

One in 5 schools in Ontario are certified EcoSchools! 32 school boards are celebrating student success and environmentally- responsible school practices

September 8, 2009 – Students and teachers across the province are beginning the school year with award ceremonies to celebrate becoming certified EcoSchools. For the 2008-09 school year, the number of EcoSchools in Ontario nearly doubled to 906 schools in 32 boards, up from 540 schools in 24 boards for the 2007-08 school year.

The following school boards have certified EcoSchools:

- Algonquin Catholic
- Avon-Maitland
- Bruce Gray Catholic
- Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario
- CSD catholique Centre-Sud
- CSD catholique de l'Est ontarien
- Durham Catholic
- Durham
- Greater Essex
- Halton Catholic
- Halton
- Hamilton Catholic
- Huron Perth Catholic
- Kawartha Pine Ridge
- Limestone
- DSB of Niagara
- Niagara Catholic
- Ottawa Catholic
- Peel
- Peterborough Victoria Northumberland Clarington Catholic
- Simcoe
- Simcoe Catholic
- Toronto
- Toronto Catholic
- Thames Valley
- Trillium
- Trillium Lakelands
- Upper Canada
- Upper Grand
- Waterloo
- York
- York Catholic

To achieve certified EcoSchool status, students participate in an exciting, school-wide program that integrates ecological literacy with hands-on activities to conserve energy, reduce waste and provide shade for their school grounds. Points are awarded for actions that meet EcoSchools criteria.

An EcoTeam, comprised of a diverse representation of students and members from the school community, creates, implements and monitors action plans to track, manage, and evaluate progress in environmentally responsible practices. Through this innovative teaching model, students develop the knowledge, skills and perspectives they need to understand how to become active citizens aware of their impact on the environment.

Many boards see the EcoSchools program as the means to implement Ministry of Education's Environmental Education Policy Framework *Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow*. The EcoSchools program aligns with the three goals and strategies in the Framework, giving schools and school boards a method of implementations.



Ontario EcoSchools was created by a consortium of education stakeholders to address environmental issues in the formal education system. Seven school boards, York University, and the Toronto & Region Conservation Authority collaborated to adapt and expand on the work of the Toronto District School Board, developing an environmental education program that can be used province-wide. Currently there are 34 school boards throughout the province in various stages of implementing EcoSchools. The Ontario EcoSchools program is free-of-charge, supported by the Ministries of Education and Environment. Resources may be downloaded from www.ontarioecoschools.org.

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