



Oregon Green Schools Association

Coordinators' Manual

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The Oregon Green Schools Association

Introduction

Schools in Oregon are implementing tremendous changes in a time of tight budgets, reduced staff, and increased enrollment. Maximizing school resources is more important than ever. Effective waste reduction programs provide one way for schools to maximize resources.

The Oregon Green Schools Association (OGSA) provides schools with an opportunity to enhance the environment, the community, and their bottom line through effective waste reduction and resource conservation programs.

The OGSA is a non-profit organization of local Green School Coordinators, Member Schools, Friends of Oregon Green Schools, and local program sponsors supported by a Board of Directors.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Oregon Green Schools is to assist Oregon schools in setting up and maintaining effective, permanent waste reduction and resource efficiency programs that improve the school, environment, and the community.

Board of Directors

A Board of Directors oversees the operation of the OGS program. The Board consists of a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Summit Chair, Coordinators' Chair, Promotions Chair, Development Chair and up to two Members at Large.

The Coordinators' Chair is responsible for organizing the Coordinators' Trainings and serves as the main contact and resource for local OGS Coordinators.

Green School Coordinators

GS coordinators are the local contact and technical support for the schools. GS Coordinators may come from a variety of areas including local government, solid waste hauling companies, non-profit recycling companies, and school district offices.

Member Schools

Once approved by its GS Coordinator, a school that submits a Green School application becomes a member of OGSA for three years. Schools maintain membership status by submitting an updated application every three years. The application process is explained in more detail in Section 3.

Friends of Oregon Green Schools

Friends of Green Schools are individuals, businesses, and other entities wishing to contribute money to the OGSA.

Sponsors

A sponsor is a person, business, or organization that donates money to sponsor a specific school or district. Sponsorship includes, but is not limited to, Green School recognition materials such as plaques, window decals, framed certificates and flags, and the school's expenses to attend the Annual OGS Summit.

The success of OGSA is the result of a variety of organizations and businesses coming together to support local schools' efforts to create healthy, resource efficient environments where children learn and grow. Our motto: *Conserving resources... one school at a time.*

Local Green School Programs

Local Green Schools Programs are community-based programs run by a local GS Coordinator.

Local OGS Programs help schools implement and maintain effective, permanent waste reduction programs by providing:

- Technical Assistance
- Links to Informational Resources
- Opportunities to Share and Exchange Information
- Community Recognition
- Links to grant opportunities

Local GS Coordinators provide these services to schools in a variety of ways.

Responsibilities of Green Schools Coordinators:

To provide a program that is consistent statewide, please follow the guidelines outlined in this packet. However, these are general guidelines, presented in broad terms, to allow you to tailor your program to meet your needs.

While OGS Coordinators manage local Green School Programs, the OGSA provides OGS Coordinators with recognition materials, networking opportunities, and technical assistance.

The following is a list of activities necessary to run a Green Schools Program in your community:

1. Publicize OGS Program in Your Area

You will need to contact the schools in your area at least once annually to let them know about the program and the opportunities and services you have available. This can be done by promoting OGS in a letter or

post-card that you send to your schools (see samples). Include a copy of the OGS brochure in letters. Another promotional tool is publicizing the OGS program in a local government newsletter or local paper (see sample article).

2. Provide Technical Assistance

OGS coordinators help connect schools and their waste haulers, help develop a school green team, tailor a program to their needs, obtain recycling containers, and provide grant assistance.

3. Link to Informational Resources

Schools often request resources from the OGS Coordinator, including:

- Help evaluating their waste stream
- Help getting information on waste reduction strategies, such as vermi-composting, etc.
- Links to curriculum materials
- Fact sheets
- Local resources

4. Award Green School Status

The OGS Coordinator is responsible for certifying schools according to the OGSA guidelines outlined in the Scoring Criteria included in the Green Schools Application.

This process may include visiting applicants' sites, working with applicants to meet OGS criteria, presenting Oregon Green School Awards, and promoting OGS in local media.

5. Participate & Network

OGS Coordinators are responsible for submitting the names and contact information for their local OGS schools. This task is easily completed by submitting the awards form to the administrative assistant.

An important part of improving local OGS Programs is learning what other OGS Coordinators are doing to overcome common problems. The OGS Coordinator is requested to attend and help with the annual OGS Summit, attend OGSA Coordinators' Trainings as scheduled and has an open invitation to the monthly OGS Board meetings.

