

2017-18

PLATINUM

CERTIFICATION GUIDE



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This guide is an adaptation of the *EcoSchools Certification Guide and Planner* produced by the Toronto District School Board (TDSB). The TDSB has donated this resource to the Ontario EcoSchools program as part of its in-kind contribution to the project.

Ontario EcoSchools: Platinum Certification Guide 2017-18

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We have gathered feedback from schools, board representatives, and certification site assessors to guide revisions to the certification application and process.

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To apply for Platinum Certification, eligible schools must register within the online certification application. For more information, please see www.ontarioecoschools.org.

DESIGN: Comet art + design



About the cover

Francis Libermann (TCDSB) first certified with Ontario EcoSchools in 2009, and achieved Platinum status over the last three years. As one Libermann Green Team member notes: "From becoming a member in grade 10, to a leader in grade 11, to Eco-rep in grade 12, being part of LGT has given me a family who has similar passions as me, and has been my stepping stone to increasing my passion in the environment. This experience has built me into the stubborn, yet firm activist that I am today."

Would you like to see your EcoTeam on the cover of an EcoSchools Guide?

Send photos of your EcoTeam or whole school engaged in eco-action to outreach@ontarioecoschools.org.



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WELCOME! THE ONTARIO ECOSCHOOLS PROGRAM

MISSION

To nurture environmental leaders, reduce the ecological impact of schools, and build environmentally responsible school communities. To do this we:

- Certify K-12 schools in environmental learning and action
- Create a vibrant network of schools, school boards, and community partners
- Build strong EcoTeams with training and tools
- Embed ecological literacy into the curriculum and daily practices



VISION

Every School an EcoSchool

From individual behaviours to collective impact, all members of school communities are empowered with the knowledge, skills, perspectives, and desire to act as environmentally responsible citizens.

"There is an inherent passion in many of our students to be advocates for our world and our environment. Their energy becomes contagious."

TEACHER, BWDSB

Platinum Certification

Platinum certification allows high-achieving schools to deepen their existing program through rich opportunities that engage students in environmental learning and action. Schools enrolled in Platinum will complete the standard Ontario EcoSchools application and an additional series of questions. Schools that do not achieve the necessary requirements for Platinum certification will still certify at the Gold, Silver, or Bronze level.

Key Dates to Remember

Early September	Last Friday of November (November 24)	Last Friday of January (January 26)	Second Friday of April (April 13)	Last Friday of April (April 27)
Registration opens	Submit <i>Platinum Yearly Planner</i>	Initial EcoReview deadline	Early bird deadline	Online application due!

Experienced EcoSchools Certification Cycle for Platinum Schools

The Experienced EcoSchools Certification Cycle (EECC) for Platinum schools is a two-year certification cycle that is available to any school that certified at the Platinum level in the previous year. The program offers Platinum EcoSchools a chance to strengthen their EcoSchools program without having to submit a full application. Schools complete a pledge year that is followed by an application year in which schools submit a complete Platinum application and receive a school visit. For more information on eligibility and program requirements, please see EECC Guide 2017-18.

STEPS TO PLATINUM CERTIFICATION 2017-18

1
STEP

Visit www.ontarioecoschools.org or contact your board representative to determine whether you are eligible for Platinum certification.

2
STEP

Establish your school's EcoTeam and select the Platinum option upon registration at <http://certapp.ontarioecoschools.org>. All schools, new and returning, must register each year. Registration opens in September.

3
STEP

Upload a completed *Platinum Yearly Planner* by the **last Friday of November**:

4
STEP

Conduct your school's Initial EcoReviews (Energy Conservation and Waste Minimization) and input results into your online certification application by the **last Friday of January**.

- Engage students and the EcoTeam in the assessment of your school's energy and waste practices by conducting your EcoReviews.
- Schools must input **18 out of 18** EcoReview questions (2.1-2.9 and 3.1-3.9) by the **last Friday of January** to be eligible for certification. If your EcoTeam is not attempting or addressing a question, it should select a level 0.

Please note: Schools have until the **last Friday of April** to complete the rest of the application.

5
STEP

Implement your Ontario EcoSchools action plan and **input your school's ongoing achievements in your online application**. Conduct your Follow-up EcoReviews three months after your Initial EcoReviews and input your results online.

6
STEP

Upload all portfolio requirements needed to support your application by **the last Friday of April**. The online Application Tracker will identify questions that require portfolio requirements (found on the "Review and Submit" page).

7
STEP

Complete the online application by answering all applicable questions by the **last Friday of April**. Review the "Review and Submit" page, then click on "Submit to Ontario EcoSchools".

Please note: Schools need to claim a minimum of 20 out of 25 Platinum points to be assessed for Platinum certification.

