

Green School Design Essentials
Green Schools National Network
Jim McGrath, mcgrath.edcons@charter.net
Jennifer Seydel, jseydel@elschools.org
Greenschoolsnationalconference.org

What Is a Green School?

A Green School uses these Design Essentials to create a comprehensive green culture that enhances student health and learning while saving resources and sustaining our world.

We believe that every school has the potential to be a Green School. Schools that self-identify as a Green School can use these Design Essentials as a road map for their transformation. Schools can choose to implement each Design Essential based on their own capacity for change.

When schools begin implementing some of these design essentials, they can consider themselves an Emerging Green School. When schools are implementing all of the Design Essentials at a high level, they can consider themselves a Comprehensive Green School.

Component 1

Standards-based integrated environmental learning and green career education

- Solid emphasis on outdoor/hands-on learning for No Child Left Inside
- Constructivist pedagogy driven by a school wide 'Green' culture
- Engaged autonomous learners with the confidence and skills to pursue the widest range of post-secondary Green careers to build a Green work force
- Individual/group learning complemented by research based environment focused models: ex; project-based, expeditionary, and interdisciplinary units. All models incorporate place-based education approach with STEM emphasis

Component 2

Implement Green & Healthy school practices and develop green school facilities

- Schools that work towards implementation of Green facilities with LEED facility design components for new and retrofit buildings
- Incorporating Green practices around Energy reduction, renewal Energy development, reducing waste by recycling and water conservation in your school
- Implement the use of healthy eco-friendly supplies and materials in your school and on school grounds
- Conduct research on the relationship of Green and Healthy Schools to improve student learning and reducing environmental impact

Component 3

Stewardship/Healthy Eating and Earth Restoration Projects

- Developing Leopold's Land Ethic. Respect for one's immediate place, land stewardship, gives one respect for all places. (We may take natural resources for granted but ultimately it is the land that sustains us.)
- Apply integrated environmental learning skills and capacity for students to develop sustainable Earth solutions through service learning projects
- Practice the role of active environmental stewardship by developing peace gardens and organic gardens on school sites to develop healthy eating habits
- Restoration of school and community land to develop native ecosystems

Component 4

Partnerships and networks

- Incorporate the community as an explicit partner for environmental learning
- Participate in statewide and regional green school chapters to support newsletters, field learning, internships, conferences, and symposiums
- Contribute to the development connection and sustainability of a national network to support green schools development and research
- Utilize dissemination resources to expand the number of green schools