



FALL '07

KENTUCKY GREEN AND HEALTHY SCHOOLS

By: Maria Zoretic (printed with permission from the Kentucky Environmental Education Council)

Kentucky Teachers who are looking for relevant, inquiry based strategies to cover core content should take a look at a new web based program called Kentucky Green and Healthy Schools (KGHS). This new program, whose web address is <http://greenschools.ky.gov>, provides students and staff with the opportunity to make their schools greener and healthier while they study the environment in which they learn and work. Schools that achieve green and healthy status will receive local and statewide recognition including plaques, banners and flags awarded during an Earth Week ceremony in Frankfort.



Students gradually achieve this goal by answering a series of standards-aligned questions called inventories. These inventories assess nine aspects of the school environment. These aspects are energy, water, solid waste, indoor air quality, green spaces, transportation, instructional leadership, hazardous chemicals, and health and safety. Once students complete an inventory, they review it to identify potential areas for improvement. Then students determine how to address these areas with improvement projects.

Since all questions are standards-aligned, students can learn core content and potentially increase test scores by completing inventories and implementing improvement projects. In addition there are potential health and economic benefits from participating in this program.

Within the last eighteen years, studies have emerged highlighting a significant correlation between the condition of school buildings and student health and academic performance.¹ One area of particular importance is poor indoor air quality and high student and teacher absenteeism. Since teachers and students spend a large portion of their day inside classrooms and on school grounds, the quality of these environments is a concern. Through the Green and Healthy Schools Program, students and faculty can assess the indoor air quality of their school and identify strategies to improve it.

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LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome back!

Bluegrass PRIDE wrapped up the last school year with great success! Maxine Rudder and our Environmental Educators helped 30 schools in Fayette County complete the Lexington Fayette Urban County Government sponsored WasteBuster program. We did over 1,300 classroom lessons on waste reduction, developed or expanded recycling programs and were able to increase school recycling by almost 40%!

We are currently working on finding funding to expand our WasteBuster Program to the rest of Central Kentucky. We have learned that the Kentucky Division of Waste Management will allow some of the litter money that local governments receive to be used for litter education. We have also learned that local governments can apply for recycling grants that may allow for K-12 recycling education from PRIDE. Contact your local officials or me if you would like more information about these opportunities.

PRIDE may be partnering with the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) to further provide environmental education opportunities to schools in our area. RSVP works with volunteers in Jessamine and Fayette Counties. As soon as it is official, we will be looking for retired educators to help in those two counties.

Our Resource Library is still growing and we have recently added an EnviroScape for check out thanks to a grant from the Kentucky River Authority. You can call our office toll free at 866/222-1648 to reserve any of the buckets or books in our library. In addition, PRIDE is still working with the congressional office to once again secure federal funding.

We hope you have a great school year!

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Another concern of school administrators is energy costs. In the KGHS program, students conduct an energy audit of their school and identify inexpensive measures that can save thousands of dollars in operating costs, while providing students with a unique educational experience. The program also provides students with a greater sense of ownership in their school.

The educational experience described above is only one facet of this program. KGHS is also relevant to those districts renovating or building new schools. The Kentucky Green and Healthy Design Manual, also available on the website, outlines design and construction criteria to help districts build schools that are healthier and that operate at top efficiency, especially in the area of energy conservation.

Schools participating in the program are provided with ample support. This support exists in the form of in-school training, links to additional curriculum resources, and a coordinator to help every step of the way. Additionally, the first 20 schools to sign up will receive a small cash incentive to help with the improvement projects students design. Another new website called <http://eeinkentucky.org> can help teachers search for EE resources and programs close to their schools as well as at the state, regional and national level.

For additional information, or to join this program, call 800-882-5271 or e-mail GreenSchools@ky.gov.

(Footnotes)

¹ The National Clearing House for Educational Facilities: Conditions of Schools in America provides links to some of these reports and studies, <http://www.edfacilities.org/rl/conditions.cfm>.

No CHILD LEFT *INSIDE*?

