



What is Ontario EcoSchools?

Ontario EcoSchools is an environmental education and certification program for grades K-12 that helps school communities develop both ecological literacy and environmental practices to become environmentally responsible citizens and reduce the environmental footprint of schools (www.ontarioecoschools.org). Its focus supports the goals and recommendations of the environmental education in the Ontario curriculum. Ontario EcoSchools is 100% free and has been developed by schools for schools. Its purpose is to promote ecological literacy for students, provide leadership opportunities, establish environmentally friendly practices within the school and provides an opportunity for assessment and celebration.

Who is involved?

The Ontario EcoSchools program encourages schools to involve EVERYONE - Students, Teachers, Staff, Administration, Custodian, Community Members, etc. The program encourages schools to create an EcoTeam in order to work together.

How does it work?

- 1) Establish your EcoTeam!
- 2) Conduct an EcoReview - The EcoReview assess the needs of the school to discover how your school can become more environmentally responsible.
- 3) Identify Priorities & develop an Action Plan.
- 4) Implement the Action Plan involving the entire school!
- 5) Monitor and evaluate your progress. Then recognize and celebrate your successes.



Above: Students from PDHS receive their EcoSchool Certification Plaque last year.

Why is it important?

The Ontario EcoSchools program not only emphasizes, reflects and supports the Ontario Curriculum in Environmental Education, but also encourages students to become involved and take a lead in reducing our environmental impact. The program focuses on the areas of: Ecological Literacy, Waste Reduction, Energy Reduction, School Ground Greening and Environmental Stewardship. Further, statistics have proven that EcoSchools use less energy per square meter than non-EcoSchools within the Board.

EcoSchools within the Grand Erie District School Board:

When Ontario EcoSchools started within the GEDSB last year, we had one school involved. This year, we have six! Four Secondary Schools and two Elementary Schools have stepped up this year and are currently in the process of becoming certified an EcoSchool!! Congratulations to each of those schools!

For additional information, check out the Ontario EcoSchools website at www.ontarioecoschools.org or feel free to contact Katie Hashimoto, Supervisor - Energy & Environmental Conservation at katharine.hashimoto@granderie.ca or ext. 281197.