Certification Deadlines:

- **The last Friday of November** (November 24): Complete and upload the *Platinum Yearly Planner* into the application.
- **The last Friday of January** (January 26): Input results from the Initial EcoReviews (questions 2.1-2.9 and 3.1-3.9) into the application.
- **The last Friday of April** (April 27): Complete all the applicable questions, include results from the Follow-up Eco Reviews, upload all required portfolio documents, and finalize and submit the application. Submit your application by the **early bird deadline** (April 13) to avoid slow upload times and for a chance to win a prize for your EcoTeam.

LEVELS OF CERTIFICATION

Ontario EcoSchools certification provides a rigorous province-wide set of criteria to assess achievement of environmentally responsible actions and learning. Engagement in Ontario EcoSchools reflects a commitment to the environment. There are four levels of Ontario EcoSchools certification:

Level	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Platinum
Total points	50–65	66–74	75–100	Gold certification plus 20 out of 25 Platinum points*

*Schools that do not meet the minimum Platinum requirements will be assessed for standard certification.



Platinum certification is designed to reflect the highest level of achievement and indicates that a school has taken a comprehensive approach to implementing the Ontario EcoSchools program. Schools must reach Gold certification (a minimum of 75% of the possible points in EACH of the six sections) and claim a minimum of 20 out of 25 Platinum points to be assessed for Platinum certification.

	Available points and minimum Gold requirements – standard certification	Available points – Platinum certification
I. Teamwork and Leadership	12/16	4
II. Energy Conservation	15/20	5
III. Waste Minimization	15/20	5
IV. School Ground Greening	10.5/14	3
V. Curriculum	10.5/14	4
VI. Environmental Stewardship	12/16	4
Total points for Platinum certification	75/100	20 out of 25 available points

Legend of Application Icons



EcoReview Requirement: This symbol indicates questions that require schools to input the results of **both** the Initial and Follow-up EcoReviews. Applicants must input their results twice – once before the **last Friday of January** (Initial) and once before the **last Friday of April** (Follow-up).



Portfolio Requirement: This symbol indicates questions that require schools to collect and upload supporting documentation (e.g., newsletters, site plans, student work).



Look For: For schools scheduled to receive a school visit, this symbol indicates questions that will be verified during the walkabout portion of the school visit.



Text Box: This symbol indicates when a text box answer is required in the online application.

PLATINUM ELIGIBILITY AND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Eligibility Requirements

In order to be eligible for Platinum certification, schools must have:

- Certified for at least five years with no more than a one-year gap
- Certified at the Gold level for at least three of those five years
- Certified Gold in the year prior to the Platinum application

Please note: Schools who have certified Gold for three consecutive years qualify for early eligibility.

Platinum Certification Requirements

To achieve Platinum certification, schools must:

1. Submit a *Platinum Yearly Planner* before the **last Friday of November**
2. Meet the minimum requirements for Gold level certification and achieve 75% of the standard questions in each section
3. Complete the additional Platinum questions and achieve a minimum of 20 out of the 25 available points
4. Receive a school visit

Opting Out of Platinum Certification

Eligible schools can select Platinum certification upon registration. They are not required to remain at the Platinum level and can opt out at any time. If your school wishes to change your certification stream, please email platinum@ontarioecoschools.org.

Platinum School Visit Information

All schools applying for Platinum certification will receive a school visit each year.

What happens at a school visit? An Ontario EcoSchools assessor will visit and provide comprehensive evaluation and rich feedback and celebrate the achievements of students and staff. There are two parts to the certification school visit:

1. A **discussion** with any members of the EcoTeam (students, staff, advisor(s), custodian, principal, other team members)
2. A **walkabout** of the school to check the Look Fors and verify the application

Who should be at the school visit? Students are central to the school visit and can participate in all aspects of the discussion and walkabout. It is important for as many EcoTeam members as possible to participate in the school visit.

When will the school visit take place? School visits will occur during the school day throughout May and June. Each visit will be approximately 30 minutes long.







When will we find out if we are certified? After all schools in your board have been assessed, the “Review and Submit” page on your online application will be updated to include the assessor’s feedback, as well as your school’s final standing.

SECTION I.

TEAMWORK AND LEADERSHIP



Guiding Question: How does your whole school build capacity and communicate feedback to create an environmentally responsible school?

