

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Board of Education  
Upper Marlboro, Maryland

0111  
Policy No.

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

Sustainability Plan

**I. Policy Statement**

- A. The Board of Education of Prince George's County (Board) acknowledges that actionable, cost-effective solutions currently exist to reduce energy used by buildings and transportation managed by Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS). The Board is committed to generating renewable onsite energy sources at buildings, monitoring and reporting electricity used from renewable energy sources, replacing infrastructure and vehicles with zero emissions alternatives, and reducing food-related greenhouse gas emissions, among other solutions.
- B. The Board recognizes the need to reduce the school system's environmental impact by building and operating its facilities in an environmentally responsible manner to create healthy places to learn and work and to preserve the environment for future generations.

**II. Purpose**

To establish and implement a sustainability plan for PGCPS, which is in alignment with the Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP), and which addresses conserving natural resources, protecting the environment, reducing waste, fostering energy cost containment, increasing the use of renewable energy in meeting the school system's energy needs and promoting environmental literacy system-wide in accordance with applicable federal, State, and local laws and regulations.

**III. Definitions**

Within the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. Climate Action Change Plan (CACP) – A plan, created by a workgroup made of environmental experts, lawmakers, Board members, staff and students, that reviews how PGCPS can make different decisions that will lessen the school system's impact on the environment and be more resilient to the negative effects of climate change. The CACP documents progress to date in advancing climate action across three (3) important broad topic areas: advancing internal systems in PGCPS operations so that its systems and processes are as climate-friendly as possible; reducing PGCPS contributions to greenhouse gas emissions; and preparing PGCPS and the community for resiliency through impacts of a changing climate.

- B. Conservation – The careful use, management, and protection of natural resources and the environment to prevent depletion, pollution, and waste.
- C. EmPower Maryland Rebates - Rebates that Maryland residents/businesses are entitled to through the EmPower Maryland Program. PGcps utilizes these rebates for lighting retrofits and energy efficient equipment.
- D. . Energy – For the purposes of this policy and its associated administrative procedures, energy consists of electricity, fuel oil #2, natural gas, steam and renewable resources (such as solar).
- E. . Energy conservation – Initiatives to reduce energy wasted by existing assets. Results are derived from change in behaviors and habits among students, administration, and facility professionals and involves continuous effort and commitment by all stakeholders.
- F. Green – A generic term that applies to products and practices that protect both the environment and human health.
- G. Green school – A school building or facility that provides a healthy environment conducive to learning and working while saving energy, water, resources and money, and promotes environmental literacy.
- H. Maryland Environmental Literacy Standards – A state law that requires local education authorities to incorporate eight environmental education standards into their curricula, and a related law that requires students graduating from high school in 2015 or later to be environmentally literate. The standards are: Environmental Issues; Interactions of Earth’s Systems; Flow of Matter and Energy; Populations, Communities and Ecosystems; Humans and Natural Resources; Environmental Health; Environment and Society; and Sustainability.
- I. MEA grants - Maryland Energy Administration grants
- J. Net-Zero Ready (NZR) school – A school building that is extremely energy-efficient in that it produces as much energy as it uses over the course of a year.
- K. Renewable energy – Energy which is regularly replenished, such as solar, wind, waves and geothermal heat, in contrast to non-renewable energy such as fossil fuels, which draw on finite resources that will eventually dwindle and become too expensive or too environmentally damaging to retrieve.
- L. Sustainability – An approach to living whereby the needs of the current generation are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, as defined by the Brundtland Commission of the United Nations in 1987.

#### **IV. Standards**

- A. PGCPS shall develop the process for implementing operational, mitigation, and adaptation practices and programs that align with the Climate Change Action Plan and establish performance metrics and goals in the following areas:
1. Energy conservation management consisting of monitoring of district- wide energy use, comfort-based optimal set points for facilities to reach desired Energy Use Intensity (EUI), sub-meters for all utility meters, and real-time energy management system/dashboards with alerts.
  2. Perform comprehensive energy audits on all existing buildings which include: monitoring and reporting district-wide electricity use, including metrics on total electricity use, the volume and percentage of annual electricity consumption derived from renewable sources, and overall electricity use by source and square foot.
  3. Begin replacing buses with zero emission vehicles and modifying bus routes to reduce current levels of diesel consumption resulting in low carbon school transportation.
  4. Identification of metrics for measuring energy efficiency, the minimum efficiency standards currently in place, and the components to which the standards will be applied.
  5. Investigation of renewable energy sources for a net zero emissions future.
  6. Evaluate the most effective approach to compliance with Maryland Green Building Standards requirements, which allow for achievement of the goal of green building design, new construction and renovation, and operation resulting in the achievement of the goal of Net-Zero Ready schools.
  7. Healthy indoor air quality.
  8. In addition to Maryland Environmental Literacy Standards (MELS) compliance, develop a work group comprised of student leaders and PGCPs educators and administrators to develop a set of “guiding principles and values that articulate the expected behaviors and norms between teachers, staff, students, and the school environment. This will support student environmental leadership and service, including engagement with nature and the outdoors.
  9. Investigate sustainable and environmentally preferable purchasing and management practices, such as: using power purchasing agreements (PPAs) to contract for renewables to procure what cannot be produced on PGCPs properties.
  10. Require private partners to participate in all rebates and other appropriate financial programs that lead to reduced emissions and/or increased resilience, such as including language in RFPs (Request for Proposals) that requires contractors to maximize all EMPower Maryland rebates/MEA grants.
  11. Conduct baseline assessments for food waste to begin monitoring the reduction of food waste

and prioritize the use of composting and the reuse and recycling of materials.

12. Conduct a system-wide landscape inventory and develop a plan for green infrastructure and sustainable landscape management assets at every school and administrative building.

B. This policy will be reviewed every two (2) years.

## **V. Implementation and Responsibilities**

- A. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is directed to develop administrative procedures to implement this policy.
- B. The CEO is authorized to advocate for adequate resources to promote the school system's sustainability plan.
- C. The CEO will establish a Sustainability Steering Committee to assist with the implementation of the CACP goals and objectives.

## **VI. References**

A. Legal

MD Code, Education Article §5-312.1 MD Code, Education Article §7-117 COMAR 13A.04.17.01

B. Other

Climate Change Action Plan Priority Recommendations, approved 4/28/22

## **VII. History**

ADOPTED: 10/27/2022

REVIEWED:

AMENDED:

EFFECTIVE: 10/27/2022