



## WHAT IS A GREEN SCHOOL?

### green school / grEn skül

**n.** a school building or facility that creates a healthy environment that is conducive to learning while saving energy, resources and money.

**W**hile many certifications and checklists exist, we have aligned our definition with the USGBC and defined a Green School as a school building or facility that creates a healthy environment that is conducive to learning while saving energy, resources and money. A healthy environment includes providing healthy food choices into the cafeteria, promotes walking, biking and transit alternatives to and from school, and expands recreational choices and opportunities for all students to the outdoors.

### where do I sign up?

Please visit us online where you can find more information on how to take action, register, and make a difference. Go to [www.usgbcc4.org](http://www.usgbcc4.org) today!



PARTNERS & SPONSORS



SUNPOWER



## GREEN SCHOOLS GUIDE



**The California Central Coast Chapter (USGBC-C4)** has prepared this resource for our local schools to support their commitment to providing the highest quality education in non-toxic, energy efficient, and high performing facilities.





## WHY GREEN SCHOOLS?

**20%** of America goes to school every day. Too many of these students and teachers attend schools that are inefficient and miss important opportunities to reduce operational costs, foster learning and protect student health.

By promoting the greening of all schools—new or existing—we can make a tremendous impact on student health, test scores, teacher retention, school operational costs and the environment.



### 1 save money

Most schools spend more money on energy each year than on school supplies! Green schools cost significantly less money to operate and use less water and energy, freeing up resources to focus on improving student education. A typical green school saves \$100,000 per year in direct costs. If all new school construction and school renovations went green starting today, energy savings alone would total \$20 billion over the next 10 years.

### 2 student engagement

Studies show that naturally lit, better indoor air quality, and hands-on, experiential environmental curricula are linked to higher test scores. Elementary school students with either hands-on experience in a school garden or an environmental education curriculum score higher on math, science, and language arts tests, behave better in class, and have better attitudes about school compared with control groups without such programs.

### 3 teaching stewardship

Ultimately, sustainability is about being good global citizens: ensuring adequate resources for a clean, healthy environment for all. Imagine if schools were leaders in environmental sustainability, giving students the tools to be innovators, and giving them a healthy environment in which to learn and play. Green schools empower kids to make a difference, and teach them environmental and health values that will stay with them for life.

### 4 safeguard health

Every teacher and student deserves to go to a school with healthy air to breathe and conditions that encourage learning.

Green schools are healthy for kids and conducive to learning. Green schools promote:

- Daylight and views
- High indoor air quality
- Excellent acoustics
- Thermal comfort
- Water and energy efficiency

Numerous studies have demonstrated direct benefits to student health and performance:

- Daylight improves performance
- Good indoor air quality improves health
- Acoustics increase learning potential

## 7 STEPS TO GREEN YOUR SCHOOL

- 1 Create a Green Team** with the power to act!
- 2 Adopt an Environmental Vision Statement.**
- 3 Conduct a Comprehensive School Environmental Audit.**
- 4 Create a Green School Action Plan.** Base your Action Plan on your energy audit.
- 5 Monitor and Evaluate Progress.** Consider use of the Energy Star Portfolio Manager Program. Report results monthly in tabular and graphic format to your Green Team.
- 6 Integrate Environmental Education** into the Curriculum.
- 7 Inform, Involve and Celebrate!** Complete all seven steps and we will help you celebrate. Through a jointly funded effort between the C4 and our generous sponsors we will offer a \$500 incentive grant to fund the Green School project of your choice and bring an eco-party to your school to celebrate!