		POINTS
<p>1.1</p> <p> Does your EcoTeam meet regularly to plan for the year and establish defined goals? Portfolio requirement: A completed copy of the <i>EcoSchools Yearly Planner</i>, one set of meeting minutes demonstrating EcoTeam planning (actions, campaigns, goals) OR an equivalent document demonstrating planning.</p>	2	
<p>1.2</p> <p> Does your EcoTeam reflect all parts of the adult school community? (Level 4 = three or more groups represented):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Teachers/ECEs/EAs <input type="checkbox"/> Community members <input type="checkbox"/> Principal/administrators <input type="checkbox"/> Parents/guardians <input type="checkbox"/> Custodial staff <input type="checkbox"/> Office support staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p>	2	
<p>1.3</p> <p> Does your EcoTeam include different groups from the student population in the school? (Level 4 = three or more grades and/or different student groups represented.)</p>	2	
<p>1.4</p> <p> Does your principal and/or other administrators make Ontario EcoSchools a part of the school culture? (e.g., set aside school time for EcoTeam leaders to plan and implement the program; include Ontario EcoSchools goals in the school improvement/success plan; host "green" meetings; provide time to report on Ontario EcoSchools at staff meetings.)</p>	2	
<p>1.5</p> <p> Does your EcoSchools program provide opportunities for student leadership? (e.g., develop communication skills by using the P.A. system; deliver classroom presentations and/or school assemblies; take the lead in developing campaigns; foster mentoring of younger students by older students; mentorship between schools; develop partnerships.)</p>	2	
<p>1.6</p> <p> To what extent is your environmental program visible throughout the school? (e.g., signs for proper recycling; lights-off and monitors-off stickers; campaign posters; eco-themed displays; use of bulletin boards or LCD monitors; environmental awards and plaques in prominent areas.)</p>	1	
<p>1.7</p> <p>Does the EcoTeam communicate successes and areas for improvement with the whole school community on a regular basis?</p>	1	
<p>1.8a 1.8b</p> <p>Did staff, EcoTeam, and/or students develop environmental knowledge or skills through participation in workshops, conferences, presentations, or webinars?</p> <p>To qualify, the following criteria must be met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clear connection to environmental learning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occurs during the current school year (including summer sessions)—July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One entry per session—if two people attend the same session, only one can be claimed <p>Workshops/presentations: Whole school, divisional, class, or EcoTeam attendance at presentation/workshop with <u>outside presenters</u></p> <p>Webinars: Attendance at a webinar (live or recorded)</p>	2 2	
<div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 10px; background-color: #f9f9f9;"> <p>WORKSHOP</p> <p>1. Name of participants <input type="text" value="Sylvie Green and Bob Tree"/></p> <p>2. Type of event <input type="text" value="Workshop (with outside presenter)"/></p> <p>3. Date of event and length (half day/full day): <input type="text" value="October 18, 2017 - full-day workshop"/></p> <p>4. Event Title: <input type="text" value="Ontario EcoSchools Intro Workshop"/></p> <p>5. Description of event and presenter: <input type="text" value="Intro to Ontario EcoSchools workshop presented by Ontario EcoSchools. Provided information, resources, and student engagement strategies."/></p> <p>6. What impact on environment-related teaching/decisions/activities resulted from this event? <input cans"="" garbage="" golden="" type="text" value="Green Leaf PS is focusing on Waste Min.: Students conduct a whole school waste audit and present findings at school assembly; track contamination in recycling bins and award "/>.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SAVE</p> </div>		
TOTAL POINTS IN THIS SECTION		16



POINTS

PLATINUM QUESTIONS

Pt 1.9



Does your EcoTeam have an **organized structure** with subcommittees and/or defined roles?

These roles could include:

- EcoReps per class/grade
- Subcommittees (e.g., waste monitors, announcement team, gardening crew)
- Defined roles (e.g., president, secretary, environmental rep on the student council)

Portfolio requirement: One document or diagram outlining the organizational structure of the EcoTeam with defined roles (e.g., list of names and roles, organizational chart).

1

Pt 1.10



To what extent is your environmental program **visible beyond the school walls**?

Portfolio requirement: Evidence of visibility beyond the school. This could include one of the following:

- Community newspaper article about your environmental actions
- Regularly updated social media account, blog, or website dedicated to the Ontario EcoSchools program
- School board media release specific to your Ontario EcoSchools program
- Open house or public event showcasing the EcoTeam's initiatives

Please note: School newspaper articles are recognized in question 1.7.

1

Pt 1.11



To what extent does your **EcoTeam develop meaningful partnerships with other schools and/or organizations** to advance or enrich its Ontario EcoSchools program?

A strong partnership involves working with another school or organization and meeting multiple times during the current school year to share ideas, provide support, work on a collaborative project, and/or build skills and knowledge.

1. Type of partnership (school/organization)

2. Name of organization/ school(s):

3. Number of meetings throughout the year:

4. How did this partnership advance or enrich your Ontario EcoSchools program?

SAVE

2

TOTAL POINTS IN THIS SECTION

4

SECTION II.

ENERGY CONSERVATION















Guiding Question: How does your school make decisions and follow daily routines and operational practices that significantly reduce the use of energy and its impact on the environment?

