



The Apple

Sustainable
Schools
News

Healthy Schools – Healthy Environments

January 2007

SOSI Kick-off Event held in Bend

On January 22 sixty five folks attended the regional SOSI Kick-off Event at the High Desert Middle School in Bend. Bend-LaPine Schools Superintendent, Doug Nelson, provided the welcome and listed many things his school district is doing in support of sustainability, such as siting schools to maximize walking and biking, an energy conservation program that includes turning off outside lighting for much of the night (which also reduced vandalism), evaluating biodiesel to fuel the school buses and a Farm to School program.

Following a presentation about SOSI, Katrina Wiest, Bend La Pine Schools Nutrition Services and also manager of the Bend Farmers Market, described how she connected local farmers with the school district to create one of the state's first Farm to School Programs, benefiting both. Schools provide a large local market for farmers, and students are introduced to new foods that they discover they like.

Chip Miller, a technology teacher at Summit High School, described how he engages students in real-world alternative energy projects such as bringing one of the first solar photovoltaic systems to an Oregon school, and constructing alternatives for powering vehicles. It became a history lesson when he noted that many of the alternative technologies being considered today are actually rediscovered ones from the past.

Deen Hylton described how he helped the small Crook

GET INVOLVED! Participation and Support Opportunities

- The Purchasing, Material Conservation and Sustainability Management topic teams are scheduled to begin next. To participate on these or other topic teams, contact Lori Stole, lstole@zerowaste.org or 503-307-4067. All stakeholders are welcome! For more on topic teams: http://www.zerowaste.org/schools/topic_teams.htm.
- Support the SOSI 2007 Fundraising effort. See below.

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County School District save \$420,000 in utility costs over the last four years. With knowledge gained through the Northwest Energy Education Institute program (<http://www.nweei.org/>) and a budget of \$0 he has developed a very successful resource conservation program. (Described in an Oregon Dept of Energy case study: <http://egov.oregon.gov/ENERGY/CONS/school/docs/Crook.PDF>.)

Scott Steele, Steele Associates Architects in Bend, spoke about the importance of sustainability for businesses and for our children, as well as the high performance school buildings he has been involved with such as Sisters High School. (Described in an Oregon Dept. of Energy case study: <http://egov.oregon.gov/ENERGY/CONS/school/docs/Sisters.pdf>).

Nancy Pustis, Eastern Regional Manager for the Oregon Dept. of State Lands, filled in for Louise Solliday, who was not able to get away from Salem. In addition to describing her department's journey toward sustainability, Nancy talked about the lands that they manage for the benefit of Oregon's schools. (See related story; Common School Fund)

The evening was concluded nicely by Mike Riley, executive director of reSource, a non-profit in Bend helping businesses, consumers and youth to reduce their impact.

The Apple is the monthly newsletter from the Sustainable Oregon Schools Initiative (SOSI). This and past newsletters are available in PDF form at <http://www.zerowaste.org/schools/newsletters.htm>.

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(www.resourceoregon.org). He reminded us that we need to think 7 generations ahead as the Native Americans have, and about how we are preparing the planet for them.

Participants enjoyed food from Wild Oats, Midtown Deli, Sparrow Bakery and Strictly Organic Coffee. Thank you! Thanks also to High Desert Middle School for providing the space, and to the local planning team; Katy Bryce (reSource), Bo Bonotto and Katrina Wiest (Bend LaPine Schools), Nikki Thompson (The Green Spot, Central Oregon Environmental Center) and Deen Hylton (Crook County School District).

Common School Fund (CSF)

When Oregon became a state in 1859, sections 16 and 36 of every township were set aside for the support of schools. Today a portion of that, nearly 800,000 acres, remains in state ownership. It includes rangelands primarily in Eastern Oregon, the Elliott State Forest near Coos Bay and state waterways. There are several additional sources of money contributing to the CSF.

The Oregon Department of State Lands is tasked with managing these resources "with the object of obtaining the greatest benefit for the people of this state, consistent with the conservation of this resource under sound techniques of land management." The proceeds, estimated to be \$48.5 million in 2007, are distributed each year to the state's K-12 public school districts. It is in the interest of our school system that these resources be managed sustainably!

For more on the CSF visit:

<http://www.oregonstatelands.us/DSL/DO/aboutcsf.shtml>

The Scoop on Radon and Schools

In January the Oregon Partnership for IAQ in Schools sponsored a call-in presentation about radon and schools. In summary:

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that migrates from the soil into the air. It has no color, odor or taste. Its half life is only 3.8 days and it is generated as part of the uranium decay chain. If a specific site has high ground concentrations then radon might be concentrating indoors.

