



WATER/BIODIVERSITY CAMPAIGN

SCHOOLYARD NATURALIZATION

Naturalizing the schoolyard means adding plants or natural spaces to what is already there. Some campaign ideas are listed on the third page. Naturalizing your school yard can:

- Add more shade to the play areas.
- Make unused space more fun, interesting and useful.
- Reduce water use by using native, drought tolerant plants.
- Create an outdoor classroom or learning space.
- Create habitat for small birds, insects and animals.

Pre Campaign Audit

1. Use an aerial photo (such as are available on google maps) of the schoolyard, print or project it on an interactive white board, or make a drawing of the school grounds and mark the manmade and natural features that exist now. Consider including:

- Percentage of grass and other open spaces
- Paved, gravel, and playground areas
- Sports fields
- Seating areas, paths
- Number and species of trees
- Number and species of plants

2. How is the schoolyard currently used? (Observe the schoolyard during recess, lunch, during class time and during an evening or weekend day) Include information about:

- Variety of sports
- Recess activities and free or inventive games played
- Lunch/eating spaces
- Gardens: food or ornamental
- Other – what is unique to your schoolyard?

3. What would students and staff like to do in the schoolyard? (Survey a number of students and staff)

- Sports, physical education, free play
- Outdoor lessons including reading, science experiments, etc.
- Gardening, including food gardening, shrubs and trees, etc.
- Other – do you have a specific idea you want to ask people about?

4. Using your drawing of the schoolyard, and a different coloured pencil, mark in some of the ideas for naturalizing the schoolyard.



Planning your Naturalization Campaign

1. From all the suggestions, make a short list of your favorite student and staff ideas.
2. Start with **one** of the ideas. Save the others for another project.
For each idea, write down:
 - A list of all the steps in the project. For each step in the project decide what work needs to be done, can students do the work, do they need power equipment and expert help?
 - How much money will supplies for the project cost? How can students raise this money? Fundraising, parent councils, support from local home and garden centres?
3. Step by step, put your plan into action. Keep track of your progress and be flexible. Sometimes plans need to change slightly because of weather, time or money.
4. Celebrate your project. Have an opening, a playtime or an assembly to let everyone know what you have accomplished.

Post Campaign Audit (Ask the people involved with the project)

1. Make or update a drawing of your school ground now. How has the amount of grass changed? Are there more species of plants and trees? Are there more benches and paths?
2. What worked well? For example, people, skills, weather, costs?
3. What would you do differently on another project or for the next step of naturalizing your schoolyard?
4. Which of the ideas from your short list is next? Can you get started on it this year, or is it a project for next years' class?



Schoolyard Naturalization

Ideas for campaigns

- Plants shrubs, fruit bushes or trees.
- Plant native species of plants or trees, they are tolerant of the climate, water conditions, and are disease resistant. Native birds, insects and small animals are also used to these plants.
- Plant a vegetable or flower garden.
- Build raised beds for a garden.
- Put mulch around plants to conserve water and keep weeds down.
- Build or place a composter for lunch and yard waste, including grass clippings.
- Place a rain barrel under a downspout to collect water run off. Use it to water gardens.
- Place large boulders in a space for sitting, playing.
- Place benches or picnic tables to create an eating, working space.
- Raise butterflies for release into the schoolyard.
- Build or place birdhouses, bat houses, bird feeders or birdbaths to create habitat for birds and bats.
- Make a brush pile to create habitat for birds and small animals.
- Have a schoolyard clean up day.
- Make labels for the plants in your schoolyard so everyone can learn the names. Or, create a bulletin board with pictures of what you are doing, what plants are called, and how people can help.
- Make a kit for each classroom to take outside with them. Include things like a pair of binoculars, small magnifying glasses, plant and bird field guides, pencils and sketching paper, etc.
- Build walking paths around your school yard

Curriculum Connections

Kindergarten Science: Outcomes: LTK.1 Examine observable characteristics of plants, animals, and people in their local environment. **NSK.1** Explore features of their natural surroundings (e.g., soil, water, landform, and weather conditions), including changes to those surroundings over time.

Grade 1 Science: Outcomes: LT1.2 Analyze different ways in which plants, animals, and humans interact with various natural and constructed environments to meet their basic needs.

