A Guide for Our Readers

This *2011 Annual Sustainability Report* shares the district’s accomplishments in sustainability management practices since implementing the Sustainability Management System (SMS) in 2006. Information for this report was collected through a review of the SMS and through a series of interviews with district staff to identify both accomplishments in 2011 and goals for 2012. This report also reaffirms the district’s commitment to sustainability in five topic areas: resource conservation, greenhouse gas emissions, sustainable education, transportation, and health and wellness.

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The District and Its Commitment to Sustainability

Poudre School District (PSD) is recognized as an organization committed to continual environmental stewardship. As one of over 50 gold partners in the Environmental Leadership Program through the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and the only school district in Colorado with this distinction, the district will utilize sustainable operations and facility practices to manage resources to support children’s education.

“In the fall of 2011, PSD was invited as one of 80 participants to the Better Building Challenge, a public/private leadership initiative designed to reduce energy consumption by 20%. The invitation for the event, which included a roundtable discussion at the White House, came to PSD due to the 11-year commitment the district has made to planning, designing, building, educating, and utilizing sustainable principles. The results have been extraordinary: PSD has more buildings with energy awards than all other Colorado school districts combined, had the first Gold LEED certified school in the nation, and has realized over $2 million in energy savings in 17 years.”

Dr. Jerry Wilson, superintendent of schools

During 2011, the first year of the 2010 Bond program, more than 60 projects totaling $14 million were completed at 30 district sites and design development began for over 50 projects scheduled to be underway during the summer of 2012. Through an integrated design process, project managers collaborated with district departments, design partners, and governmental agencies to design energy efficient systems that enhance the learning environment and occupant comfort, ensuring all buildings operate at an optimal level of efficiency and effectiveness.

The following tenets embody the foundation for the district’s SMS:

- Support the district’s educational mission by providing spaces promoting health, productivity, and safety of students and staff.
- Reduce life-cycle costs by conserving energy and natural resources, further supporting the district’s educational mission through fiscal responsibility.
- Balance educational, financial and environmental issues in its daily decision making.
- Consider and incorporate relevant aspects of sustainability into all future procedures.
- Inspire commitment to sustainability among district employees.
- Serve as a community leader in sustainability and partner with other organizations to further common goals.

About the District

Poudre School District is the ninth largest school district in the state of Colorado, serving approximately 26,900 pre-k-12th grade students. Encompassing 1,856 square miles in northern Colorado, the district serves Fort Collins, LaPorte, Timnath, Wellington, Red Feather Lakes, Livermore, Stove Prairie and parts of Windsor. The district owns 950 gross site acres and contains over 4 million square feet of building space. Its facilities include:

- 1 early childhood school
- 31 elementary schools
- 10 middle schools
- 7 high schools
- 2 charter schools
- 1 online school
- 23 other structures housing administrative, maintenance, information technology, warehouse, transportation, and other service departments

Other district facts:

- 2.2 million healthy meals are served annually by Child Nutrition staff.
- PSD schools have an 82.4% graduation rate compared to the state average of 73.9%.
- Information Technology supports more than 19,000 computers across the district.
- PSD employs over 3,200 employees, including nearly 1,800 licensed teachers.
- More than 18,000 volunteers work in PSD schools every year.
Resource Conservation

The district will work to reduce its use of natural resources by collaborating with the community, governmental agencies, design partners, and businesses to employ common sense reuse, to engage in single stream recycling, to participate in energy conservation, and to implement current trends in green building and operational efficiencies.

What’s Been Accomplished

- Benefits Services transitioned to an online enrollment system for the open enrollment benefits elections period, resulting in approximately 350 benefit plan changes sent electronically to OTG, the district’s electronic records system, instead of printed out and stored, saving over 2 reams of paper.
- Containers from local farmers, including cardboard, waxed, and plastic boxes, were returned by Child Nutrition to farmers for reuse instead of recycled; the containers cost $2.50 each.
- Security installed exterior 180-degree view night/day cameras at various district schools, including at the Fort Collins High School parking lot. With a wider field of view than the current cameras, 30% fewer cameras are needed, saving licensing costs and reducing the electricity needed to power the cameras. In addition, the cameras can capture anything within the field of view and zoom into any spot, allowing for an increase in the recovery of vandalism.

