

# Green Schools Program



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## I. Green Schools Program Overview:

*Water and energy conservation, indoor air quality, and environmental stewardship are all part of today's educational lexicon. Is your school interested in joining this discussion, in engaging your students in achievable green initiatives, and in setting the example for all area schools? Green Omaha Coalition's Green Schools Program offers tips and resources to help schools identify opportunities to "green" their buildings and operation, ranging from the solid waste they generate, to the indoor environment they provide, to the energy and supplies they consume.*

*This Program focuses on common-sense, economical improvements that individual schools can make in their daily operations that will reduce energy consumption, minimize or stop potential health and environmental problems before they start, and reduce the impact of generated waste.*

*This Program recognizes that there are other certification programs in existence such as USGBC's LEED for Schools program and the USEPA's ENERGY STAR Labeled Schools. The GOC Green Schools Program is not meant to be a substitute for these programs. It can and will complement these programs on another level.*

*The strategies in this program have been organized into several categories, including:*

- **Management Strategies**
- **Water Use and Efficiency**
- **Energy Use and Efficiency**
- **Solid Waste Management**
- **Indoor Environmental Quality**
- **Grounds and Landscaping**
- **Other**

*Green Schools strategies have been compiled to help administrators, facility staff, teachers and students raise awareness, promote environmentally sustainable practices within their Schools, and realize the potential benefits of a green school.*

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## II. Benefits of a Green School Program

*A green schools program is good for everyone involved. Not only does it help protect students from environmental health and safety risks, it can help save money and increase efficiency. Schools that make environmentally healthy practices a top priority can realize many of the following benefits:*

- *Save money through reduced consumption of goods and energy savings,*

**Did you know?** It has been estimated that total utility costs for schools, including fuel, water, wastewater and trash disposal, averages \$140 per student per year.



- *Increase efficiency of operations and use of resources,*
- *Create favorable learning and teaching conditions,*
- *Generate community goodwill,*
- *Avoid future liability problems,*
- *Educate the next generation on the value of caring for the environment.*

*This Program is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all of the techniques and practices that can potentially improve the way a school conducts business. Each school is unique, with its own set of environmental challenges and opportunities.*

*The chances are you will not be able to solve all the environmental challenges facing your school at one time. Start with the easier strategies that will have the greatest impact; in other words, “think big, start small.” Once you have built momentum, you can expand your environmental program to other areas and reach higher plateaus in the Green Schools recognition program.*

## III. Program Procedures:

**A. Registration:** *If interested in becoming a part of this exciting new program, please E-Mail your school’s name & contact to [dave.lampe@lra-inc.com](mailto:dave.lampe@lra-inc.com) This notification does NOT obligate your school to officially engage in the Green Schools program, but simply establishes a communication link for the GEC to answer your questions and provide input as may be required from time to time.*

**B. Checklist:** *Download the Green Schools Scorecard (available on the Green Education Council’s page at [www.greenomahacoalition.org](http://www.greenomahacoalition.org)).*

1. *Identify credits that your school already has achieved.*
2. *Select additional credits that could be achieved by your school for its first year in the Green Schools program.*

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**Did you know?** According to the U.S. Department of Energy, American schools spend roughly \$6 billion each year on energy – or approximately \$110/student/year. For most school districts, energy use is the second biggest operating expense. The department estimates schools can save 25% of these high costs through better building design and energy efficiency improvements.

3. *In communication with school administration, develop a plan to address those additional credits.*
4. *Complete the checklist and document (photos, short description,...) the efforts required to achieve the additional credits.*

**C. Annual review/update procedure:** *To help insure ongoing commitment to the Green Schools program, schools are to update their Scorecard each year. Review the scorecard to confirm those areas achieved in the past remain a part of your Green School effort. Target additional credits which could be reached. Follow the submittal procedures detailed below.*

**D. Submittal procedures:** *Mail the signed checklist along with appropriate documentation to Green Education Council, PO Box 3127, Omaha, NE 68103-0127. Applications can be submitted at any time; however May 1 is the deadline to be considered for that year's awards.*

**E. Review procedures:** *The GEC will complete all reviews by August 1. Random verifications will be completed. Schools will be contacted with questions or comments.*

## IV. Recognition:

**A. Recognition Levels:** *Credits achieved will apply to the following Green Schools performance levels:*

- |                            |                    |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Three Leaf Green School | 50 points achieved |
| 2. Two Leaf Green School   | 42 points achieved |
| 3. One Leaf Green School   | 34 points achieved |
| 4. Certified Green School  | 26 points achieved |

**B. Awards:** *All schools achieving a green school performance level will receive a Green Schools flag denoting the appropriate level of achievement.*

**C. Recognition Ceremony:** *All Green Schools will be recognized each year at a special Fall awards ceremony.*

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## V. Questions & comments:

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