In 2002, President Bush enacted No Child Left Behind, in an effort to reduce the achievement gap in reading and math between white and minority children in America. This bill requires evaluation, or testing, of the students annually in grades 3-8, and once more in high school. Because these test scores are of utmost importance in regard to the "School Report Card" and funding, schools have begun focusing more on the reading and math scores. This is manifested in the school day by using as much time as possible to teach those topics which will be tested. An unintended consequence of NCLB has been a reduction in the teaching of environmental education.

Congressman John Sarbanes (D-MD) would like to address this issue. NCLB will expire in 2007, and must be reauthorized. Congressman Sarbanes is working to increase federal funding for environmental education through a stand alone bill entitled No Child Left Inside. This bill would 1) provide funds for grants for K-12 environmental education, 2) provide new funding for states to develop, improve and advance environmental education standards, and 3) provide new funding to train qualified teachers to teach environmental education courses and programs. Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) is also working to strengthen and expand environmental education by increasing funding to states for teacher training.

In Oil City, Louisiana, Oil City Elementary became a certified Project Learning Tree school. It is now a magnet school and has installed a new environmental program: implementing environmental science across the curriculum. The school boasts outdoor classrooms, outdoor math lab, rose and vegetable gardens, and butterfly garden. In 1999, when Louisiana began assigning scores to schools, Oil City Elementary's score was 26 points below average. In the spring of 2007, the scores had increased 48.6 points to a score of 89. These test scores reflect what we are all

eager to see: increased student learning. (See http://www.learnoutside.org/images/Science_Children_April_2007.pdf for more information.)

Richard Louv addresses a similar concern in his book, Last Child In the Woods. Louv coined the term 'nature deficit disorder' and discusses the benefits of children playing outside, learning about the natural environment and identifying plants and animals in nature. Louv asserts that more unstructured, outside time is an antidote to many childhood problems such as obesity, depression, and attention deficit disorder.

All of this is exciting to us in the Environmental Education Field. For more information concerning the No Child Left Inside Act of 2007, visit www.eeNCLB.org or contact your local Representative. With environmental education, we can make a difference!

Hands ON

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World Water Monitoring Day (WWMD) is an international outreach program that builds public awareness and involvement in protecting water resources around the world. Held annually between September 18th and October 18th, the program engages communities in monitoring the condition of local rivers, streams, estuaries and other water bodies. Since its inception in 2002, more than 80,000 people have participated in 50 countries.

How to Get Involved with World Water Monitoring Day:

Select and Register your site. Choose any lake, stream, bay, or other waterbody where you can safely monitor. Register your site by going to the World Water Monitoring Day registration database, (www.worldwatermonitoringday.com).

Prepare your monitoring equipment. PRIDE has water monitoring kits available through our Resource Library (call 866-222-1648 to reserve the kit).

Monitor your site. Invite others to help you monitor, or do it yourself. Visit your site anytime from **September 18th through October 18th** to test the water. Remember, safety first!

Report your data. You did the work, so let us know about your water. You can submit your results directly through the website, www.worldwatermonitoringday.com. Results may be entered anytime from September 18, 2007 through December 18, 2007 for inclusion in the annual World Water Monitoring Day summary reports.



MONEY TREE

Fiskars Project Orange Thumb Community Garden Grants

Fiskars Garden & Outdoor Living created Project Orange Thumb to provide community garden groups with the tools, plants and materials they need to reach their goals for neighborhood beautification and horticultural education.

Project Orange Thumb recipients will receive grants of up to \$1,500.00 in Fiskars® Garden Tools (retail value), as well as up to \$800.00 in gardening-related materials such as plants, seeds, mulch, etc. Recipients will also receive Project Orange Thumb T-shirts for garden members/volunteers.

Gardens and/or gardening projects geared toward community involvement, neighborhood beautification, horticultural education and/or sustainable agriculture are eligible. Community garden groups, as well as schools, youth groups, retirement communities, treatment facilities, community centers, camps, clubs, etc. are encouraged to apply.

