



July 2019

## School Sustainability Working Group

### Purpose

The purpose of the School Sustainability Working Group (SSWG) is to promote and increase sustainable practices within the Newton Public Schools (NPS) with an initial emphasis on improving waste diversion efforts.

- 1) The SSWG will serve as a leadership team for on the development of sustainability objectives and goals;
- 2) The SSWG will serve as a forum for ongoing feedback among stakeholders across the City of Newton;
- 3) The SSWG will implement actions that support natural resource conservation including, waste reduction, reuse, and recycling, as well as energy use reduction;
- 4) The SSWG will provide implementation oversight of the School Committee Policy File: DJAA – RECYCLING, New: May 13, 2019. (Annex 1)

### Structure

The membership goal of SSWG is to include representation from: NPS administration staff, NPS facilities staff, NPS educator team, School Committee, the Food Service Management Company, the City Department of Public Works, the City Department of Sustainability, Green Newton, and from time to time a NPS student representative.

SSWG will meet monthly to share feedback, share positive work, identify concerns, and suggest adjustments.

To improve transparency and engagement from the NPS community, a webpage will be formed on the NPS website to communicate the sustainability goals in NPS as well as host pertinent NPS sustainability documents including the NPS Recycling Policy.

### Timeline

The first SSWG meeting was held on June 10, 2019. Following June, a monthly meeting timeline will be established to ensure a regular feedback cycle.

### Objectives

#### June 2019:

- Help initiate the MassDEP School Recycling Assistance Grant application with the City (application due June 12, 2019) (Annex 2)
- Review goals and objectives of SSWG and plan communication of the formation of SSWG to School Committee and Community
- Discuss implementation plan for a school textile collection program

#### First year (FY20):

- Promote recycling efforts, such as:
  - Installing recycling signage in recommended school locations, including signage on waste collection barrels used by custodians

- Installing Textile Recycling Receptacles at schools sites
- Identify feasible methods to reduce single-use plastics. Examples include:
  - Reduce single use plastic in food service (eliminate plastic straws)
  - Promote the use of reusable water bottles (install water bottle filling stations)
- Coordinate with the Food Service Advisory Group on actionable waste reduction goals with food service vendor, such as:
  - Divert food waste from cafeterias by expanding food waste collection service with a private hauler
  - Reduce wasted food by implementing a food rescue program
- Promote more active and sustainable transportation to school:
  - Upgrade bike racks at specified schools
  - Install bike canopies at high schools
- Support sustainable use and sourcing of energy, such as:
  - Completion of Phase 3 solar projects with the City (solar canopies in schools parking lots and solar roofs)
  - Advocate for designated EV (electric vehicle) charging stations in school parking lots
  - Monitor utility savings

### **Second Year (FY21-22) and Beyond Goals:**

- Formation of Green Teams at all schools
- Partner with district personnel for support in recycling efforts, including: custodians, school staff and educators in their different roles
- TBD based on funding awarded by Recycling Assistance Grant Program
- Improve implementation of classroom education on sustainability efforts broadly and locally
- Align classroom projects to district sustainability goals
- Develop district sustainability goals or adopt/commit to a school sustainability framework, such as the Green Schools Alliance.

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## **Annex 1**

### **School Committee Policy File: DJAA – RECYCLING, New: May 13, 2019:**

*“The Newton Public Schools recognize the need to make more efficient use of our natural resources, create markets for the materials collected in recycling programs, reduce solid waste volume and reduce waste disposal costs. The District is committed to purchasing products which are environmentally preferable and/or made of recycled materials whenever such products meet quality requirements and are available at reasonable prices and terms.*

*District schools will recycle, whenever feasible, materials that would otherwise become waste, including paper, cardboard, bottles, and cans. This is in support of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's waste bans.*

*Success in reducing waste through recycling is based on the cooperation of all the individuals in the school community. Wherever practical, recycling containers will be collocated with trash receptacles to encourage participation. Additionally, to ensure success in the recycling efforts, all district personnel are expected to support recycling efforts throughout the schools and teachers are encouraged to include educational lessons on recycling in their curriculums.*

*The school committee shall make its best effort to ensure recycling policy is aligned with the City of Newton's sustainability practices.”*

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## Annex 2

### **MassDEP School Recycling Assistance grant**

**Applicant:** City of Newton

**Application Deadline:** June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**Use of the grant:** improve local recycling, composting, reuse, and household hazardous waste diversion programs

**Announcement of grants:** two rounds of grant awards in the fall, generally in September and November.

**Site:** [www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-a-sustainable-materials-recovery-program-smrp-municipal-grant](http://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-a-sustainable-materials-recovery-program-smrp-municipal-grant)

**Guidance document:** <https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/03/21/smrpguid.pdf>

## SECTION SEVEN: School Recycling Assistance

### **Overview**

- Funding to a school district for implementation of a district-wide recycling program
- Goal: institutionalize effective recycling programs in Massachusetts schools.
- Programs implemented through this grant must be sustained after the grant funding ends.
- Funds are for: equipment and educational materials and/or to pay staff for planning and implementation of sustainable school recycling programs.
- Priority will be given to applicants that include a letter of commitment to implementing a district-wide recycling program with their application, signed by the superintendent, facilities director, principals, municipal fire chief, and local board of health.
- The maximum grant award is \$100,000
- May be implemented over a period of up to 3 years (but the total award will not exceed the amount indicated above).