District Beverage Provider Services

Starting in 2012, the district will sign a five-year contract for beverage provider services for all district facilities. Through the new provider, vending machines will be upgraded to include an energy management system where standby times can be programmed directly into the machine, reducing energy use by 35%. The bottles sold in the new machines will be 100% recyclable polyethylene terephthalate (PET) made with 30% plant-based materials. In addition, concession stands at French Field district stadium will convert from fountain drinks to PET bottled beverages, reducing waste by eliminating cups, straws, lids, and straw papers.
Resource Conservation continued

What’s Been Accomplished

- 6,649 tons of aggregate, asphalt, concrete, metal, and cardboard generated by 2010 Bond construction projects were recycled as well as all cardboard, Styrofoam, and electronic equipment generated by Information Technology during the 2011 technology refresh. In addition, 688 tons of single stream recycling, hot compost, scrap metal, shredded paper, and organic material were recycled by district schools and administrative buildings.

- Communications Services began sending an electronic media packet to the Coloradoan, the local Fort Collins newspaper, instead of a paper packet, saving 60 pages per week and over 6 reams of paper per year.

- Instead of recycling discarded textbooks, Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment found opportunities for reuse, including redistributing the books within the district, selling the books back to the publishing company, or donating the books to an organization in Africa.

- The Customer Support Center’s facility use scheduling process for Professional Development classes is entirely paperless: requests are submitted through email and facility use permits are sent as PDFs, signed, returned, and stored electronically.

- Poudre High School distributed newsletters electronically to students and parents, saving 22,000 sheets of paper, as well as ink, postage, and staff time. Within the newsletters, advertisement space was sold and over $400 generated from the advertisements was returned to the school.

- The Lopez Elementary playground was replaced by Utilities & Resource Management and was repurposed at a church in North Dakota instead of being scrapped and recycled. The sand replaced during the project was diverted from the landfill by giving it to dairies and farms for reuse.
Resource Conservation continued

What’s on the Horizon

- Custodial Services will install over 3,000 foaming hand soap dispensers at all district sites. Soap for the dispensers will be soy-based and can be purchased in bulk instead of in bags or cartridges. All removed dispensers will be recycled instead of sent to the landfill.

- The French Field district stadium and Harris Bilingual Elementary School synthetic turf fields will be replaced with new turf during the summer by Utilities & Resource Management. The existing turf at French Field will be repurposed at a high school in Colorado Springs and existing rubber in the field will be used in the new field. Sections of the current turf at Harris Bilingual Elementary School will be reused by Athletic Services around the district, including in batting cages, and sections not saved will be recycled.

- To reduce the amount of Code of Conduct books printed, Communications Services will investigate how many books were printed but not distributed during the 2011-2012 school year. With the 72-page book being available online, only 5,000 copies were printed in 2011 instead of one book for each of the district’s approximately 26,900 students. In addition, the books for the 2012-2013 school year will be printed with a soy-based ink on high recycled content paper.

- Plastic composite restroom partitions will be installed by the Carpentry Department instead of metal partitions and will be the sole-specified product used for all future installations. The plastic partitions, which are made from 100% recycled components, require less service, do not rust, and are easier to maintain than the metal partitions.

- The Mentoring Department will work with Information Technology to find ways to have the Mentoring program significantly paperless, including having the induction notebook available online, which will save paper, printing costs, and time to prepare program materials. Through the program, new teachers coming into the district will be encouraged to use less paper in their classrooms.

- Through Purchasing & Materials Management, less packaging for materials for 2010 Bond construction projects will be requested by Planning, Design & Construction and waste stream management requirements will be specified in all project contracts.

- “Hydration stations” will be investigated by School Wellness for use at Wellington Middle School. These mobile units are wall mounted and supply water for containers, eliminating the need for single-use plastic bottles.

Online Human Resources Application System

In the fall of 2011, Human Resources implemented AppliTrack, an online employment application submission management system. With this system, the department will save over 80 reams of paper annually – during 2011, approximately 6,830 applications totaling 40,370 pieces of paper were submitted. In addition, the system will also help to reduce the amount of staff time needed to process and prepare hiring packets by an estimated one to two hours per day, as well as eliminate the need for applications to be turned in to the department by applicants, saving VMTs.
Greenhouse Gas Emissions

As a member of the City of Fort Collins Climate Wise program, the district is committed to minimizing greenhouse gas emissions. The district will continue to embrace existing energy conservation procedures, recognizing that reduction in energy consumption has the largest impact on the district’s greenhouse gas emission sources.

What’s Been Accomplished

- Athletics Services educated coaches on proper use of buildings during the summer and worked with Utilities & Resource Management to reduce electrical usage and air conditioning needs.
- High efficiency Bradford White water heaters were installed by the Plumbing Department at Eyestone Elementary, Irish Elementary, Putnam Elementary, and Poudre High School. High efficiency water heaters use up to 50% less energy than standard models.

