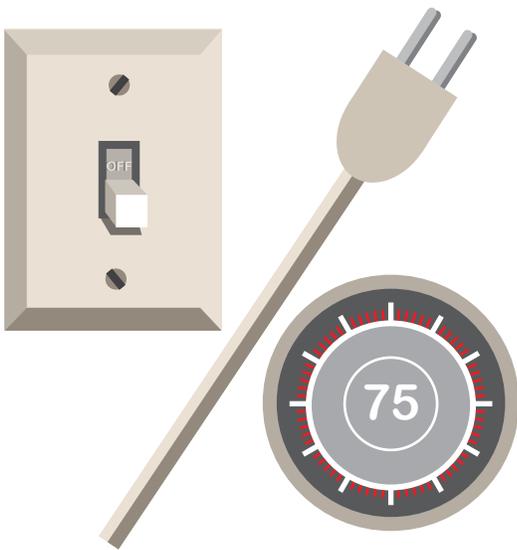


School Energy Conservation Guide



Information and
tools to design and
organize an energy
conservation
campaign at your
school

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Introduction: School Energy Conservation Guide

The SEI School Energy Conservation Guide is an action-based tool to help reduce resource use at your school. In order to foster a school-wide commitment to sustainability, it is important to develop and implement an action plan to ensure a consistent and deliberate approach to resource conservation. Beyond its positive impacts on the environment, reducing resource use saves money, creates a healthier learning environment, and provides tools for experiential education. But who will make sure that changes are made, and how? Whether you have a school green team, an inspired classroom, a group of value-driven friends, or a single sustainability champion, these change-makers can all work to promote sustainability and reduce environmental impact through environmental education, event programming, and resource reduction project implementation.

The goal is to gain “multi-stakeholder” support with participation from students, parents, teachers, community members, principals, and custodians. Multi-stakeholder support is important to ensuring that school sustainability leaders can draw on the expertise and enthusiasm of everyone in the community, and sustain consistent actions from year to year. In this Guide, we’ll loosely refer to this team of change-makers as a Green Team.

Green Teams address issues that have the highest environmental impact in our schools, such as energy, waste, water, and transportation. Included in this Guide are resources for planning, implementation, team management, strategies and ideas for resource reduction, and community resources. This Guide will also lead you through how to optimize each stage of the cyclical conservation process, visualized below.

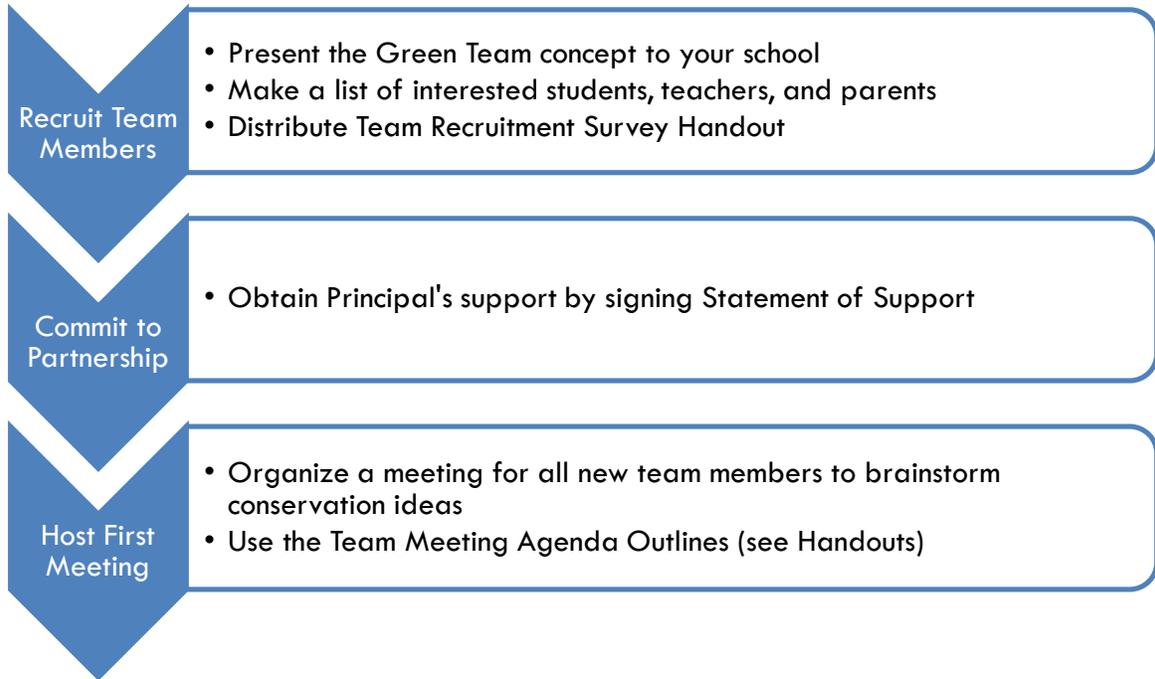


1. Forming a Team



Section 1 includes the materials you need to successfully manage a group of sustainability change-makers, from recruiting and retaining members, to creating a legacy so your team's goals are carried on year after year.

