

Date: April 29, 2008  
To: Planning and Priorities  
From: Sustainable Development Committee  
Subject: **Sustainable Development Scan & Recommended Actions**

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Type of Report:  Internal Monitoring  
 External  
 Direct Inspection

Type of Information:  Information for Decision Making  
 Information Only  
 Monitoring Information

Origin:

**2007 Director of Education Annual Report:** "...a Sustainable Development Committee has been struck under the leadership of the Senior Manager of Public Affairs/Executive Officer, John Shewchuk. His mandate will be to work with all departments of the organization and to prepare an environmental scan for Planning and Priorities so next steps in the process can be determined".

References:

**WCDSB Professional Standard of Ethics – Stewardship:** "We need to use all our resources wisely to ensure that they are available to the poor, to the powerless and to succeeding generations. We will seek creative, meaningful ways to meet this social responsibility and extend hope to all in the organization". **Reflection Question (pg. 11):** What plans do we have to protect the non-renewable resources that have been identified at our site"?

**Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations:**

- √ **A Reflective, creative & holistic thinker** -- who solves problems and makes responsible decisions with an informed moral conscience for the common good.
- √ **A collaborative contributor** -- who finds meaning, dignity and vocation in work which respects the rights of all and contributes to the common good.

Background:

Recognizing the need to show leadership in the area of sustainable development, the Director of Education has appointed the following individuals to the WCDSB Sustainable Development Committee: **Jeff Admans** (Purchasing); **Dave Bennett** (Planning); **Joe Gowing** (Trustee); **Rob Holowack** (Technology); **Sandra Quehl** (IT); **Sandra Vieira** (Wellness); **John Shewchuk** (Chair); **Arnie Wohlgemut** (Plant).

The committee has developed an organizational scan and action list based on the following action areas: **Food & Drink**; **Energy & Water**; **Purchasing & Waste**; **Buildings & Grounds**; **Inclusion & Participation**; and **Local Well-being**. These areas are based on York University's Sustainability & Education Academy (SEdA) organizational sustainability

model. The *SEdA* academy is a collaboration of the Schulich School of Business, the York Faculty of Education and UNESCO.

To assist in launching WCDSB's sustainable development strategy, the Board in February, 2008 applied for and has been granted \$23,500 from the Council of Directors of Education (CODE). The funding breaks down as follows:

**PROJECT:** Environmentally Sound Cleaning Procedures - Technology Areas  
*Environmentally friendly equipment and cleaning materials: (\$1,000.00)*  
*Release Time - curriculum development to support equipment use: (\$400.00)*

**PROJECT:** Bicycle Refurbishing – Blended Bicycle Project  
*Three industrial grade steel shipping containers: (\$6000.00)*  
*Transport of shipping containers to school locations: (\$600.00)*

**PROJECT:** Outdoor Education – Program Enhancement of Services  
*Environment Experimentation Equipment: (\$8000.00)*  
*Equipment for activities: (\$2000.00)*

**PROJECT:** Social Marketing Support For School-based Environment/green Clubs  
*Funding for various projects - 11 schools @ \$500 per school: (\$5500.00)*

Comment:

The following projects are proposed for immediate action as outlined in the sustainable development organizational scan:

- √ **Elimination of bottled water at the CEC as Step #1 leading to eliminating bottled water across the school system;**
- √ **Implementation of an automatic night-time, weekend and holiday shut-down of board computer equipment.**

## **BOTTLED WATER PROJECT**

Given the ready availability of high quality tap water in WCDSB facilities, the sustainable development committee has determined the indiscriminate use of bottled water is an unsustainable practice that runs counter to our Professional Standard of Ethics as well as the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations.

Other local organizations (including the Regional Municipality of Waterloo and the Waterloo Region District School Board) have recently made similar determinations regarding bottled water and are in the process of eliminating its use.

The arguments against the indiscriminate use of bottled water in lieu of tap water are persuasive and strong.