Please visit <http://www.fiskars.com/US/Garden/Project+Orange+Thumb/> for complete details on how to apply.

Application deadline is January 2008.



Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Grant Program

The Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Grant Program gives small monetary grants to schools, nature centers, or other non-profit educational organizations for the purpose of establishing outdoor learning centers. Funds will be provided only for the purchase of native plants and seed.

Application deadline is November 15, 2007.

<http://www.for-wild.org/sfecvr.html>

PRIDE PEOPLE

PRIDE would like to introduce this year's Environmental Educators. These new EE's will work primarily on the Lexington WasteBuster Program.



Carol Bradford was brought on board to work with elementary schools. Carol received a BA degree at Rhodes College, and a Master's in Social Work at the Univ. of Tennessee. She is a certified teacher in Kentucky and taught kindergarten for three years at Co-op Pre-School and Kindergarten in Lexington. Carol lives in Lexington with her husband and two children and a menagerie of animals. Carol can be reached at 859-266-1572 or carol@kentuckypride.com.

Pattie Stivender will also be working with elementary schools. Pattie attended Eastern Kentucky University where she majored in Occupational Therapy. Pattie developed a passion for environmental education while working for UK's Cooperative Extension Service in 4-H/Youth Development. She spent three years in FCPS directing summer camps and after school activities. Pattie, a Lexington resident, enjoys camping and hiking with her family and dogs. Pattie can be reached at pattie@kentuckypride.com.



Returning to the Bluegrass PRIDE staff is Wendy Cegielski. As our Middle and High School Environmental Educator, she will continue bringing recycling education into Fayette County schools. Wendy is a resident of Bath County with a master's degree from the University of Kentucky's Patterson School of Diplomacy and an undergraduate degree in Agriculture from Morehead State University. Wendy specializes in sustainability issues including "green" waste management, composting, and organic farming. She has professional community development experience with Heifer International and AmeriCorps, including the creation of a hands-on gardening curriculum directed toward at-risk students living in urban poverty. During her past year with the WasteBuster program, her favorite projects included: 1) an "Enviro-market" for which students created and auctioned items made from recycled materials, 2) "The Bouncy Ball" lesson during which students make their own polymers, and 3) "Eco-footprint", a way to calculate one's impact on the environment. Wendy can be reached at Wendy@kentuckypride.com.

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM CORNER

Make a Garden Rain Gauge

Kentucky Core Content 4.1: MA-EP-1.1.2, MA-EP-2.1.5, MA-EP-4.1.1, MA-04-2.1.1, MA-04-2.1.2, MA-04-4.2.1, MA-05-2.1.1, MA-05-2.1.2, MA-05-4.2.1, MA-06-4.4.1, MA-06-5.1.2, MA-07-4.1.4, MA-07-4.2.1, MA-08-4.1.1, MA-08-4.1.4, MA-08-4.2.1, MA-HS-4.1.2, MA-HS-4.2.1, SC-EP-2.3.2, SC-EP-2.3.3, SC-05-2.3.1, SC-05-2.3.4, SC-06-4.7.1, SC-07-4.7.1, SC-08-4.6.9, SC-HS-3.4.1, SC-HS-4.6.4

The success or failure of any outdoor garden depends on adequate amounts of rainfall. One of the simplest ways to keep track of rainfall is a rain gauge. This activity provides step by step instructions for making a rain gauge to calculate how much rain has fallen.

Materials:

- Plastic bottle (water bottle or soft drink bottle)
- Tall plastic cup approximately the same size as the plastic bottle.
- Wire clothes hanger
- Plastic Ruler
- Waterproof tape
- Knife
- Wire cutter
- Nails
- Hammer

Procedure:

- Straighten the clothes hanger and use the wire cutter to cut off the twisted ends.
- Bend the wire around the plastic cup in a spiral pattern to make a holder for the finished rain gauge.
- The top end of the wire should be shaped into a hook that can be used to hang the rain gauge.
- Under supervision of an adult, cut off the top one third off the plastic bottle. Do not discard.
- Place the plastic ruler inside the bottom section of the plastic bottle.
- Be sure the numbers on the ruler are facing outward.
- Use the waterproof tape to tape the ruler to the inside of the bottle.
- Turn the top part of the bottle upside down to make a funnel.
- Place the funnel inside the rain gauge to collect the water.
- Since most rain showers are usually windy, the wire hold should be nailed to a post, fence or side of a building.