Forming a Team



Team Recruitment

Effective conservation action is a community goal. The more people that are involved in the effort, the better a school will be able to affect change and create ownership of environmental efforts on campus. Here is a list of potential team members to recruit from within the school community to gain support for your team.

Administrators

✓ *Strengths*

- School-wide leadership
- Signals credibility of program to staff, students, and community
- Advantageous reach when launching school-wide campaigns
- Point of contact with District

✓ *Targets*

- Principal: Your school principal has already expressed his/her support for a Green Team by signing the Principal's Pledge. Ask him/her for a few minutes during each staff meeting to inform the school staff of the group's launch.
- Assistant Principals: Assistant Principal responsible for Buildings & Grounds (at high schools)

✓ *Recruitment Strategy*

- With assistance from the Principal, introduce the Green Team at the first available staff meeting.
- Publicize the program by sending out an email to all staff on the listserv and perhaps distributing a flyer in staff mailboxes.

Teachers

✓ *Strengths*

- Classroom-based projects
- Connection to students and parents
- Integrate educational aspect of resource savings into course material

✓ *Targets*

- Science teachers
- Environmental Club teachers
- ASB/Leadership teachers

✓ *Recruitment Strategy*

- With assistance from the Principal, introduce the Green Team at the first available staff meeting. Pass around a sign up sheet for interested teachers to sign on, emphasizing that all levels of commitment are welcome. Following the staff meeting, send out an email to all interested teachers with details regarding the first Green Team meeting, and ask them to sign the Classroom Pledge. The Classroom Pledge should be printed and displayed near their respective classroom doors.
- Put an initial flyer announcing the first Green Team meeting in teachers' office mailboxes. You may also decide to have a monthly theme and distribute flyers to teachers informing them of this month's theme thereafter. Recommend that all teachers assign a student Conservation Monitor in their classroom.

Parents

✓ *Strengths*

- Reinforce Green themes at home
- Connection to students and community outside of school
- Strong outreach network

✓ *Targets*

- Members of the PTA

✓ *Recruitment Strategy*

- Announce the Green Team at the first available PTA meeting to recruit parents. Interested parents should fill out a short Green Team Survey, indicating their level of commitment and areas of interest.
- Have an outreach table at Back to School night or other events at which parents are often in attendance.
- Include a blurb in the next available edition of the School Newsletter of the school year, as well as the school website.
- Check if any parents are employed in the environmental sector and get them involved.

Students

✓ *Strengths*

- Largest potential for behavioral change and school savings
- School-wide enthusiasm and reach

✓ *Targets*

- Student Leadership (Student Council and ASB), Ecology/Environmental Clubs

✓ *Recruitment Strategy*

- Consider making a school Sustainability Officer an elected student leadership position in the Associated Student Body or Student Council. They can help lead student recruitment by identifying members of the environmental club on campus, or finding interested friends and classmates to join the Green Team.
- Host a volunteer recruitment session at the beginning of the school year following a large school assembly or organized environmental education talk. (Several organizations like PEAK, ACE, and ZunZun offer these services to schools). Utilize the enthusiasm and energy created from the assembly to motivate students to dedicate their efforts for Conservation.
- Make PA announcements about the Green Team at the beginning of the school year, directing interested students to contact the Team Champion.

Skilled Staff

✓ *Strengths*

- Technical know-how
- Access to tools
- Familiarity with school layout
- Operate in specialty areas that may be especially energy-intensive
- Targets
- Custodial/Facilities staff (Bathrooms, Auditoriums, Hallways), Librarian, Computer Lab Teacher, Cafeteria Staff

✓ *Recruitment Strategy*

- With assistance from the Principal, introduce the Green Team at the first available staff meeting.
- Publicize the program by sending out an email to all staff on the school listserv.

Team Outreach Strategies

Here are a few ideas for recruiting and assembling your Green Team, as well as strategies for keeping it going successfully:

1. Spread awareness about your Green Team during Open House.
2. Hold a kick-off meeting when school begins in the fall. Make PA announcements about your Team's meeting time and location.
3. Host environmental education assemblies every year.
4. Update staff about best practices, Green Team projects, and monthly environmental themes through periodic presentation at staff meetings.
5. Update the school community about Green Team projects through newsletters, emails, and websites.
6. Recruit representatives from the following groups and more: parents (PTA), students (including student council), administration, and custodian.
7. Include a green party seat for student elections.
8. Include a Green Team chair position at the PTA level.
9. Create permanent positions/roles on the team and make sure they are filled.
10. Establish a regular meeting time and date every week/month.
11. Develop a calendar of events you'd like to run each year.
12. Create an agenda template with elements you'd like to address at every meeting.
13. Encourage teachers to model environmentally friendly behavior.
14. Develop monthly environmental themes to focus efforts.
15. Provide incentives for participation.
16. Make PA announcements about green themes and projects.
17. Perform outreach at school events.

Seek funding and grant opportunities

- ✓ Check your local utilities and service providers to see if they have current funding opportunities for your school conservation efforts.
- ✓ Research local community foundations. Ask if they offer resources or funding to schools and students.