

Green Schools Menu

Interested in organizing a walk to school day? Starting a garden? Auditing your school's energy use? Or maybe educating your peers on best recycling practices? These are just a few of the projects and platforms you and your students can incorporate in your school's sustainability initiatives. Below are some examples of things you and your students can do this year in the various areas of sustainability*.

Waste Management

- ❖ **Recycle in the Classroom**
 - Recycling is now single stream or "all-in-one." Post signage showing items that are recyclable either above or on recycling bins in classrooms.
- ❖ **Recycle in the Cafeteria**
 - Initiate the collection of recyclable items in the cafeteria such as plastic salad/sandwich containers, Lunchable containers, yogurt/applesauce cups, bottles, cans, and Smartmouth pizza box lids.
- ❖ **Recycle in the Bathroom**
 - Capture all the "clean" paper towels in the restroom in a recycling bin. Clean paper towels are ones that have only been used to dry hands after washing.
- ❖ **Reduce Paper Use**
 - Implement a school wide movement to "go digital" with communications or create a Paper Policy to help curb consumption.
- ❖ **Eliminate Bottled Water**
 - Encourage students to bring reusable cups or bottles to fill with water from the water fountains rather than purchase bottled water or use disposable serviceware.
- ❖ **Bring a Zero-Waste Lunch**
 - Encourage students to bring reusable lunch containers and boxes for their meals each day. Ask your cafeteria to start Trayless Tuesdays and serve items that do not have packaging.
- ❖ **Compost Your Scraps**
 - If your school does not have the CCSD Composting Program, you can still collect your fresh fruits and vegetable scraps and compost on-site and witness a cool plant lifecycle process. Click here for more information on how to [compost on-site](#).
- ❖ **Right Size Your Dumpster**
 - Conduct a week-long visual assessment of your school's dumpster using our [Dumpster Fullness Assessment Log](#) to determine if your school's diversion to other waste streams or reduced consumption of items has made an impact on how often your dumpster needs to be serviced each week.

* Inspired by and adapted from our sustainability friends at San Francisco Unified School District

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❖ Conduct a Waste Audit

- Bring students together to sort out items found in the classroom trash from the previous day by type of material and their correct waste stream to get a better idea of your school's recycling and consumption habits. Schedule an audit this year with assistance from [CCSD](#) and [CCEM](#) for your school or facility.

❖ Perform a Trash Can Count

- Each classroom should ideally maintain a 1:1 trash can to recycling bin ratio in order to provide facility users the opportunity to make the correct choice when disposing of an item. Walk your school and see how many trash cans are present in each classroom. Total your findings and make a recommendation to your teachers and staff to adopt the 1:1 ratio in their workspace.

School Grounds

❖ Grow a Garden

- Learn about nutrition and the importance of farm to table while learning how to be self-sufficient and sustainable producers. Clemson University Cooperative Extension office provides an [educators course on gardening in schools and materials](#) to get you started with assistance from their Master Gardeners in the Lowcountry**.

❖ Install a Rain Barrel

- Help capture stormwater runoff and repurpose rain water in your outdoor learning spaces with guidelines on planning and installation a rain barrel at your school provided by [Carolina Clear](#)**.

❖ Trace Your Stormwater

- Mark your school's storm drains to raise public awareness on urban runoff and pollutants in runoff which make their way into our stormwater systems. Guidelines on how to partner with the [Charleston Area Project Impact](#) to start your marker project can be found [here](#) or call the [Ashley Cooper Stormwater Education Consortium](#) for more information**.

❖ ID Your Birds, Shrubs, and Trees

- Design and create plaques to identify the flora and fauna around your school's campus. Identification plaques can be placed on landscapes in common areas where wildlife is commonly observed or below trees, shrubs, or flowers that are planted.

❖ Create a Nature Trail

- Inspire wellness and outdoor learning by creating a nature trail on your school's campus. Consider placing information about local flora and fauna along the trail, as well as training student guides to take school guests on walks**.