How OGSA Supports the Green School Coordinator:

Training, Support, and Technical Assistance

OGSA provides Local Coordinators with training workshops (at least annually) and a contact person, the Coordinators' Chair, for help answering schools' questions, concerns, and in finding support materials. Coordinators are encouraged to network with other coordinators, share materials and ideas and build upon each other's successes. The Coordinator's Chair is Eileen Stapp, Clackamas Co. Recycling Partnership, 503-353-4454, eileens@co.clackamas.or.us.

Green Schools Materials

The Green Schools application materials are available online at

www.oregongreenschools.org.

Recognition materials such as certificates, plaques, window stickers, and flags are provided to the OGS Coordinator through the OGSA Administrative Assistant ; Cathy McGuire, 541-367-0711, greenschoolin@yahoo.com.

The order form is available on the website. Please allow at least 5 working days for Cathy to process your request and send your decal and certificate, plaque or flag by mail. Plaques require at least two weeks lead time for engraving.

OGSA also provides tools to help the local Coordinators maintain OGS programs, such as, templates for tracking Green Schools, OGS postcards and bookmarks, and samples of a waste assessment form, award presentations, letters, and certificates at the OGS Coordinators' Trainings. Updated materials will be provided as developed.

Premier Green School Review

Recognition at the Premier level requires OGSA Board approval. The OGS Coordinator receives support from the Coordinators' Committee on final review and recognition of Premier level Green School applications. It is required that the local coordinator submit bullet points re: the key reasons a school deserves Premier certification.

The Coordinators' Chair helps to prepare and then presents the Premier applications to the Board for approval.

Oregon Green Schools Summit

Each year OGSA hosts the Green Schools Summit. Member schools are invited to bring a delegation of students and school representatives to share and learn about successful waste reduction strategies from their peers.

Local OGS Sponsors and Coordinators are also invited to the summit. The OGS Coordinator may use the Green Schools Summit as a tool to both motivate and showcase local schools involved in the OGS program.

Promotion

OGSA is responsible for promoting the Oregon Green Schools Program and your efforts statewide. OGSA maintains the OGS website, provides updated OGS applications, and develops promotional brochures and bookmarks.

Setting up Your Green Schools Program

Contacting Your Schools

Know what schools are in your area. If you need assistance, refer to the Oregon Dept. of Education School Directory: (www.ode.state.or.us/pubs/directory/index.htm)

Keep a database or some other record of the schools in your area (refer to the OGS Coordinators' Schools Database for ideas). This database can be used as a mailing list for your schools and as an organized list of all of the school contact information.

Sending letters, referring people to the OGS website, or offering to do presentations can help to develop a contact person at each school in your area.

You may also want to identify a contact person at the school district office. This can help to set up district-wide meeting with all of the schools, similar to that of the Gresham-Barlow school district (GS Coordinator, Jan Rankin).

Receiving and Reviewing OGS Applications:

1. Review completed applications and score them using the GS Checklist on the back of the application. (Contact Coordinators' Chair with any questions.)
2. Determine the applicable GS recognition level. Work with the school in the areas they need to improve to meet GS Criteria. Schools should achieve each GS level progressively, rather than trying for the Premier level right at the start.
3. If possible, visit the school to review the applicant's program.

Recognizing Green Schools

Once you have determined the school meets OGS standards, you will need to recognize them for their achievement. Notify the school of the award (refer to sample letter) with letters to:

- The school principal
- The school district and school board
- School parent/teacher organization

Order the awards and recognition materials from OGSA and present them to the school. For Green School recognition the school receives:

- Window decal
- Framed certificate

Recognizing Merit Level Schools:

Notify the school and local community by sending letters to:

- The school principal
- The school district and school board
- School parent/teacher organization
- Local government office

Order from OGSA and present to the school:

- Window decal
- Plaque

Recognizing Premier Green Schools

Send a copy of the application to the Coordinator Chair, along with bulleted short paragraphs summarizing how the school meets each area of criteria (see sample letter). The Coordinators' Chair then brings the application to the OGSA Board. Upon Board approval, recognize the school's achievement statewide by sending letters to:

- The school principal
- The school district and school board
- School parent/teacher organization
- Local government office
- DEQ
- Oregon Dept. of Education
- Local newspaper

Order from OGSA and present to school:

- Window decal
- Certificate
- Flag

Promoting Premier Schools is the best way to promote your program and encourage other schools to achieve the same!