

Sustainability

The Portsmouth School Department embraces and supports the principles of sustainability and believes that it is the responsibility of all members to encourage and implement environmentally sound practices. It is committed to making the most efficient use of its natural resources and to the practice of sound waste reduction methods including source reduction, reusing, recycling and composting and will strive to purchase environmentally sustainable materials, considering short and long term consequences.

INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION:

The Portsmouth School Department encourages, supports the prudent management of its energy resources and utility services, and believes that these should be managed with a focus on conservation as well as education. It further believes that, to this end, it is the responsibility of each district employee and student to participate in energy and resource conservation efforts whenever possible. The School Department has long participated in such efforts from recycling, solar energy, farm to table initiatives and the use of green products, as well as participation in municipal and school wide committees.

BEST PRACTICES:

FARM TO SCHOOL

The School Department recognizes the importance of health and well-being in the district's wellness policy, and as such, acknowledges that proper nutrition helps to improve student, faculty and staff health, concentration and learning. Where possible, all food and drink is produced locally and chosen with consideration for the agricultural practices used in its production. Studies show increased participation with healthy eating is experienced when people are directly involved in the growing process; school gardens and curriculum integration addressing core curriculum concepts are supported to ensure the district's Farm to School Program is as strong and healthy as can be.

ENERGY AND WATER

The Portsmouth School Department is conscious of the need to conserve energy and water and it promotes methods to encourage efficiency in these areas. There is continuous monitoring of energy use and consideration for ways to reduce consumption.

TRAVEL AND TRAFFIC

The Portsmouth School Department promotes transportation to and from school that minimizes negative environmental impacts and reduces emission levels and congestion; consideration where appropriate, is given to sustainable fuel sources. It encourages limiting auto and bus idling and encourages the use of car-pooling, walking and cycling. Bus routes will be evaluated annually for efficiency.

PURCHASING, CONSUMPTION AND WASTE

The Portsmouth School Department gives priority consideration to the environmental impact of all purchases and contracts with vendors. It strives to choose products that are both functional and environmentally sustainable, factoring in the long-term and far-reaching environmental

impacts of its consumption. The School Department will establish guidelines for the correct and safe disposal of all waste, and the disposal of old equipment in an ecologically sound way. The School strives to reduce, reuse, recycle, and print only when necessary. Equipment and lights are switched off when not in use. The School Department will also implement strategies to reduce waste.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

The School addresses environmental concerns in all maintenance, construction, refurbishing, and landscaping decisions, including regular review of performance and conservation practices. Purchases of equipment and building supplies should be based upon long-term sustainability and technology that utilize renewable resources and energy sources. The School Department will also provide training in resource conservation for facility and ground personnel.

EDUCATIONAL AWARENESS

Members of the Portsmouth School District should promote and reinforce a positive environmental attitude and assist students in developing appreciation and respect for the natural world through curriculum whenever possible. Areas of importance include global citizenship, ecological ethics, creation and design of sustainable solutions to a shrinking Earth, responsible consumerism and connections to nature via gardening and outdoor activities.

MONITORING, TRANSPARENCY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Sustainability planning, implementation and review are ongoing processes that require education and participation of the community. The School will collaborate with organizational structures to enable this process. Administrative leadership directs and facilitates our commitment to sustainability. The effective communication of annual goals and objectives helps us to advance the efforts of the School.