Radon, a human carcinogen, is the most prevalent source of human radiation exposure. It is the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers and 2nd leading cause in smokers.

Elevated radon levels have been found in every state, including every county within Oregon. Being in a low risk area does not mean there can't be a problem. Radon levels are not possible to predict. The only way to know if it is a problem in a specific building is to test for it.

It can get into buildings through openings around a foundation and at entry points of pipes and conduits, especially if the building is at a lower pressure than the soil.

Radon testing involves either a short term test (2-5 days) or long-term test (3-9 months). The test device sits exposed for the designated time period, and is then retrieved and mailed to a lab for evaluation. It's best to test during occupied times and in cold weather months. The surgeon general has suggested that everybody test every 2 years.

If a high level is detected and reconfirmed, the radon needs to be mitigated. Sometimes the solution is a simple change to the HVAC system or sealing entry points. Sometimes it requires relieving underslab pressure.

Ray Jester, Oregon Public Health Division, is the state radon coordinator. He can provide schools with test kits and advice at no cost. Contact him at 971-673-0496, Raymond.A.Jester@state.or.us.

To learn more:

- Presentation at 2006 EPA IAQ Symposium: <http://www.iaqsymposium.com/agenda.html>, and select Bell presentation.
- EPA radon information: <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/radon/>

Portland Public Schools receive National IAQ Award

EPA's Tools for Schools Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) program recently held their annual symposium. Two Oregon efforts were recognized with awards. -> The Portland Public Schools received the Excellence Award. They have established a centralized IAQ program which informs staff about available IAQ services, includes an IAQ management information system and a standard procedure for responding to IAQ events. PPS actively promotes its IAQ program's services, gives presentations on IAQ at teacher union meetings and school safety committee meetings, and has developed an online IAQ handbook. Contact: Patrick Wolfe, (503) 916-3449.

Support SOSI and The Apple for 2007!

The success of the Sustainable Oregon Schools Initiative depends on your financial contributions!

Help keep us going in 2007!

If you find this newsletter helpful, please help support it with you tax deductible donation today. To learn about individual donation opportunities and corporate sponsorship visit <http://www.zerowaste.org/schools/supporters.htm>. Show your support by becoming an individual donor.

Use your credit card to make a secure on-line contribution or, send a check to:

Zero Waste Alliance
One World Trade Center, Suite 210
121 SW Salmon St, Portland, OR 97204

Thank you!

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-> An Oregon team received a special achievement award. Bev Stewart, American Lung Assoc. of Oregon, James Sundell, UniServe Consultant, Oregon Education Assoc. and Jim Terhune, Oregon Dept. of Education, launched the Oregon Partnership for Indoor Air Quality in Schools, a statewide grassroots working group committed to improving IAQ in all Oregon schools through the adoption of IAQ management programs. (SOSI is now a member of this working group).

For details about the awards and how to apply see:
<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/iaqtfawards.html>.

High School Essay Contest

The Air & Waste Management Association is celebrating 100 years in 2007 with their Annual Conference. The Education Council, Women's Professional Development Committee, is sponsoring an essay contest for high school students with cash prizes. To commemorate the contributions that women have made toward creating a more sustainable environment, students must select a woman who has done so, and describe how her contributions may change the world in the next 100 years. Deadline: May 4, 2007.

Contact: Pamela Heckel, awmaessay@gmail.com
<http://www.awma.org/ACE2007/images/EssayPoster.pdf>

International Travel Grant for Teachers

Under the Eurasia/South Asia Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program (TEA), the U.S. Department of State, and IREX (the International Research & Exchanges Board) announce a competition for secondary-level teachers of English as a Foreign Language and Social Sciences from the United States to participate in a two-week professional exchange program in one of the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Georgia, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, or Ukraine. Application Deadline: April 2, 2007

http://www.irex.org/programs/tea/tea_info.asp

Place-Based Education

Place-based education (PBE) is a holistic approach to education, conservation and community development that uses the local community as an integrating context for learning. It fosters partnerships between schools and communities to boost student achievement and improve community health and vitality--environmental, social and economic. Project-focused and inherently tailored by local people to local realities, place-based education is relevant to anyone, anywhere.

Place-based education immerses students in local heritage, cultures, landscapes, opportunities and experiences, using these as a foundation for the study of language arts,

mathematics, social studies, science and other subjects across the curriculum. PBE emphasizes learning through participation in service projects for the local school and/or community.