Certification Deadlines:

- **The last Friday of January** (January 26): Input results from the Initial EcoReviews (questions 2.1-2.9 and 3.1-3.9) into the application.
- **The last Friday of April** (April 27): Complete all applicable questions, including results from the Follow-up EcoReviews, upload all required portfolio documents, and finalize and submit the application.

Please note: The Follow-up EcoReview should be completed three months after the Initial EcoReview.

POINTS

POINTS	
LIGHTS AND EQUIPMENT	
2.1  Do students and staff turn off lights when they are not required? (e.g., when classrooms are not in use, in stairwells and corridors with extensive natural lighting, or according to the season.)	3
2.2  Do students and staff turn off electronics (monitors, LCD projectors, smartboards) when not in use?	3
2.3  Are printers, scanners, and photocopiers on standby when not in use and turned off at the end of the day ?	1
2.4  Has your school's equipment been consolidated to ensure that energy is not wasted by using more equipment than is necessary? (e.g., reducing the number of computer printers through networking.)	1
HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING	
2.5  Do students and staff ensure that blinds and curtains (if present) are closed when appropriate to minimize heat loss?	1
2.6  Do students and staff consistently monitor to ensure that the space around vents on walls, ceilings, or windowsills is kept clear (to ensure effective cold air return)?	1
2.7  Do students and staff ensure that doors to the outside of the building are not left open unnecessarily (to reduce energy/heat loss)?	1
SPECIALIZED PRACTICES OF CARETAKERS/CUSTODIAL STAFF	
2.8  Does your school adhere to board standard room temperatures and make maximum use of its computer-controlled temperature system (HVAC/BAS, if available)? (e.g., ensure that heating/cooling equipment is adjusted/maintained to minimize the school's energy consumption.)	1
2.9  Are regular inspections of mechanical equipment and water faucets conducted and problems addressed promptly? (e.g., fix broken valves, check roof vent seals, dampers, louvres, filters for school and portable motors, window/door seals.)	2
STUDENT MONITORING AND COMMUNICATION	
2.10  Do students regularly monitor energy conservation practices throughout the school? Portfolio requirement: <i>Energy Conservation Walkabout Worksheet</i> or equivalent monitoring sheet (Level 4 = a completed monitoring sheet with a minimum of three tracking dates across ten classrooms.)	2
2.11  Do students use communication strategies to effectively share energy conservation goals, successes, and areas for improvement that link directly to questions 2.1-2.10? (e.g., through posters, announcements, assemblies, presentations, awards, energy hog.)	2
2.12  To what extent do students actively explore energy use and energy conservation behaviour within the school? Portfolio requirement (provide <u>one</u> of the following): A copy of a <u>completed</u> <i>Classroom Lighting Assessment</i> , <i>School Energy Consumption Assessment</i> , <i>School Appliance Audit</i> or equivalent worksheet.	2
TOTAL POINTS IN THIS SECTION	
20	



POINTS

PLATINUM QUESTIONS

Pt 2.13 To what extent does your school **develop, implement, analyze, and reflect** on a long-term energy conservation action plan informed by monitoring and observations?

Examples of targeted actions:

- Turn monitors off
- Turn off smartboards and printers when not in use
- Close windows/curtains
- Monitor space around vents
- Reduce phantom power

1. Lights-off Monitors-off Smartboards
 Printers Space around vents Windows/curtains closed
 Phantom power Other energy targets: _____

2. What steps will your school and EcoTeam take to achieve your target? When will the phases of your action plan be implemented?

3. How will your EcoTeam know that its target has been met (counting participants, collecting feedback, research, etc.)?

4. What resources does your EcoTeam need to achieve your target (people, materials, funding, etc.)? Who will be responsible for different phases of the action plan?

5. Analyze the data you collected over the school year. Did you achieve your target this year? Why or why not? How will these results impact your future campaigns?

SAVE

1

Pt 2.14 **NEW!** To what extent does your EcoTeam facilitate taking **energy conservation messages home and/or sharing information with the broader school community?** (e.g., microsites, open houses, community events/challenges, parents' night, school council meetings)



2

Pt 2.15 Have your energy conservation initiatives **resulted in change over time?**
 Please describe the qualitative and/or quantitative changes that have occurred while participating in the Ontario EcoSchools program. You may highlight changes that have developed over the past year or over several years.



These changes may include:

- Increase in the number of students, staff, classes, or families that have been involved in Energy Conservation activities (e.g., lights-off campaigns, Earth Hour)
- Decrease in monthly heating, electricity, or natural gas consumption
- Implementation of innovative technologies (e.g., energy dashboard, solar panels)
- Improvement in your current EcoReview compared to past EcoReviews

2

TOTAL POINTS IN THIS SECTION

5

Helpful Resources

- Energy Conservation Walkabout Worksheet (2.10)*
- School Energy Consumption Assessment Worksheet (2.12)*
- Classroom Lighting Assessment (2.12)*
- Appliance Audit Worksheet (2.12)*

Find it at www.ontarioecoschools.org

SECTION III.

