

# Environmental Chairman's Guide

**Texas**  
**PTA**<sup>®</sup>  
*everychild.one voice.*<sup>®</sup>

Texas PTA  
408 West 11th Street  
Austin, Texas 78701-2113  
512.476.6769 or 1.800.TALK.PTA  
FAX: 512.476.8152  
[www.txpta.org](http://www.txpta.org)

Item #L-6208  
Revised: Spring 2009

*This item is for PTA use only.*

## **The Vision of PTA**

Making every child's potential a reality.

## **The Mission of PTA**

PTA is:

A powerful voice for all children,  
A relevant resource for families and communities, and  
A strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child.

## **The Purposes of PTA**

- To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community and place of worship.
  - To raise the standards of home life.
  - To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.
- To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth.
- To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social and spiritual education.

# Environmental Chairman's Guide

## Overview

The environment affects our mental and physical well-being. Students learn better and people work better in clean, healthy and attractive surroundings. We tend to take pride in things that are beautiful. As responsible citizens, we all should be concerned about our environment, the conservation of energy and natural resources.

## How to Use

It is the duty of this committee to develop programs and projects that will enhance the beauty of the school and community and to promote environmental education for students, school faculty, PTA members and the general public.

## Who Should Use

Environmental Chairman

## Table of Contents

The Purposes of PTA.....	2
Overview .....	2
<b>PLAN OF WORK</b> .....	3
Procedure Book .....	5
Major Duties of Chairman.....	7
Environmental Concerns.....	9
Calendar of Annual Environmental Events.....	11
<b>TEXAS PTA ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS PROGRAM</b> .....	12
<b>TEXAS PTA ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS</b> .....	15
Texas PTA Approved Resource List.....	16
Environmental Protection Agency.....	17
National Service Center for Environmental Publications (NSCEP) .....	17
What is the Go Green Initiative? .....	18





# PLAN OF WORK (Plan de Trabajo)

**Officer/Chairman Name:**  
(Nombre de Oficial/Presidente de Junta)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Position:**  
(Posición)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Year:**  
(Año)

\_\_\_\_\_

*Reproduce as needed for the appropriate number of goals.*  
(Se puede reproducir para metas adicionales.)

<b>Responsibilities/- Duties:</b> (Responsabilidades)		<b>Committee Members:</b> (Miembros del Comité)	
<b>Goal:</b> (Meta)		<b>Evaluation Process:</b> (Proceso de Evaluación)	

<b><i>Specific Action Steps</i></b> (Proceso Especifico de Acción)	<b><i>Start Date</i></b> (Fecha de Empezio)	<b><i>Completion Date</i></b> (Fecha de Terminación)	<b><i>Budget</i></b> (Presupuesto)

<b>Resources:</b> (Recursos)	
---------------------------------	--

Rev. July 2008



## SAMPLE PLAN OF WORK (Plan de Trabajo)

**Officer/Chairman Name:**  
(Nombre de Oficial/Presidente de Junta)

Name ? \_\_\_\_\_

**Position:** ENVIRONMENTAL CHAIRMAN  
(Posición)

**Year:** 2009-2010  
(Año)

*Reproduce as needed for the appropriate number of goals.*  
(Se puede reproducir para metas adicionales.)

<b>Responsibilities/-Duties:</b> (Responsabilidades)	<p><b>Local PTA</b> — Educate students to be responsible environmental stewards.</p> <p><b>Council PTA</b> — Support and work directly with the Local PTA Chairmen by encouraging them to promote Texas PTA programs/issues and apply for awards.</p> <p><b>Area PTA</b> — Same as Council PTA for PTAs not in a Council PTA.</p>	<b>Committee Members:</b> (Miembros del Comité)	Encourage non-board members to get involved as committee members
<b>Goal:</b> (Meta)	Enhance the beauty of the school and community and promote environmental education and advocacy.	<b>Evaluation Process:</b> (Proceso de Evaluación)	Increase Env. Awareness Program participation by 10%; member feedback and participation

<i>Specific Action Steps</i> (Proceso Especifico de Acción)	<i>Start Date</i> (Fecha de Empiezo)	<i>Completion Date</i> (Fecha de Terminación)	<i>Budget</i> (Presupuesto)
Organize a drop-off station for Texas Recycles Day- (see <a href="http://www.pta.org">www.pta.org</a> for ideas)	November	November 15	
School-wide participation in the Texas PTA Environmental Awareness Program	January	March	\$100
Submit newsletter article for Earth Week	August	June	
Plant a tree for Arbor Day	April	April	\$50
Apply for Texas PTA Environmental Award	August	Due online to Texas PTA by May 15	