That description comes from the Promise of Place web site, a project of the Center for Place-based Learning and Community Engagement, and was supported by the USDA Forest. The web site offers program ideas, case studies, research, links, and other resources to support place-based education projects. See <http://www.promiseofplace.org/>.

Wellness Policies, A Foundation for the Future

Section 204 of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 required that all school districts that participate in the National School Lunch Program approve a local wellness policy by July 1, 2006. The law mandates that these policies include goals for nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities, as well as nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages available on school campuses.

The School Nutrition Association (SNA) has issued several reports looking at these wellness policies. In October they released "A Foundation for the Future" which provides an analysis of the school wellness policies for the 100 largest school districts by enrollment.

That's now followed by "A Foundation for the Future II," which examines local wellness policies from 140 school districts in 49 states.

These wellness policies include such key characteristics as more nutrition education, mandatory recess and additional nutrition standards for foods and beverages available outside the school cafeteria. The study found that:

- 98.6 percent of schools address school meal nutrition standards set by the government for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs
- 88.6 percent address nutrition standards for a la carte foods and beverages
- 87 percent address the standards for food and beverage offerings in vending machines.
- Wellness policies of 69 percent of schools set up nutrition standards or guidelines for fundraisers held during school hours.
- 65.7 percent do the same for classroom celebrations or parties as well as for teachers using foods as rewards in the classroom (55 percent).

The next step now is to actually implement the wellness policies!

<http://www.schoolnutrition.org/Index.aspx?id=1075>

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Check the website for details and updates. <http://www.zerowaste.org/schools/events.htm>.

SOSI Events and Meetings:
February 26, SOSI Steering Committee Meeting
 Portland, (Rescheduled due to snow)

Future Kick-off Events to introduce SOSI will be scheduled in Portland, Eugene, Medford and Pendleton. All stakeholders are welcome!

Related Events:

Many events that help support sustainable schools occur throughout the year. This information is provided as a service. Listing on this page does not necessarily imply endorsement by the Zero Waste Alliance or the Oregon Sustainable Schools Initiative.

February 8 Informational Sustainable Offices Fair
 Forest Grove, 10am to 1pm
 Pacific University, Washburn Hall - Fireside Lounge.
 Vendors showcase their lines of environmentally preferable office products for schools, including paper products with high post-consumer recycled content, non-toxic markers or cleaners, and other "eco-friendly" products, with FREE samples and refreshments. Contact: Elaine Jane Cole, 503-357-5960, cole4105@pacificu.edu

February 10 Sustainability Using the Natural Step Framework
 Oregon Natural Step Network workshop
 Newport, 8:30 – 5 PM, <http://www.ortns.org/events.htm>

February 14 Sustainability Using the Natural Step Framework
 Oregon Natural Step Network workshop
 Portland, 8:30 – 5 PM, <http://www.ortns.org/events.htm>

February 15 Sustainable Facilities
 Breakfast workshop presented by reSource
 Bend, 7:30 - 10 AM
http://resourceoregon.org/page_detail.php?page_id=23&category_id=3

February 16 The Life Cycle of Electronic Products- Impacts and Responsibilities
 U of O Sustainability Leadership Program Workshop
 Portland, 8:30 - 4:30, <http://sustain.uoregon.edu>

March 30 Building the Business Case for Sustainability
 U of O Sustainability Leadership Program Workshop
 Portland, 8:30 - 4:30, <http://sustain.uoregon.edu>

July 16-20 Advanced Summer Program at Cloud Institute, New York City
 The Cloud Institute for Sustainability Education offers its 2nd Advanced Summer Institute, "Shifts Really Do Happen," http://www.sustainabilityed.org/what/services_for_educators/2007AdvancedSummerInstitute.html

Oct 4-7 Healthy Kitchens, Healthy Lives
 A leadership Conference bridging nutrition, health care and the culinary arts. Held in Napa Valley, Calif. (A similar, earlier April 19-22 conference is sold out.)
<http://www.healthykitchens.org/>

Other Related Events:

- Salem: 2006-2007 Straub Environmental Lecture Series: <http://www.open.org/~selc/>
- Portland: Oregon Natural Step Network events: <http://www.ortns.org/events.htm>
- Bend: reSource: <http://www.resourceoregon.org>
- Northwest: Cascadia Green Building Council: <http://www.cascadiagbc.org/>

BE A SUPPORTER!! Contributions from you and your organizations make this initiative happen. Please consider contributing. Details at <http://www.zerowaste.org/schools/supporters.htm>.

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