Built Environment

❖ Conduct an Energy Audit

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- The [CCSD Energy Services office](#) can provide your school with energy and water data, as well as energy audit checklists and worksheets for elementary, middle, and high school students to use to audit their school facilities. Perform a walkthrough and share your results with other students, staff, and faculty members at your school and CCSD's Operations Division.
- ❖ **Put Computers and Copiers to Sleep**
 - Screen savers aren't necessarily energy savers! Set your monitor and computer to go to sleep after a period of inactivity by changing the *Energy Setting* on your Mac (under *System Preferences*) or *Power Options* on your PC (under *Control Panel*).
- ❖ **Perform a Doors and Windows Check**
 - All windows and doors should remain shut at all times in CCSD facilities to ensure students and staff safety, as well as allow air conditioning and handling units to properly and efficiently filter air in each building. Do a school walkthrough, noting and closing any open window or door. Report these findings to the [CCSD Energy Services Office](#).
- ❖ **Initiate a Turn Off the Lights Campaign**
 - "Be Nice and Hit the Lights" is just one slogan available to encourage your school's students and staff to be more energy conscious. Post signs and light switch cover stickers around your school to remind people to turn off the lights when they are going to be out of a room for more than 20 minutes.
- ❖ **Follow IAQ Tools for Schools Checklists**
 - Help improve your indoor air quality (IAQ) by completing [EPA's Tools for Schools Action Kit](#) checklists for each area in your school.

Transportation

- ❖ **Form a Walking School Bus**
 - Check out the Walking School Bus [guidelines](#) by Safe Routes to School to help parents, teachers, and community members organize safe daily walking groups of students to their schools.
- ❖ **Coordinate a Walk TO, AT, or FROM School Day**
 - Celebrate officially on National Walk to School Day on October 8, 2014, South Carolina Walk to School Day on March 4, 2015, or any other day of the year! Check out ways to [participate](#) in the movement here. [Register](#) your school's SC Walk to School Day event with SC Safe Routes to School today!
- ❖ **Create a Bike Convoy**
 - Like Walk to School Day, National Bike to School Day is May 6, 2015. Visit [Walk Bike to School](#) for more information on how to organize your biker groups and [keep it going all year-round!](#)
- ❖ **Organize a Rideshare**

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- Coordinate with other parents in your school to determine opportunities for students to carpool to and from school. Tools such as [SurveyMonkey](#) (free) can be used to get data and information to match families with other families nearby.

Awareness

- ❖ Educate Your Peers on BWPs [Best Waste Practices]
 - Have students develop an electronic presentation, play, newscast, or something similar to educate their peers on best waste practices such as what's recyclable, how to recycle, how to place bins in classrooms and cafeterias, what's compostable (if applicable), etc.
- ❖ Start a No Idling Campaign
 - [SCDHEC's B2 Breathe Better Anti-Idling Program](#) is a great resource to increase your students, teachers, and parents awareness about the importance of reducing harmful vehicle emissions around school campuses. Consider posting No Idling signs in the car-rider line, bus loop, and student parking lots. Signs can be homemade or requested from the CCSD Maintenance Shop via [SchoolDude work order](#).
- ❖ Feature Your Green Students and Teachers
 - Write a column in your school or PTA newsletter featuring your sustainability efforts. Post pictures and updates of your green projects on your school's or [CCSD's Facebook page](#) via the CCSD Communications Department.
- ❖ Host a Green Week
 - Make green a week-long thing! Create a different theme for each day such as a waste free lunch day, empty can drive, art/essay contest on the importance of being green, green shirt day, and more.
- ❖ Form a Green Team
 - CCSD and Charleston County Environmental Management (CEM) have created [Student Green Team resources](#) including student team formation guidelines and an application template for teachers and staff to use.
- ❖ Hold a Recycling Drive
 - Encourage students and parents to bring in items such as empty steel or aluminum cans, or e-waste such as used or broken electronics and host a recycling drive at your school. Items can be collected in the school or during the parent drop-off and pick-up lines. Organizations such as [Terracycle](#) will take e-waste and other used school supplies.
- ❖ Put Your Data To Use
 - Request and publish your school's [waste](#), [recycling](#), [compost](#), [energy](#), or [water](#) data to inspire monitoring of consumption and competition to increase your tonnage or lower your usage within your school or between other similar schools and locations.

For assistance with project planning, execution, or funding, please contact Maggie Dangerfield at (843) 566-1962.

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