DS1.2 Inquire into the ways in which plants, animals, and humans adapt to daily and seasonal changes by changing their appearance, behaviour, and/or location.

English Language Arts: Outcome: CC1.1 Compose and create a range of visual, multimedia, oral, and written texts that explore and present thoughts on: identity, community (e.g., Neighbourhood) social responsibility (e.g., Plants and Trees).

Social Studies: Outcome: DR 1.3 Demonstrate awareness of humans reliance on the



natural environment to meet needs, and how location affects families in meeting needs and wants. **DR1.4** Recognize globes and maps as representations of the surface of the Earth, and distinguish land and water masses on globes and maps. **RW1.1** Describe the influence of physical, spiritual, emotional, and intellectual needs and wants on personal well-being. **RW1.2** Discuss ways in which work may be managed and distributed in families, schools, and groups.

Grade 2 Science: Outcome: AN2.3 Assess the interdependence of humans and animals in natural and constructed environments. **AW2.2** Assess the importance of air and water for the health and survival of living things, including self, and the environment.

Social Studies: Outcomes IN2.1 Determine characteristics of a community. **DR2.2** Analyze the influence of the natural environment on the local community. **DR2.3** Identify physical representations as constructed models of real things. **PA2.1** Analyze how decisions are made within the local community. **PA2.3** Analyze rights and responsibilities of citizens in the school and local community. **RW2.2** Analyze various worldviews regarding the natural environment.

RW2.3 Contribute to initiating and guiding change in local and global communities regarding environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

Grade 3 Science: Outcomes: PL3.2 Analyze the interdependence among plants, individuals, society, and the environment. **ES3.1** Investigate the characteristics, including soil composition and ability to absorb water, of different types of soils in their environment. **ES3.2** Analyze the interdependence between soil and living things, including the importance of soil for individuals, society, and all components of the environment.

Social Studies: Outcomes IN3.1 Analyze daily life in a diversity of communities.

DR3.1 Use various model representations of the Earth. **DR3.2** Assess the degree to which the geography and related environmental and climatic factors influence ways of living on and with the land. **PA3.1** Compare how decisions are made in the local community and communities studied. **RW3.1** Appraise the ways communities meet their members' needs and wants.

Grade 4 Science: Outcomes: HC4.2 Analyze the structures and behaviours of plants and animals that enable them to exist in various habitats **HC4.3** Assess the effects of natural and human activities on habitats and communities, and propose actions to maintain or restore habitats.

English Language Arts: Outcomes CR4.2 View and respond to visual and multimedia texts explaining the creator's technique and the impact on viewers. **CC4.1** Compose and create a range of visual, multimedia, oral and written texts that explore identity, community, social responsibility through personal experiences and inquiry. **CC4.2** Create a variety of clear representations that communicate straightforward ideas and information relevant to the topic and purpose, including short illustrated reports, dramatizations, posters, and other visuals such as displays and drawings.

Grade 5 Social Studies Outcomes: RW5.1 Explain the importance of sustainable management of the environment to Canada's future.

English Language Arts: Outcomes: CC5.1 Compose and create a range of visual,



multimedia, oral and written texts that explore, identity, community, social responsibility and express personal thoughts shaped through inquiry. **CC5.2** Demonstrate a variety of ways to communicate understanding and response including illustrated reports, dramatizations, posters timelines multimedia presentations and summary charts. **CC5.3** Speak to express and support a range of ideas and information in formal and informal speaking situations for particular audiences and purposes.

Grade 6 Science: Outcomes: DL6.1 Recognize, describe, and appreciate the diversity of living things in local and other ecosystems, and explore related careers. **DL6.4** Examine and describe structures and behaviours that help: individual living organisms survive in their environments in the short term and species of living organisms adapt to their environments in the long term.

Grade 7 Science: Outcome: IE7.4 Analyze how ecosystems change in response to natural and human influences, and propose actions to reduce the impact of human behaviour on a specific ecosystem.

Grade 8 Health Education: Outcome: USC8.6 Examine and assess the concept of sustainability from many perspectives, and develop an understanding of its implications for the well-being of self, others, and the environment.

Additional Resources

Pesticide Reduction Resources: <http://bepesticidefree.ca/>

Native Plant Resources: http://www.npss.sk.ca/?s=6.educational_resources

Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan:

<http://www.pcap-sk.org/education-programs-and-resources>