

GRADE 8
POPE JOHN PAUL II SCHOOL
ERIN JONES

The students in the grade 8 class chose to focus on two areas impacting environmental sustainability: water conservation and waste reduction. Through six inquiry projects investigating the question "What is the power and responsibility of the individual to make a difference in the world?" they were able to create positive change in our school community. After performing a waste audit, one group focused on implementing vermicomposting in three classrooms to reduce the food waste while a second group chose to reduce waste by educating classes regarding the importance of recycling and providing them with appropriate bins. In the area of water conservation, the other groups focused on educating classrooms about the importance of water bottle use and proper handwashing while fixing leaky hardware and using rain barrels for outdoor watering.

GRADE 6/7
ST. NICHOLAS CATHOLIC SCHOOL
TRACY BAZYLAK

Our grade 6/7 class at St. Nicholas Catholic School focused on an overarching inquiry question, "Why erase waste?" (not meaning only garbage, but also energy, water, food, plastic, and Styrofoam as well) after learning about many different issues affecting our world. Students were then grouped according to interest level in the following areas: Waste-Free Lunches, Water Conservation, Water Pollution, Recycling (specifically plastic), Styrofoam Waste, Energy Conservation, and Wasted Energy (focusing on solar power as an alternative).

Students became experts in their environmental issue by writing persuasive letter to their parents, expository essays, as well as visual presentations that were shared with other classes in the school. Each group performed audits, and many groups did post audits as well. All groups are in the process of organizing a final representation of their learning including hands-on visuals, graphs, a summary of their audits, brochures, homemade environmental products, and tri-fold poster boards.

It was exciting to witness the waste-free lunch group's influence on the younger children in the school. The grade 2-4 students wanted to show off their re-usable containers that they had started bringing their food in, and the surprise post-audit really motivated them to reduce the amount of garbage in their classroom. Our class is responsible for blue bin recycling within the school and they noticed more recycling in the blue bins after their presentations. Yeah!

I am thankful for the opportunity this year to learn in an engaging way with my class. Not all students learn from the textbook, or a teacher...sometimes getting involved and knowing you are making a difference is the best learning experience of all.

GRADE 5
ST. LORENZO RUIZ CATHOLIC SCHOOL
NICOLE SYROTA

Our Grade 5 class focused our thoughts around the question, "How does our behaviour impact the environment?" From there we started to question, "How could our behaviours harm or protect our environment?" In addition to our research, we invited a number of experts into our classroom, conducted numerous interviews, as well as travelled to various sites within our city and surrounding area to learn, seek answers, and acquire guidance with our school-wide initiatives from professionals. Our class divided into seven sustainability teams based on individual interests pertaining to waste, recycling, compost, water, electricity, and the environment. Each team identified areas of concern, designed a pre-audit, generated and implemented a campaign, and conducted a post-audit to assess their data to see if they were successful in changing the behaviours in question, and if so, by how much.

Although each team took on their own direction and project initiatives, we unified our sustainability projects through the creation of a mini-greenhouse in our classroom. From our waste audit, we knew that we needed to implement vermicomposting. Next, we decided to add this compost to soil to grow vegetables and flowers in our mini-greenhouse. The water team took on the role of ensuring that sustainable practices were implemented to keep our garden moist, while the electricity team monitored the energy consumption used by the greenhouse lamps as well as incorporated the use of natural light. Finally, our environmental team has an end goal to plant these beautiful plants in gardens and pots around our school to beautify our grounds once they are fully grown.

GRADE 6/7
SILVERWOOD HEIGHTS SCHOOL
SHANTELL HOEHN

Our SASF journey started with a conversation about what sustainability is and what it looks like. We talked about the program's six main areas of sustainability and decided to focus on waste. The students thought this was a problem in our school before we even began. We audited the school's garbage collected from one full day and found that there was a lot of good food being wasted, compostable items were in the garbage, and there was too much recycling. We decided that a project on waste was the right way to go. We began campaigning. Specific groups were interested in interviewing supermarkets, compost, wasting good food, and another was interested in recycling. We purchased new recycling bins, five gallon pails for composting in our lunch rooms, a compost bin for outside, and some buckets to be transformed into "Buddy Buckets". These buckets allow a student to share a food item they do not want or need with someone who does. We had an assembly to introduce the idea to the school and get other students on board. Our projects will be wrapped it up with a post audit to help determine our success!

The Student Action for a Sustainable Future (SASF) program involves students from the Public and Catholic school systems in projects that reduce classroom, school, and household greenhouse gas emissions. Each project results in positive sustainability benefits in the areas of waste, water, energy, food, biodiversity, and transportation.

Over the last five years, the program has involved over 60 teachers, 44 schools, and approximately 1,570 students.