Lighting Retrofits

During 2011, the Electrical Department upgraded interior and exterior lighting fixtures at 13 district buildings. Over 270 high intensity discharge (HID) fixtures ranging from 70-watt to 1,000-watt were replaced with energy efficient T-8 fluorescent and light-emitting diode (LED) fixtures. In total, the fixture upgrades resulted in a savings of over 47,800 watts of electricity, which will have a continual reduction in energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, saving the district nearly $3,000 annually.
Climate Wise and Energy Star Recognition

PSD continues to be recognized as a platinum partner by Climate Wise, a voluntary group of businesses and organizations committed to climate protection, environmental stewardship, and economic vitality. Since 2000, program partners have saved over 480 million kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity, which is equivalent to the annual energy use of 43,000 homes.

In 2011, 30 schools and 2 office buildings earned an Energy Star Award, with 16 schools earning a score of 90 or above. In total, PSD has received 152 Energy Star Awards since 2000.

Each year the district publishes the Energy Conservation Update, which details the district’s continuing dedication and commitment to energy conservation. Since 1994, the district has completed 210 energy efficiency projects with a cumulative savings of over $2,000,000.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions continued

What’s Been Accomplished

• Heating, Ventilation, & Air Conditioning (HVAC) worked in conjunction with Utilities & Resource Management on the Hot Shot program. The program ensures HVAC equipment turns off and on as scheduled through a signal sent remotely to the equipment.

• Bacon Elementary School conducted an energy audit of their building. As a result, small appliances and refrigerators in classrooms were eliminated, reducing electrical usage. In addition, a water cooler was removed from the site for a $1,200 savings in maintenance and operating costs.

• To reduce the need for space heaters by 50%, the Customer Support Center worked with the HVAC Department to adjust airflow within the department.

• Custodial staff at Poudre High School worked with the Electrical Department to isolate light switches and zones. In doing so, lights in specific areas can now be turned on instead of having to turn on large areas, saving electricity.

What's Been Accomplished
Green Team

The district demonstrated its commitment to sustainable design by establishing the original Green Team in 1999. Comprised of representatives from Facility Services departments, Planning, Design & Construction, and various external organizations, the team’s charge was to research sustainable products, sustainable design practices, and energy efficient commissioning and building performance to be applied to the 2000 Bond Program projects.

With the approval of the 2010 Bond, the 2011 Green team is currently meeting to research innovative solutions and to provide an integrated/collaborative approach to Bond projects. This will allow for opportunities to work towards district greenhouse gas and solid waste reduction goals, to maximize utility cost management, and allows the team to build on the successes of the original Green Team while supporting the district’s educational mission through fiscal responsibility.

What’s on the Horizon

- Information Technology will work with Facility Services departments to identify areas in which technology can improve utility efficiency, such as building automation systems and computer hibernation.

- The Paint Department will work with Utilities & Resource Management and HVAC to only run ventilation in specific areas while painting instead of running ventilation throughout the entire building.

- Insulation on the roofs at Dunn Elementary, Irish Elementary, Preston Middle School, and Fort Collins High School will be increased to R-27, a measure of thermal resistance, by the Carpentry Department during summer reroofing projects. The added insulation will have a reduction in utility costs.

- The Records Center and the Partnerships & Volunteers Center will have the heat set to the unoccupied mode of 60 degrees and turn off lights in the warehouse sections of their buildings when not in use. Heat will be set to the occupied mode of 70 degrees when volunteers are working in the Partnerships & Volunteers Center.

- In conjunction with Outdoor Services, Utilities & Resource Management will install six weather stations at geographic locations across the district and integrate the stations into the building automation and irrigation control systems. Real-time weather data will be provided and systems can be set based on current weather conditions.

Find out more about the district’s greenhouse gas inventory methodology
With student achievement as its first priority, district departments will continue to: recognize the intergenerational nature of sustainability; work collaboratively and establish learning opportunities that are brought to life by its teachers and students; and be supported by physical spaces and operations throughout the district.

What's Been Accomplished

- Students at Polaris Expeditionary Learning School hosted a booth on green fashion at the Sustainable Living Fair in September. Clothing was purchased at thrift stores, alterations were made by students, and the clothing was sold.

- Channel 10, the district’s educational cable access television station, teamed up with Planning, Design & Construction to produce serial video communication for the 2010 Bond. Hosted by a district project manager, the Summer 2011 Bond Fund Update highlighted new playground equipment, roof replacements, and new locker installation.

- Rocky Mountain High School maintained a recycling display in order to promote a culture of sustainability among students and staff and highlight current school efforts.

- The Customer Support Center maintained the district’s Sustainability website in order to provide outreach and an interactive tool for students, staff, and community members to learn about the district’s sustainable efforts.

