



REGIONAL
DISTRICT
OF NANAIMO

SCHOOL EDUCATION SUMMARY REPORT 2022/2023

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board receive this School Education Summary Report 2022/2023 for information.

BACKGROUND

In January 2020, the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Board authorized entering into an agreement with the Nanaimo-Ladysmith Public School District (NLPS), in partnership with Qualicum School District (SD 69), in the amount of \$70,000, to carry out an education pilot project starting January 2020 and ending June 2020. The pilot project was interrupted due to the closure of NLPS and SD 69 school buildings as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the early interest and success of the pilot project, the project was extended for the 2020/2021 and the 2021/2022 school years, and in 2022 the contract was extended to June 2025.

For the 2022-2023 school year, the project included 10 schools in NLPS and 5 schools in SD 69 participating in zero waste education, several of which have been a part of the project since 2020. Each participating school used the funds allocated to them to support various teaching and learning opportunities throughout the school year. The funding was split so schools in their first year received \$6,000; schools in their second year received \$3,000; and schools in their third year received \$1,000. Once a school completes their 3-year term, they will receive an additional \$10,000 to support their ongoing zero waste initiatives.

School year highlights:

School Gardening and Food Programs

In response to the school audits, there was a focus on gardening and food programs. These schools shifted to sorting stations in hallways and focused lessons on waste reduction within the school community, with a specific focus on healthy eating, which includes fresh homemade foods with less packaging. This included a challenge called “Naked Lunches” where students focused on bringing lunches without any disposable packaging.

Place-based Learning

Place-based learning is a practice that emphasizes a place’s culture, history, and natural environment with the goal of fostering awareness and appreciation for the community. Schools emulated place-based learning and zero waste practices by participating in beach clean-ups, adopting a local park for litter pick up and invasive plant removal, tree planting, addressing stream erosion, and using compost in school gardens.

Climate Change and Sustainability

For some schools, a starting point to bring zero-waste education into classrooms was to connect their projects to other subjects like Social Studies and Science. A school focused on GHG reduction with the use of solar panels. To fundraise for this project, they held an upcycling fair where students sold items that they upcycled. A Climate Action Symposium was also held which brought together student leaders and climate activists to address climate change which included discussions about zero waste and the RDNs solid waste programs.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Zero Waste School Education Program is included in the approved Solid Waste Management Plan, the approved Solid Waste Asset Management Plan, and the 2023 - 2027 Amended Financial Plan, as shown below. The funding is increased with 3% inflation considered for each year.

2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2023-2027 Total
\$ 83,162	\$ 85,657	\$ 88,227	\$ 90,873	\$ 93,600	\$ 441,518

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

Environmental Stewardship - Achieve the 90% waste diversion target as per the Solid Waste Management Plan.

The Zero Waste Program, identified in the approved SWMP, promotes the development of collaborative partnerships, innovative approaches, and the inclusion of future generations to achieve the SWMP's goal of 90% waste diversion.

REVIEWED BY:

- B. Routledge, Manager, Solid Waste Services
- E. Tian, General Manager, Regional and Community Utilities
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ATTACHMENT

Zero Waste Education Program – Year 1 of 3