WASTE MINIMIZATION


















Guiding Question: How does your school make decisions and follow daily routines and operational practices that significantly reduce its impact on the environment through waste reduction?

Certification Deadlines:

- **The last Friday of January** (January 26): Input results from the Initial EcoReviews (questions 2.1-2.9 and 3.1-3.9) into the application.
- **The last Friday of April** (April 27): Complete all applicable questions including results from the Follow-up EcoReviews, upload all required portfolio documents, and finalize and submit the application.

Please note: The Follow-up EcoReview should be completed three months after the Initial EcoReview.

POINTS

		POINTS
REDUCE		
3.1 	Do students and staff reduce paper consumption by photocopying/printing on both sides of paper whenever possible?	1
3.2 	Does your school regularly use electronic methods (email, website) to communicate with parents/guardians or, if printed communication is necessary, use a sibling list?	1
3.3  	Do students and staff work towards reducing food-related waste through regular practices (e.g., cafeteria/lunchroom composting, waste-free lunch programs, boomerang lunches)? (Level 4 = consistent, weekly or daily programs over a minimum of three months.)	3
REUSE		
3.4 	Has your school put in place systems to reuse paper with Good On One Side (GOOS)/Reuse it boxes placed in key locations throughout the school (e.g., classroom, office, library, photocopy room)?	1
3.5 	Do students and staff have waste-free events/meetings by ensuring reusable dishes and serviceware are used?	1
3.6 	Does your school make use of systems (board-wide or school-wide) for reusing office equipment, surplus goods, electronics, craft supplies, etc.?	1
RECYCLE		
3.7  	Has a school-wide paper recycling system been effectively implemented (i.e., bins strategically placed throughout the school containing minimal contamination from non-recyclable items)?	2
3.8  	Has a school-wide container recycling system been effectively implemented (i.e., bins strategically placed throughout the school containing minimal contamination from non-recyclable items)?	2
3.9 	Does your school recycle photocopier toner bottles and printer cartridges ?	1
STUDENT MONITORING AND COMMUNICATION		
3.10 	Do students regularly check for contamination in the garbage and recycling bins using the <i>Waste Minimization Walkabout Worksheet</i> or equivalent monitoring system? Portfolio requirement: <i>Waste Minimization Walkabout Worksheet</i> or equivalent monitoring sheet? (Level 4 = a completed monitoring sheet with a minimum of three tracking dates across ten classrooms).	2
3.11 	Do students use communication strategies to effectively share waste minimization goals, successes, and areas for improvement that link directly to questions 3.1-3.10? (e.g., through posters, announcements, assemblies, presentations, awards).	2
3.12  	Have students participated in a school-wide waste audit that includes a breakdown of contents of both garbage and recycling and communicated the results to the whole school? Portfolio requirement: Student-led <i>Ontario EcoSchools School Waste Audit</i> or comparable audit analyzing a representative sample of both garbage and recycling. Classroom and lunch waste audits do not meet the criteria.	3
TOTAL POINTS IN THIS SECTION		20



POINTS

PLATINUM QUESTIONS

Pt 3.13 To what extent does your school **develop, implement, analyze, and reflect** on a long-term waste minimization action plan informed by monitoring and observations?



Examples of targeted actions:

- Eliminate/reduce plastic water bottles
- Compost food waste
- Start a Good On One Side paper program
- Reduce use of paper towels

1. Proper recycling Food waste/food packaging Plastic water bottles
 GOOS paper Composting/food waste Paper towel
 Other waste target: _____
2. What steps will your school and EcoTeam take to achieve your target?
 When will the phases of your action plan be implemented?
3. How will your EcoTeam know that its target has been met?
 (counting participants, collecting feedback, research, etc.)
4. What resources does your EcoTeam need to achieve your target (people, materials, funding, etc.)? Who will be responsible for different phases of the action plan?
5. Analyze the data you collected over the school year. Did you achieve your target this year? Why or why not? How will these results impact your future campaigns?

SAVE

1

Pt 3.14 **NEW!** To what extent does your EcoTeam facilitate taking **waste minimization messages home and/or sharing information with broader school community?** (e.g., microsites, open houses, community events/challenges, parents' night, school council meetings)



2

Pt 3.15 Have your waste minimization initiatives **resulted in change over time?**
 Please describe the qualitative and/or quantitative changes that have occurred while participating in the Ontario EcoSchools program. You may highlight changes that have developed over the past year or over several years.