In 2017, SASF received international recognition as a feature case study by the Global Environmental Education Partnership. The SASF program has also been locally recognized through a Regional Centre for Expertise award for Education for Sustainable Development. In 2013, SASF won the Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council's Waste Minimization Award for Youth/Schools. St. Anne School (SASF 2015/16) received the Rob Dumont Youth Award for their commitment and leadership in the area of reducing energy consumption involving peers, school(s), neighbourhoods, and communities. In 2017, St. Volodymyr School (SASF 2016/17) received the Rob Dumont Education Award for their work on multiple action projects that focused on solar power, energy conservation, vermicomposting, and the construction of a micro garden in the classroom.

The Student Showcase provides an opportunity for students to tell their own environmental success stories, highlight the results of their projects, and demonstrate what's possible for Saskatoon in terms of sustainability.

For more information, please visit
Saskatoon.ca/StudentAction.



A vertical event poster with a pink and purple background. At the top, it says "TAKE ONE" in large letters. Below that, the main title "STUDENT ACTION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE" is written in large, bold, yellow letters. Underneath, it says "YOUTH TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE OUR ENVIRONMENT" in smaller yellow letters. The date and time "THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2018 9:45 A.M. - 11:30 A.M." are listed in white. The location "WESTERN DEVELOPMENT MUSEUM SASKATOON, SK" is at the bottom in white. The background features a collage of images including a bar chart, a recycling symbol, and a car. At the bottom of the poster, there is a photograph of three children smiling, and a list of logos for the City of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan Environmental Society, Saskatoon Public Schools, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, and the University of Saskatchewan Sustainability Education Research Institute.



**GRADE 5 SAGE
GREYSTONE HEIGHTS SCHOOL
ANGELA PETERS**

Our class did a minor project and a larger main project, both focused on reducing waste. Our mini-project was based on trying to reduce vehicle emissions by doing a small scale idling campaign. This idle-free campaign went fairly well and we saw good results in our post-campaign audit. For our main project, we audited the school's waste for a day and decided to try and reduce the amount of compost our school was sending to our landfill. With many field trips and guest speakers, we learned about sorting waste and how to compost. Then we hosted an assembly to teach the school what we had learned, started a compost club, and built a large compost bin in the school's courtyard. We put compost bins in each classroom so that students and staff could easily sort their waste. One group also wanted to focus on electricity waste and so did a project trying to reduce the amount of lights left on in the school.

**GRADE 7/8
QUEEN ELIZABETH SCHOOL
ADAM MORKEN**

Students at Queen Elizabeth School focused on a number of sub-topics surrounding energy use. Areas of focus include renewable forms of energy such as solar, wind, hydro, and biomass as well as off-grid housing, sustainable transportation, and recycling. Several other groups focused on non-renewable energy sources such as oil, coal, natural gas, and nuclear energy and the impact their usage has on the environment.

To supplement our learning from the lesson plans provided on the SASF website, students also attended Brightwater, Cosmopolitan Industries, the WDM for the Smarter Science Better Buildings program, as well as trips to the city's riverbank to photograph biotic and abiotic factors in the environment that may be impacted by humans.

The students are currently campaigning within the school to get teachers and students to turn off lights and rely on the abundance of natural light that our classrooms receive. Furthermore, classrooms are being given power bars and LED lights for lamps that are often used during the day.



**GRADE 6/7
BROWNELL SCHOOL
EVAN NIENABER**

Our class has been investigating the impact we have on the environment throughout the school year. We watched "Before the Flood" to understand the importance that sustainability has on our future. Students then branched off to a variety of projects centered on waste, electricity, and water. Students created a trash monster and made posters to encourage our school to recycle more. They replaced inefficient lights with LED lights and placed lamps in classrooms to encourage classes to save on energy. Students monitored their home use of water and developed strategies to reduce water waste. In addition to the action projects, students conducted research on how we can become less reliant on fossil fuels in Saskatchewan, created posters for the UN Global Goals contest, and investigated how a person can live a completely sustainable lifestyle. As a class we were able to work on this project in many places around Saskatoon. We took trips to Saskatoon Light & Power, Cosmopolitan Industries, the Forestry Farm, the U of S, Brightwater, local stores, and local libraries. This project allowed students to investigate many aspects of sustainability and the importance of living a sustainable lifestyle.