- Student council and environmental club members at Poudre High School put tape over one light switch in each room to encourage students and staff to only turn on lights as needed. In addition, students make sure computers and lights are turned off at night; if a computer or light is left on, the students leave a reminder note to turn off lights and monitors when the room is not in use.

- At a statewide recycling conference in Steamboat Springs, student representatives from Kinard CARES presented on use of social media and its effects on sustainability and recycling.
Sustainable Education continued

What’s on the Horizon

- Bacon Elementary School will present at the Green Schools National Conference and put together presentations, including a podcast, video segment, and book, on green aspects of the building. The presentations will also be on display in the main office for use by students, staff, and visitors.

- In partnership with the Little Shop of Physics, Channel 10 will produce “School Works”; these segments will highlight sustainable systems within district buildings. Each segment will include a tour of the system and a tabletop demonstration of how the system works.

- Rocky Mountain High School will add sustainability to the school culture by having homeroom classes include sustainable education on recycling, current sustainable school efforts, and school wide conservation goals. By having all homerooms participate, and through support by administration staff, all students and staff will be involved in and educated on sustainability.

- The Mentoring Department will highlight sustainable features of the building during New Teacher Orientation at Fossil Ridge High School in August. During orientation, the district’s sustainable values will be reinforced and encouraged with all new staff members.

- An interactive ocean mural will be painted at Kinard Middle School in their recycling area to spread awareness about single-use plastics and their effect on the environment.

- Rice Elementary will use their vegetable garden as a pilot program for use of harvested vegetables in the school cafeteria. Students and staff will be able to harvest lettuce and spinach weekly and the growing process will be used as a teaching tool.

- Waste bins at Poudre High School will be restructured so the bins are clearly labeled for trash and recycling. In addition, a recycling bin will be placed next to every trash can in order to increase recycling awareness and internal education on solid waste management will be encouraged.

- Professional Development will make classified training days zero waste events and advocate recycling during classes and training days.

- Students from Kinard CARES will create and post “Did you know?” plaques in various locations around the building to share facts about energy efficient building features.

Rice WASABI Environmental Club

Rice Elementary School’s WASABI (We Are Serious about Being Informed) environmental club continued to share their knowledge of building features and message of environmental responsibility with students, staff, parents, and community members. Throughout the course of the school year, WASABI club members trained their fellow students about the school’s composting program, put together a presentation on sustainable building features for new teachers, provided tours of the building for parents during orientation and back-to-school night, and taught students about sustainability and conservation efforts.

Polaris 8th Grade River Walk

To demonstrate how far children in Africa walk to get clean drinking water, 8th grade students at Polaris Expeditionary Learning School participate in an annual river walk. Each student walks from the school to the Poudre River and carries water back to the building; the nearly 7 miles walked is equivalent to the average distance a child in Africa walks to get clean water. Pledges are received for the walk and the money raised is donated to an organization in Uganda that works to provide clean drinking water to villages.
Transportation

The district will continue to implement strategies designed to increase busing efficiency; encourage alternative transportation, including walking and bike riding; and reduce transportation demands, including vehicle miles traveled (VMTs).

**What’s Been Accomplished**

- Athletics Services combined teams on buses for out-of-town track meets to reduce the number of buses needed for the trip, saving VMTs and the cost of the buses.

- Purchasing & Materials Management combined orders to reduce the amount of vendor deliveries, including changing the Northern Colorado Paper delivery schedule from daily to Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

- Virtual conferencing systems were used by Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment to reduce travel costs and VMTs by having staff members attend webinars and by conducting interviews online.

- Transportation Services collaborated with Transfort, the City of Fort Collins bus service, to explore the feasibility, cost, and benefits of a partnership designed to provide transportation options for students within the established walk areas of their middle or high school.

- School Wellness worked with an elementary school to put together a field trip to the Gardens at Spring Creek where instead of using buses, students biked to the gardens.

- Utility locate practices were refined by Utilities & Resource Management by working with the City of Fort Collins to determine which entity locates a certain utility service. Doing so, VMTs and the time needed to perform the utility locate were reduced for Building Maintenance, Outdoor Services, and Information Technology departments.
Transportation continued

What’s on the Horizon

- To encourage alternative transportation, Poudre High School will create a bike shop for students and staff who bike to school and build a skateboard rack to store the skateboards of students who skate to school.

- Podcast or video orientations will be developed by Benefits Services and posted online for reference for new employees, saving VMTs, paper for handouts, and the staff time to put together quarterly orientations.