These changes may include:

- Increase in the number of students, staff, classes, or families that have been involved in waste minimization activities (e.g., waste-free lunches, using reusable water bottles.)
- Decrease in waste generation (highlighted by a follow-up waste audit)
- Decrease in frequency of waste pick-up
- Reduction in supply orders (e.g., paper, paper towels)
- Improvements in your current EcoReview compared to past EcoReviews

2

TOTAL POINTS IN THIS SECTION

5

Helpful Resources

- Waste Minimization Walkabout Worksheet (3.10)
- School Waste Audit (3.12)

Find it at www.ontarioecoschools.org

SECTION IV. SCHOOL GROUND GREENING



Guiding Question: How does your school engage students and staff in projects that care for the natural environment, encourage teaching and learning in the outdoors, and increase biodiversity on the school grounds?

		POINTS
<p>4.1a Is your school actively involved in one or more school ground greening projects that improve biodiversity and/or ecological sustainability?</p> <p>Our school is planning, planting, or caring for:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Trees for shade <input type="checkbox"/> Food garden <input type="checkbox"/> Drought-tolerant garden </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Native species garden <input type="checkbox"/> No-mow zone <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Nature study area <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat for pollinators/butterflies </div> </div> <p><i>Please note:</i> You only need to be involved in one project to receive full points, and multiple projects can be claimed throughout the section. Planter boxes and on-site greenhouses meet criteria. Bulb planting does not meet criteria.</p>	2	
<p>4.1b How have students been actively engaged in your school ground greening project(s) during the current school year? Please check the phase(s) of the project in which students are engaged:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Planting <input type="checkbox"/> Regular care </div> <p> Portfolio requirement (provide one of the following to demonstrate student engagement):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning: Student-drawn site plan, photo of students presenting to parent council, evidence of student-driven fundraising • Planting: Photos of students planting, mulching, watering • Regular care: Sign-up sheet/maintenance plan specifying activities, photos of students caring for the project 	4	
<p>4.2 Were members of the wider school community involved in the planning, planting, or regular care of your school ground greening project(s) during the current school year and summer months? Please specify who by checking all relevant boxes:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation authority <input type="checkbox"/> Landscaper <input type="checkbox"/> Parent council </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Funder/foundation <input type="checkbox"/> Organization/business <input type="checkbox"/> School board </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Families/community volunteers <input type="checkbox"/> Municipality/local government <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ </div> </div> <p><i>Please note:</i> You only need to involve one member/group of the wider school community to receive full points.</p>	1	
<p>4.3 To what extent did your EcoTeam follow a research and/or planning process to ensure that your project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves biodiversity (e.g., provides habitat, includes diverse plant species, establishes a nature study area) and/or • Encourages ecological sustainability (e.g., includes native plant species, drought-resistant perennials, food-producing plants)? 	2	
<p>4.4 To what extent do your school ground greening project(s) have an impact on the broader community? (e.g., provides useful shade for students; grows food; provides a venue for events; reduces runoff.)</p> <p> Portfolio requirement (provide one of the following):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For useful shade, copy of detailed site plan (can be student-drawn) or shade survey • Copy of poster, newsletter, or communication that demonstrates community engagement and outreach • Photos that clearly demonstrate project impact 	2	
<p>4.5 How do students and teachers regularly use the school ground greening project(s) mentioned in 4.1a to enrich student learning?</p> <p>Please check all that apply.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum-linked lessons <input type="checkbox"/> Health and wellbeing </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Whole-school activities <input type="checkbox"/> Sports and clubs </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Learning in the outdoors </div> </div>	3	
TOTAL POINTS IN THIS SECTION		14

* If your school is unable to engage in school ground greening due to leasing restrictions or other factors, please contact Ontario EcoSchools at info@ontarioecoschools.org before the April 27th certification deadline for alternate criteria.



POINTS

PLATINUM QUESTIONS

Pt 4.6 To what extent do **students investigate and learn** from school ground greening project(s)?
 Please ensure that your activity focuses on, or extends, your current school ground greening project(s).



Please note: This activity cannot be claimed in any other area of the program.



Choose **ONE** of the following:

Option 1: Biodiversity survey of school ground greening project(s) with whole-school communication

Students can learn about the abundance of biodiversity on their school grounds by conducting a survey that identifies and tallies all of the plants and creatures found there. Communicate findings to the whole school community to increase biodiversity awareness.

Portfolio requirement: Evidence of communication of biodiversity survey results (e.g., copy of announcements, posters, bulletin board notices, booklets, newsletter articles).

Option 2: Student-created signage, brochure, or booklet, to enhance school ground greening project(s)

Enhance engagement with your school ground greening project(s) with student-created:

- Permanent signage for gardens/trees/plants (consider adding numbers or QR codes that reference additional information for deeper engagement)
- Tree/garden tour brochure for classes/visitors
- Booklet containing information on the species found on your school grounds and/or activities for students/visitors

Portfolio requirement: Evidence of student-created signage, brochure, or booklet. If the project is not completed by the application deadline, detailed planning notes are accepted.