**GRADE 7/8
PRINCESS ALEXANDRA SCHOOL
GABRIELLE NEIMAN**

At Princess Alexandra School, we have been exploring our individual connection to the land, and our role in ensuring a sustainable world for the seventh generation. On visits to Brightwater, we focused on how to become stewards of the land. In the fall, we collected fallen branches and ensured walking areas were cleared of debris. In winter, we spent a morning collecting black knot fungus to help ensure the forest of Brightwater was healthy and ready for spring. We also participated in cultural practices, including smudging and tobacco offerings. We took our learnings out at Brightwater and translated them back into the city. Our class takes regular body break walks, and made an effort to learn outside in nature. We also recorded how we felt before and after, and quickly discovered we felt happier, calmer, and refreshed after spending time in nature. Students are now encouraging other classrooms to take regular body breaks. We are in the process of creating body break maps which will highlight different routes classes can take. We hope by doing this we will be able to support other classrooms in their own journeys to connect to the land around us, and recognize the importance in protecting our environment.

**GRADE 7/8
W.P. BATE COMMUNITY SCHOOL
KORTNEY MICHAYLUK**

W.P. Bate Community School's grade 7/8 students started their journey toward a sustainable future by performing a school wide garbage audit. We found the areas our school struggled in were recycling, Styrofoam use, and compostable waste.

The students decided to research the problems associated with waste and the landfill. After learning about greenhouse gases, their contribution to climate change, and their negative impact on human health, the students created a plan to decrease school waste. They eliminated the use of Styrofoam for the school-provided lunch by helping get more reusable bowls and plates. They also assist with the dishwashing duties.

Next, the students focused on composting and built a system for the school. They created a play and PowerPoint to educate all students on composting and remind them what can/cannot be recycled. We have high hopes our post audit will show a reduction in waste due to our composting system. Lastly, our future plans are to use the decomposed material from the compost bins to help fertilize our school garden beds.

**GRADE 7/8
FATHER ROBINSON SCHOOL
JOANNE DE LA ROSA**

Our SASF projects revolve around behaviours of wastefulness that we noticed in our school. The students are in six groups, focusing on: "Walk, Don't Drive" (getting to school), using less disposable packaging in lunches (promoting re-usable containers), recycling, lower waste lifestyle, and "Lights Off/ Projector Off" (students noted how many classrooms leave the Smartboard projectors on). Pre-audits were completed, and campaigns are underway to educate students and staff about alternatives to being wasteful. Initiatives include a "Walk to School Day", posters promoting facts about our sustainability goals, classroom chats around sustainability, as well as a "Garbage Free Lunch" challenge. To promote the students' background understanding of the significance of behaving in a sustainable manner, our class utilized several community resources and experts in this area. We borrowed energy monitors from Saskatoon Light & Power. Agriculture in the Classroom talked to our class about their Journey 2050 program, which is about sustainably feeding the world. Saskatoon Compost Coaches taught us about vermicomposting. We also attended the Saskatchewan Environmental Society's education program called Smarter Science Better Buildings which took place at the Western Development Museum.

**GRADE 7/8
SASKATOON MISBAH SCHOOL
LISA SLOMINSKI**

Grade 8 students at Saskatoon Misbah School have been excited to take action after learning about Earth's water systems and some of the detrimental natural and human caused events affecting water. Two groups looked into how plastic affects water and the environment. They are taking action to reduce plastic use and clean up plastic pollution. One group is surveying peer responses and opinions regarding the environment and sustainability and aims to find a balance between economic development and environmental sustainability. Reducing water use at Saskatoon Misbah School and the Masjid has been the focus of some students. Others are looking to reduce electrical energy consumption by switching off lights and computers. Last but not least, an ambitious group strives to lead the class in a local school/community and riverside clean-up to reduce garbage and plastic entering the South Saskatchewan River. The students are thankful for the SASF program because it has helped them achieve these honourable goals and foster internal habits and beliefs that will continue through lifetimes and generations.

**GRADE 6/7
FATHER VACHON SCHOOL
LANE BRYKSA**

Our class journey with sustainability began at our school's "Santa's Market" back in November. Students worked as a team to create sellable crafts and decorations out of things that we normally view in society as "garbage". Our class mass produced recycled paper ornaments, glass jar candleholders, and snow globes. The students' sale was able to raise some extra funds to spend on their inquiry projects.

When we dove into our inquiry projects, we had a combined total of six groups, in which students worked together to answer the essential question "How can we limit our impact on the environment?" Students were able to explore and find a topic they were passionate about. We ended up getting three groups that were interested in working with the conservation of energy and analyzing different energy sources. One group was interested in water waste at our school with water bottles being dumped out. Finally, the last two groups examined several classrooms' garbage to discover the amount of recyclables, compostable items, and even perfectly fine food being tossed.

Our class has noticed some school wide awareness around their topics, but their mission isn't over yet! This project has helped us open our eyes to some glaring concerns around sustainability at Father Vachon School and we will continue to be good role models for a sustainable future in our final years at this school.