- √ The production of one kilogram of *polyethylene terephthalate* (PET) – the substance used to manufacture water bottles -- requires 17.5 kilograms of water to produce;
- √ PET production results in release of at least half a dozen significant pollutants into the air;
- √ Estimates vary, but it is generally agreed the pollution caused during truck transportation of bottled water to Canadian consumers is significant;
- √ An estimated 88 per cent of water bottles are not recycled. According to the Environment and Plastics Industry Council, Canadians sent 65,000 tonnes of PET beverage containers to landfill or incineration in 2002;
- √ A Canadian scientist working at the University of Heidelberg, released a study of 132 brands of bottled water in PET bottles stored for six months, and found that significant levels of antimony, a toxic chemical used in the bottle's production, had leached into the water;
- √ The Canadian Bottled Water Association agrees that algae will build up in bottled water exposed to sunlight or high heat;
- √ All water distributed in Waterloo Region's municipal water system must meet high levels of quality legislated by the Ontario Ministry of Environment. Most (80 per cent) of the water comes from aquifers deep below the ground surface

(126 different well sites). The remaining 20 per cent comes from the Grand River and is treated at the Mannheim Water Treatment Plant. Water from both sources is required to pass more than 120 different water quality tests based on more than 150 bacteriological, chemical and physical parameters before delivery to homes. Although only a portion of these tests are required by regulation, the Region proactively tests many additional parameters. Bottled water undergoes only a small fraction of the tests to which Regional water is subjected;

- √ More than 70,000 tests are run on Regional water every year, with the results reported to and monitored by the Medical Officer of Health;
- √ Between September, 2007 and March 2008 the CEC has purchased 400 cases (24 x 500ml) of bottled water at a cost of \$4.43 per case (\$1,772). In addition, Culligan has delivered 137 18.9 litre jugs at a cost of \$1,170.77 (which includes one year rental of the dispensers @ \$145.77). Total cost for September to March: \$2,942.77.

**Recommendation:**

That the use of bottled water at the CEC be discontinued upon the installation of filtered water stations at the following locations:

- √ 1<sup>st</sup> Floor -- Kitchenette; Parish Hall Kitchenette;
- √ 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor -- St. Aloysius Room; HR Oasis; Balcony Lounge;
- √ 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor – Exit #4 Hallway Oasis; IT Oasis

**Rental cost per unit:** \$30.00 per month (maintenance & filter changes provided by supplier)

**Estimated one-time cost to install water lines:** \$1,000

**Total cost for 2008/09:** 7 stations @ \$30 per month x 12 months = \$2,520 (plus \$1,000 installation) = \$3,520.00

Note that the monthly rental charge for seven stations for one year is \$422.77 LESS than the amount spent on bottled water at the CEC between September and March of the current school year. The money will be budgeted in the 2008/09 food services budget.

**COMPUTER SHUT-DOWN PROJECT**

Every evening at 6:00 p.m. a power management software application searches the school networks for classroom computers that have not been shutdown at the end of the school day. The application transmits a “power off” signal to any operating computer and the computer automatically powers off upon receiving the signal.

**This process will be immediately expanded to include all CEC and school administrative computers along with a second process to be implemented at 11:00 p.m. for classroom computers – primarily to address issues at the St. Louis Adult Learning & Continuing Education Centres.**

There is no cost associated with this project except for an hour for ITS staff to modify the parameters of the software application that is already in use.

Conclusions:

The Sustainable Development Committee requests approval of P&P to proceed with the two projects outlined above with funds to be budgeted in the 2008-09 fiscal year – and further requests that the committee’s organizational scan and associated actions be approved in principle subject to approval of individual projects are they are brought forward from the plan.

Prepared/Reviewed By: **John P. Shewchuk** -- Senior Manager: Public Affairs / Executive Officer

**Jeff Admans** -- Purchasing Manager

**Dave Bennett** -- Sr. Manager: Capital Planning

**Rob Holowack** – Technology Consultant

**Sandra Quehl** – Chief Information Officer

**Sandra Vieira** – Records Management Officer

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