Extensions:

- Use the rain gauge to measure the average amount of rainfall for a given period of time. Compare the data collected with your local weather bureau statistics.
- Students should try several locations for their rain gauge to determine the effects of trees, electric wires, edges or roofs and etc.
- The data collected can also be used to determine the amount of water falling on the school grounds, including impervious surfaces such as the roof and parking lot.
- Use the data to study weather patterns.
- Use data from the rain gauge to determine the types of plants that would be best suited for your area.

NOTES FROM A GREEN AND HEALTHY SCHOOL

By Janet Sams, CTK Parent

Christ the King School, located in Lexington KY, has approximately 500 students and serves K-8th grades. Our goals are to promote the growth of Christian beliefs, values, and moral attitudes and provide an excellent education for each child. We have a high level of parental involvement and we offer many extra-curricular activities that encourage leadership, experience, and acceptance of responsibility. We strive for an ever deepening relationship with God through the integration of faith and academics and the example of our lives. As part of our relationship with God we consider each person to be a Steward of the Earth, protecting it for future generations.

As the first private school in Kentucky to participate in the Pilot Program of the Green Schools Initiative, we have completed several interesting activities. Initially, we hosted a well-received Teacher Movie Screening of 'An Inconvenient Truth' with door prizes and discussion. We provided each teacher with grade-level packets containing activities/experiments that they could easily integrate into their classrooms. Each teacher received a package of Compact Fluorescent Bulbs courtesy of Great Clips Hair Salons. Classroom recycling bins were distributed to all offices and classrooms. Each of our 14 big recycling bins are owned by a student. The Middle School has completed an Environmental Stewardship Unit initiated by teachers, Mrs. Cathy Nohe and Mrs. Kathy Howell. The unit included a Dumpster Dive Assembly, written essays, movie reviews, and a Catholic Schools Week focused on this topic. At the conclusion of the Unit, each student was provided with a package of Compact Fluorescent Bulbs to take home, courtesy of The Sylvania Co.



Our Facilities Manager, Mrs. Josette Garstka, is very supportive of all 'green' activities at the school, and she has helped us with instituting our first project of school recycling. We now recycle approximately 30% of our waste, up from 0% in January. We expect to exceed 60% once all of the recycling bins are in place.

This fall, we plan to install Phase I of our Outdoor Classroom Project. This will consist of an Organic Garden, Compost Area and Rain Barrels. We have received \$3300 in grant funding so far for this project. We are integrating the "Green Schools" Audits into our Science Curriculum and our Environmental Club will be kicked off in early September. Finally, we have been selected to work with KEEP this year to identify and implement energy savings at the school.

WONDERFUL WEBSITE

www.EEinKentucky.org



EEinkentucky provides one stop shopping for teachers and all citizens who want a simple and straightforward way to discover environmental education opportunities across Kentucky. Website categories include a calendar of events, statewide resources, EE announcements and much more!

This collaborate effort allows you to locate organizations and events across the Commonwealth that will help you, your family, or your students better understand our environment. From acorns to zebra mussels, discovering the beauty and wonder of Kentucky's natural environment is only a click away.

NOVEMBER 15TH IS AMERICA RECYCLES DAY!!!

In an attempt to encourage school participation in America Recycles Day, Bluegrass PRIDE will have a special "America Recycles Day" section on its website, www.kentuckypride.com.

This section will feature recycling ideas, projects, and hands on classroom activities. So remember, on November 15th, logon and join classrooms across the USA as AMERICA RECYCLES.



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