Option 3: Student-hosted event or scavenger hunt that showcases school ground greening project(s)

Actively engage students in showcasing your school ground greening project(s) by:

- Hosting an informative after-school, half-day, or full-day event that focuses on your garden's unique features. Students can lead tours of the garden, create informative pamphlets, and/or act as ambassadors
- Designing a nature scavenger hunt for classes/visitors to explore and learn about your school ground greening project(s)

Portfolio requirement: Evidence of student-hosted garden event or nature scavenger hunt (e.g., pictures of event clearly demonstrating student involvement, invitation to the event, newsletter articles).

Option 4: Student-created photojournal, outdoor art exhibit about your school ground greening project(s) (temporary/permanent)

Have students explore and enhance your school ground greening project(s) through:

- A student-created photojournal displayed in a common area of the school. Temporary asphalt paintings, chalk art, garden stepping stones, and/or murals that enhance your school ground greening project(s)

Remember to seek board approval before beginning any permanent outdoor art projects.

Portfolio requirement: Evidence of student-created photojournal or photo of students with their outdoor art installation/exhibit.

3

TOTAL POINTS IN THIS SECTION

3

SECTION V. CURRICULUM




Guiding Question: How do students learn IN, ABOUT, and FOR the environment as a regular part of teaching and learning?








To qualify, curriculum submissions must meet all of the following criteria:

- Environmental learning:** Demonstrate learning IN, ABOUT, and FOR the environment.
- Taught over at least two periods**
- Student work:** Include one copy of one student’s completed work per submission.
Student work is not required for off-site field trips.
- Completed during the current school year,** September to June (lessons taught after the application deadline may be submitted with evidence of planning/lesson plan as the portfolio requirement).
** Please include one submission per lesson (points are awarded per lesson, regardless of the number of times it is taught).


Off-site environmental field trips: Complete the Curriculum template online; student work is not required.

Portfolio requirement: One copy of one student’s completed work for each submission, except for field trips.

 Lesson plans/planning notes are ONLY accepted for submissions occurring after the **last Friday of April**.
Photos and screen captures of student work are accepted.

		POINTS
5.1 	Example of online Curriculum template	2
<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px; background-color: #f9f9f9;"> <p>CURRICULUM SUBMISSION #1</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Lesson was an off-site field trip</p> <p>3. Grade <input type="text" value="Gr. 10"/></p> <p>5. Number of periods for instruction? <input type="text" value="3"/></p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>2. Location of field trip <input type="text" value="Example text"/></p> <p>4. Subject <input type="text" value="Secondary – Can. & World Studies"/></p> <p>6. Completed? <input type="text" value="Yes"/></p> </div> </div> <p>7. Describe the environmental lesson and what students learned about the environment:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin: 5px 0;"> <p>Using Enviro. Canada data, students investigated the potential impacts of climate change over time for assigned regions of Canada. They created maps and wrote an MP suggesting actions.</p> <p>Students learned about the potential impacts of climate change on both human & natural systems in different regions of Canada, potential mitigating initiatives and how to advocate for change.</p> <p>Assessment: annotated maps and copies of letter that suggested actions.</p> </div> <p style="text-align: right;">SAVE</p> </div>		
5.2 		2
5.3 		2
5.4 		2
5.5 		2
5.6 		2
5.7 		2
Maximum of 7 submissions x 2 points each		
TOTAL POINTS IN THIS SECTION		14



PLATINUM QUESTIONS		POINTS
<p>Pt 5.8 Do the curriculum submissions 5.1-5.7 demonstrate that three or more grades are learning IN, ABOUT, and/or FOR the environment within three or more distinct curriculum subjects?</p>		1
<p>Pt 5.9 To what extent does your school foster and encourage enhanced environmental learning opportunities through ONE of the following:</p> <p>P</p> <p> Option 1: Two lessons taught outside on your school grounds. Submissions must be unique from those submitted for questions 5.1-5.7 and each lesson must consist of a minimum of two periods.</p> <p>Portfolio requirement: Two completed Learning on the School Grounds templates. No completed student work is required.</p> <p>Option 2: An environmental theme incorporated across divisions/departments and multiple subject areas.</p> <p>Portfolio requirement: Evidence of planning/teaching across divisions or departments (e.g., microsites, blogs, photo of a bulletin board, notes from whole-school or multi-department collaboration, environmental fair, summary diagram).</p> <p>Option 3: Demonstration of environmental learning opportunities for students in a career-oriented education program (e.g., SHSM, Co-op, Dual Credit, internship, four credit integrated program, job shadowing).</p> <p>Portfolio requirement: One-page student reflection, assignment, or journal entry that describes how the experience has influenced their future plans to pursue an environmental career or what they learned during their experience.</p> <p><i>Please note:</i> This activity cannot be claimed in any other area of the program.</p>		3
TOTAL POINTS IN THIS SECTION		4

SECTION VI. ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP



Guiding Question: How does your school foster environmental stewardship through whole-school and community engagement?

