

## Exemplary Environmental Leadership/Sustainability Program or Initiative

School Board \_\_\_\_\_ York Region District School Board \_\_\_\_\_

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Name of Program/Initiative \_\_\_\_\_ YRDSB EcoTeam \_\_\_\_\_

Hyperlinks to Documents or Website(s) Describing this Program/Initiative

[YRDSB EcoTeam](#), [YRDSB Environmental Policy #235](#)

Description of Program/Initiative

The York Region District School board has established a system-level EcoTeam comprised of a variety of stakeholders (trustees, students, administrators, managers, superintendents, teachers, support staff, caretakers) to oversee the various activities associated with ecologically sound practices in YRDSB. The role of the YRDSB EcoTeam is to advance environmental literacy and promote environmental responsibility for all our staff, students, and parents. It assists with the implementation of the Ontario EcoSchools certification program and the YRDSB EcoWorkplaces certification program for all non-school sites. The YRDSB EcoTeam supports environmental action, initiatives and programs in schools and workplaces by facilitating communication between stakeholders about programs, resources, and professional learning that can be used to support the development of environmental responsibility in schools. Examples of such programs include organic waste collection, real-time energy monitoring, EcoCamp (an Environmental Leadership Camp for students Grade 5-7), and system-wide initiatives such as Earth Hour and Waste Reduction Week. The YRDSB EcoTeam was instrumental in developing the [YRDSB Environmental Policy #235.0](#) which outlines the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in the system and actively supports the goal of environmental responsibility outlined in the [YRDSB Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-Being](#).

What has been the Impact on Student Learning?

The YRDSB EcoTeam has been successful in shifting culture around environmental responsibility, both in schools and at non-school sites. We have evidence that an increased number of schools and workplaces participate in environmental responsible practices, including waste minimization, energy conservation, and environmental action projects as indicated through Ontario EcoSchools and YRDSB EcoWorkplaces certification, school/site visits, and school improvement plans. Data collected through certification indicates that environmental education is embedded throughout the curriculum (K-12) and that students are actively engaged in promoting environmental responsibility in schools and at home. In addition, the existence of the environmental policy has impacted decision making and actions at all levels, resulting in more environmentally responsible practices throughout our system.