<b>Resources:</b> (Recursos)	<a href="http://www.txpta.org">www.txpta.org</a> ; <a href="http://www.pta.org">www.pta.org</a> ; Keep “Houston” Beautiful; Principal and school district, etc...
---------------------------------	---

# Procedure Book

*A procedure book serves as a permanent record of activities and ensures an ongoing PTA program of work. It should contain material and information needed for the job. A three-ring binder with tabbed dividers keeps your records organized.*

## Suggested Table of Contents

### Directory

- Local PTA Fact Sheet
- Your name, address, phone number and term of office
- Rosters of National, Texas, Area, Council and Local PTA boards
- Names and phone numbers of resources used

### Job Description

- Responsibilities of your job
- Month by month “To Do” List

### Plan of Work

- Copy of your approved Plan of Work

### Budget

- Local PTA budget
- Treasurer’s reports
- Voucher forms
- Tax exempt forms
- In-depth breakdown of expenditures for your job (can be put with your Plan of Work)

### Bylaws

- A current copy of the Local PTA bylaws and standing rules

### Events, Projects, Programs

- List on a separate page each event, project or program (include dates, responsibilities, expenses and evaluation)

### Reports

- A copy of all forms turned into the National, Texas, Area, Council or Local PTA
- Award forms
- Annual report: A summary of year’s activities that should not exceed one page (include your recommendations)

### Volunteer Hours

- Use a calendar to keep track of your hours and turn them into the Volunteer chairman

### PTA Materials

- Handouts and updates received from Texas, Area, Council and Local PTAs
- Agendas and minutes

### Newsletters

#### Past Years Information

Personalize your procedure book to best fit your needs. Ask yourself, “*If I knew nothing about the job, could I do it with this procedure book?*”

#### Information You Should Pass to the Next Chairman:

- Plan of Work and Budget
- Actual amount of money spent doing your job
- List of resources – don’t forget the most important resource: YOU
- Copy of all reports
- Handouts – include the number of copies made, who they went to and supplies used
- Activity Summary – be specific and give details (who, what, when, where, how)
- Include sample notes, maps and diagrams used
- Month by month “To Do” list
- Estimate the number of hours you spent on the job
- Recommendations

## **Introduction:**

### **National PTA Position Statement-Environmental Health and Safety**

Since its founding, National PTA has worked to secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth. Over the years, National PTA has recognized the growing importance of environmental issues and the impact they have on the health and welfare of children and their families. PTA members have a responsibility to promote environmental health and safety, and to help protect our world's finite natural resources.

National PTA urges its members at all levels to monitor, support, and advocate for laws, regulations, and programs that

- Promote environmental education programs in pre-Kindergarten through higher education.
- Eliminate environmental pollutants and prevent new hazards.
- Protect children from health risks by testing for specific hazards in and around homes and schools and, if hazards are found, by limiting exposure and addressing remedies.
- Use protection and management strategies that take into account the geographic, economic, ethnic, cultural, and other societal factors that influence the incidence, exposure, and effects of environmental health hazards.
- Require comprehensive right-to-know and public information provisions in environmental laws and policies.
- Encourage the use of renewable, sustainable energy and technologies, as well as environmentally healthy land-use policies to reduce greenhouse gases and manage hazards to minimize further health problems.
- Promote “recycle, reduce, and reuse” policies and support incentives for pollution prevention and natural resource conservation activities.
- Improve the quality of our physical environment by securing and monitoring the enforcement of stricter health and safety standards for contaminants and pollutants.
- Minimize the production of hazardous waste, and enforce strict compliance with rules that require the safe transportation, storage, management, and disposal of hazardous waste.
- Support research and data collection about environmental hazards and health risks.