To qualify, environmental stewardship activities must meet all of the following criteria:



- ✓ **Environmental learning:** Demonstrate clear connection to learning about an environmental issue (e.g., conserving resources, mitigating the impacts of climate change).
- ✓ **Environmental action:** Engage the whole school community in active participation focused on a specific environmental issue (e.g., campaigns/presentations/assemblies with action initiatives).
- ✓ **Above and beyond:** Include school-wide initiatives that go beyond other sections of the Ontario EcoSchools program (i.e., cannot be initiatives that have already been allocated points – for example, lights-off/electronics-off, general recycling or contamination, waste-free lunches, and GOOS paper programs).



Portfolio requirement: One supporting document that verifies that a **specific environmental issue** has been the focus of student learning and action for each submission (e.g., announcement, newsletter, picture, or poster sharing information about an environmental issue).

		POINTS
6.1	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="background-color: #ccc; padding: 2px 5px; border-radius: 3px;">P</div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP SUBMISSION #1 </div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 5px;"> <p>1. Campaign Type</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px; display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> Bottled Water/Great Gulp ⌵ </div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 5px;"> <p>2. Title of campaign</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;">Ban the Bottle</div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 5px;"> <p>3. Who led this campaign?</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;">The EcoTeam took a lead in organizing the campaign.</div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 5px;"> <p>4. Was the whole school invited to participate in this campaign? Please describe.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;">Yes, all members of the school community were invited to participate. All staff and students were encouraged to bring reusable water bottles.</div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 5px;"> <p>5. How did students communicate the campaign and its impacts to the whole school community?</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;">Three-part story in newsletter, info posters, assembly launch, audit results announced, reusable water bottle sales in cafeteria, visiting sports teams encouraged not to bring DWB.</div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 5px;"> <p>6. Describe what students LEARNED about an environmental issue through this campaign:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;">Students learned facts about the environmental impacts of disposable water bottles when they end up in the landfill. They also learned about the resources it takes to produce a single water bottle and the benefits of using a reusable water bottle.</div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 5px;"> <p>7. Describe the environmental ACTION students were engaged in through this campaign:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;">The whole school participated in Bottled Water-Free Day and two audits were conducted by counting the number of disposable water bottles in the waste bins. The campaign was launched at an assembly and reusable water bottles were sold. Signage was placed above water fountains to educate about the issue.</div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 5px;"> <p>8. Were points claimed for this action in other section(s)?</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;">No points were claimed for this campaign in other sections.</div> </div> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: #666; color: white; padding: 5px 10px; border-radius: 5px; display: inline-block;">SAVE</div> </div> </div>	4
6.2	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="background-color: #ccc; padding: 2px 5px; border-radius: 3px;">P</div> </div> </div>	4
6.3	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="background-color: #ccc; padding: 2px 5px; border-radius: 3px;">P</div> </div> </div>	4
6.4	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="background-color: #ccc; padding: 2px 5px; border-radius: 3px;">P</div> </div> </div>	4
TOTAL POINTS IN THIS SECTION		16
APPLICATION TOTAL		100



PLATINUM QUESTIONS		POINTS
<p>Pt 6.5  Did your EcoTeam deepen and extend one environmental stewardship campaign claimed in questions 6.1-6.4 by engaging the broader community?</p> <p>These campaigns can involve the parent community, nearby schools, and/or local community organizations.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earth Hour is run at a school and information is also sent home to challenge families to participate. Family pledges are then brought back into the school and hung in prominent areas of the school. • Two schools hold walk-to-school campaigns and then challenge each other to see who has the higher percentage of participants in their campaign. 	<p>2</p>	
<p>Pt 6.6  To what extent do students reflect on the current year’s environmental stewardship campaigns with the goal of improving future campaigns and school practices?</p> <p>Portfolio requirement: Two <i>Environmental Stewardship Campaign Reflection</i> templates completed by students that address any of the campaigns submitted in questions 6.1-6.4.</p>	<p>2</p>	
TOTAL POINTS IN THIS SECTION		4

Helpful Resources

- Campaign kits
- Environmental Stewardship Campaign Reflection* template (6.6)

 **Find it at www.ontarioecoschools.org**

We are grateful for the support of the Ontario EcoSchools Steering Committee and the Toronto District School Board, whose expertise made this guide possible.



ECOSCHOOLS PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE



www.ontarioecoschools.org