- Information Technology will move to a geographically aligned support model for school technicians. The average distance between the two furthest schools assigned to one technician will be reduced from 17.5 to 9.8 miles, reducing VMTs by 43.7%.

- As a pilot program, Transportation Services will purchase two alternative fuel buses and develop plans to expand the program in coming years. Use of alternative fuel buses will reduce fuel consumption.

- Communications Services will continue to send design proofs electronically to clients to reduce the VMTs required to travel to project meetings.

- Professional Development will investigate creating an online diversity training module to reduce VMTs required for all staff members to travel to attend the required training.

CSO Bike Patrol

High school Campus Security Officers (CSOs) have begun to use bicycles instead of vehicles to patrol school campuses and attended bicycle training through the Fort Collins Police Department. The use of bicycles has allowed for better monitoring of large events, such as cross country meets or football games, and reduced VMTs. While on bicycles, CSOs are more approachable; have increased interaction with students, staff, and community members; and have access to areas of the school campus where a vehicle could not normally go.
The district will work to make health and wellness an accepted and celebrated part of its culture by integrating student and staff wellness, supporting mental health, and recognizing how district facilities influence staff and student wellness.

What’s Been Accomplished

- Through School Wellness and site-level wellness teams, 40 district schools began participation in the Healthy Schools Colorado grant, which provides funding to pursue health and wellness goals. Goals set by the schools include having healthy snacks for celebrations and “brain breaks” during which students and staff are encouraged to get up and move.
- Through a client satisfaction survey, Employee Assistance Services (EAS) found that a higher utilization of the program by district employees has led to improvement of mental and physical well-being, reduction in work related stress, increase in job satisfaction, higher attendance rates, and increased safety on the job.
- The Paint Department used Health Kote paint, a nonvolatile organic compound (VOC) product, on the interior repaint of Tavelli Elementary.
- Teachers at Rice Elementary were encouraged to eat lunch in the staff lounge instead of eating in their classrooms. Leaving the classroom allows teachers to get a break, develop relationships among co-workers, and team build.
- Athletic fields were fenced by Utilities & Resource Management in order to protect district resources and to have an increased level of field management and repair, which provided a stable and safe infrastructure for students.

Child Nutrition

With a focus on scratch cooking, taste and appeal, and serving local and organic products, the district has become an industry leader in Child Nutrition. In partnership with the Colorado Farm to School program, Child Nutrition serves over 179,000 pounds of produce from Colorado farms annually, including a minimum of seven fresh fruits and vegetables provided each day at district schools. Most items are grown and shipped less than 10 miles to the district. Currently, over 40% of menu offerings are made-from-scratch items and 21 local and organic items are served in district schools.
Health and Wellness continued

What’s on the Horizon

- Custodial Services will continue to purchase microfiber mops and rags, which reduce cross-contamination while cleaning, as funding allows.

- The Lock Shop will install doors with aluminum frames, which are 30% lighter than other doors, making them easier to handle and reducing the potential for injury.

- Varnishes will be converted to latex by the Paint Department and use of oil paints will be eliminated.

- School Wellness will continue to encourage wellness programs for staff members, which will include providing healthy snacks, coordinating and scheduling aerobics and exercise classes, and assisting with site-level wellness initiatives.

- EAS will continue to integrate their message into schools and departments through scheduling in-service presentations for staff on wellness and personal mental health topics.

- Students and staff members at Bacon Elementary School will be encouraged to participate in daily exercise or movement.

Employee Health Clinic Pilot Program

EAS will collaborate with Benefits Services to implement an employee health clinic program that will provide integrated health services, including disease and health management, for all district employees at low-cost or no-cost. The program is aimed at improving employee health and wellness, which, in turn, may decrease rates of absenteeism. EAS will team up with Communications Services to develop graphics and online communication to advertise the program.
Looking to the Future

The staff, students, and community of Bacon Elementary School are very proud to be a part of PSD’s vision and strategic goal of creating, maintaining, and supporting sustainability efforts in all branches of the district. With PSD’s innovative efforts leading the nation, we are continually moving forward and striving to achieve more. At Bacon Elementary we believe in a team approach and are proud to support the district with these practices. Our teachers work very hard at educating students about sustainability and green efforts through lessons, awareness, and daily practice. Our student led Bacon Energy Savings Team continues to teach students and staff about how we can impact our Earth through energy conservation, recycling, wellness, and simply living green. This learning and education also spreads outside of the walls of Bacon Elementary by sharing with and teaching parents, family, friends, and organizations in the Fort Collins community. We are honored and excited to help PSD continue to move forward with sustainability education and practice.

Alissa Poduska, assistant principal
Bacon Elementary School