*This position statement was written to update and combine resolutions and position statements concerning “Environmental Health and Safety.” The original resolutions and position statements will be archived in the Historical Records as reference on this issue. (www.pta.org )*

# Environmental Chairman's Guide

## *Beautification, Energy, Environmental Protection*

### Major Duties of Chairman

- Become familiar with the PTA bylaws, standing rules, Texas PTA Handbook and all material from National and Texas PTA relating to your chairmanship.
- Attend training offered by national, state, area and council levels of PTA.
- Meet with the previous chairman and review their procedure book for ideas and guidance.
- Research potential resources at the government and community organizations dedicated to environmental issues.
- Build your committee. Work with related committee chairmen such as Healthy Lifestyles, Parent Education, Youth Protection, Legislative Action and Arts in Education, as well as the principal and science or social studies teachers. Encourage non-board members to be committee members.
- Review the Texas PTA Environmental Awards requirements and plan activities accordingly.
- Present a Plan of Work to the executive board for approval including budget needs.
- Maintain a procedure book including information on activities, programs, contacts, communications, statistics and budget information to pass on to your successor .
- Support legislation by Texas PTA on environmental issues that involve the health and welfare of children and youth — such as indoor air quality, air pollution, lead in drinking water, pesticides, playground safety, and safe communities.
- Educate school personnel, students and PTA members about environmental issues through articles in the newsletter or on the Web site.

- Encourage the executive board to adopt healthy fundraisers and policies that minimize their impact on the environment.
- Attend all executive board meetings and chair the environmental committee meetings.

### Local PTA Chairman

- Meet with your president and principal to discuss potential goals and role of your committee.
- Determine if there is a need for school or community improvements, either inside or outdoors. If so, plan a meeting and invite speakers who can explain the problem and offer possible solutions. Find out how the PTA can help.
- If funding is necessary, include it in the Plan of Work and consider collecting cans, paper, old cell phones, or printer cartridges for recycling to raise funds for a beautification project.
- Include students in projects to supplement environmental education, to teach them to care for plant life and respect for other people's property, to value litter-free and unpolluted surroundings, and to conserve energy and to recycle.
- Conduct the Texas PTA Environmental Awareness Program encouraging school-wide participation.
- Encourage campus participation in PTA and community environmental events/activities.
- Sign up for the Go Green Initiative and start implementing some of the elements.
- Encourage recycle, reduce, and reuse strategies on your campus.

## **Council PTA Environmental Chairman**

- Serve as liaison between National and Texas PTA and the Local PTAs
- Encourage, inform, and inspire
- Encourage all PTAs to form an environmental committee
- Keep up with environmental issues at the local, state and national level and disseminate this information to Local PTAs
- Maintain a contact list of Local PTA environmental chairmen. If a PTA does not have an Environmental chairman, communicate the need to the president.
- Provide an opportunity for chairmen to network and share ideas.
- Host environmental training workshop. Contact Area or Texas PTA if you need for help.
- Encourage Local PTAs to participate in recycle, reduce, and reuse strategies on their campus.
- Encourage Local PTAs to participate in the Go Green Initiative ([www.gogreeninitiative.org](http://www.gogreeninitiative.org))
- Conduct Council PTA level Texas PTA Environmental Awareness Program.
- Meet with your president and superintendant to discuss potential goals and role of your committee.
- Promote and encourage participation in Texas Recycles Day, Arbor Day, Earth Day, and Texas PTA activities.
- Partner with local businesses and community groups on environmental activities.
- Work with community organizations involved in beautification, conservation and recycling. The PTA chairman can be an effective liaison with community organizations that have similar goals. Seek opportunities to be represented in these organizations and to participate as a coalition member.

- Talk to your administrators about the environmental education program and policies in the school district. Find out how PTA can help.

## **Area PTA Environmental Chairman**

- Provide Council PTA services to those Local PTAs not in a Council PTA.
- Encourage PTAs not in a Council PTA to have an active Environmental Committee.
- Conduct Area PTA level Texas PTA Environmental Awareness Program for PTAs not in a Council PTA.
- Host training workshops.
- Keep up-to-date with environmental information and education.

### **The TOP Environmental Issues are:**

- Indoor Air Quality
- Indoor Air Quality on School Buses
- Air Pollution
- Tobacco Smoke
- Energy Consumption
- Recycling
- Pesticides
- Playground Safety

# Environmental Concerns

## PTA and Environmental Concerns

Innovative environmental and beautification projects sponsored by Local PTAs not only can increase awareness of and appreciation for the earth and its wildlife, but also they can have a positive impact on the lives of students, parents and the community at large.

Involvement in environmental concerns can be effective community outreach tools of the PTA, as programs and projects are planned and conducted that involve all segments of the school and community. Since the environment depends on the cooperation of all people, the PTA should work closely with other organizations and government entities to help coordinate activities.

