY PARTNERSHIPS

WCSD partners with many local organizations to provide environmental education in the classrooms including:

- Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful
 - Educational program for educators in compliance with new standards
 - Waste Warriors – recycling & trash reduction
 - Weed Warriors – invasive weeds
 - Watershed Warriors – watershed protection
- Sierra Nevada Journeys
 - Delivers innovative outdoor, science-based education programs to develop critical thinking skills and inspire natural resource stewardship
 - >50% of the elementary schools
 - Served over 150,000 since inception in 2007 including 32,129 in 2018.
- Great Basin Outdoor School
 - Programs immerse students in day trips and multi-day overnight ecology camps
 - Students hike, snowshoe, learn local ecology with hands-on standards-based activities
 - Served thousands of children and adults since 1998
 - Teachers get professional development courses
- DRI – Greenpower
 - Educational outreach for DRI
 - Support educators in science-based, environmental education
 - Provide inquiry based STEM curriculum through Green Boxes, teacher trainings and workshops
 - Provide speakers, field trips, and special opportunities
 - 49 schools
- Project ReCharge
 - STEM based service-learning program
 - Provides 96 teachers with the training and materials to implement engaging energy efficiency curriculum
 - More than 10,000 students in 33 schools
 - Real-time energy monitoring data to be used by teachers and students to conduct energy audits

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- Urban Roots
 - “Where does our food come from?”
 - From planting and harvesting to preparing
 - Follows food from seed to table
 - 18+ Schools

- Reno Bike Project
 - After-school clubs, summer day camp, and as a credit-earning P.E. class
 - Riding skills and commuting knowledge Appropriate nutrition and attire
 - Maintenance and mechanics

- Alliance for Climate Education
 - Teach climate science that puts teenagers at the center of the story
 - Worked with Washoe County Air Quality
 - Idle Free Schools
 - 25 schools
 - (16 ES, 2 MS, 7 HS)

SUMMARY

The initiatives described above are just a small portion of environmentally preferable programs that include procurement components that WCSD has established. WCSD will continue to seek out ways to effectively conduct business while caring for and considering the environmental impacts of its decisions.