## PTA Involvement

Educators teach better, students learn better, and people work better when their surroundings are healthy, attractive, and clean. Our environment affects our mental and physical well-being, and we tend to take pride in beautiful things.

Protecting our environment is one of the most important things we can do for our children and future generations. We need to teach our children that their future may depend on the environmental awareness they develop now.

As parents, schools, and students work together; they can participate effectively in such projects as recycling, clean-up campaigns, earth-science projects, discovering the world of nature, and beautification of playgrounds, parks, and communities.

The PTA is an effective starting point for both education and action. Through local efforts, the school and community can become more environmentally safe. Taking part in projects like Texas Recycles Day, The Great American Clean-Up, Earth Day, and Arbor Day will help focus attention on worldwide concern for the environment.

## PTA Legislative Program and Issues

Through its legislative program, PTA has focused attention on environmental hazards that directly affect children. PTA, at the local level, can bring influence to bear on elected officials and school administrators to ensure that monitoring and compliance with safety guidelines are followed. Areas of concern include:

- **Indoor Air Quality** — Emissions from radon; mold; asbestos; chemicals or toxins from cleaning agents, printing/copying devices, science labs, and art and craft material; and school buses not retrofitted to reduce emissions.
- **Air Pollution** — Use of toxic chemicals, cigarette smoke, noxious fumes from nearby industry, heavily-trafficked roadways, idling vehicles, and school bus emissions should be monitored.
- **Lead in Drinking Water** — Drinking water quality should be checked by using EPA-approved testing procedures.
- **Pesticides** — Children are especially susceptible to chemical pesticides. An effective pest management system that uses the least toxic, most permanent and effective methods, including good sanitation and proper maintenance of structures and grounds, should be encouraged by PTA.
- **Playground Safety** -- Playgrounds should be routinely checked for maintenance and safety.
- **Safe community** -- Sexually oriented businesses and their signs should not be located within 1000 feet of schools or visible on school bus routes. Smoke-free environments should be encouraged.

The Environmental chairman may bring environmental issues to the attention of their executive board and members. The chairman may write PTA resolutions and legislative positions if warranted. Issues should be thoroughly researched and voted on by the Local PTA membership before submitting them to Texas PTA. Volunteer to sit on your school's site-based decision making committee.

## Effective Strategies

Begin by meeting with school staff and parents concerning environmental needs and concerns in the school/community. Some issues that PTAs might address include but are not limited to:

- Clean up of school grounds or a community area. Consider creeks, rivers, and beach areas
- Landscape school grounds for beautification or safety, planting flowers, shrubs or trees to improve the appearance of the school. Removal of shrubs may be necessary to ensure clear vision when exiting the parking lot or for supervision of students on the school grounds.
- Beautify the cafeteria, auditorium, or restrooms. Older buildings may need a fresh look. A “most beautiful room” contest is a great way to get volunteer investment and participation.
- Improve the playground area. Additional benches, foursquare or hopscotch designs on the paved areas, and workout stations with instruction plaques are just a few ideas that can encourage more use of the playground.
- Plan and build an outdoor learning center, nature trail, butterfly or vegetable garden. This may be a long-term project that can involve the community and local business partners. The end result will be very gratifying for those involved and will be appreciated for years to come.
- Develop a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. If there are safety barriers to students walking to school, consider a SRTS, funded by the US Department of Transportation. An SRTS program is an opportunity to make walking and bicycling to school safer for children and to increase the number of children who choose to walk and bicycle. On a broader level, SRTS programs can enhance children’s health and well-being, ease traffic congestion near the school, improve air quality, and improve community members’ overall quality of life.” For more information, visit [www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org).
- Talk to your principal and school district about retrofitting older buses to reduce

emissions and ask them to adopt an anti-idling policy.

- A PTA might choose to sponsor an anti-litter campaign, ecology fair, environmental contest, or provide the library with books and materials for environmental study.
- Plan a “waste-free” PTA event to demonstrate environmentally friendly strategies.
- Explore the possibility of switching to LED exit signs and replacing light bulbs with CFL bulbs: they last longer and use less energy, thereby saving money.
- Green Teams, Watt Watchers, a Nature Club, or an Environmental Club can all be supported and encouraged by the PTA.

Once a project or issue has been identified, work with your committee, school officials, local businesses, and other community groups to make it happen.

- If classroom or school projects are planned, it is important to work closely with both principal and teachers.
- Investigate what other agencies, political entities, committees, and community groups are doing about environmental concerns. Try to coordinate the PTA’s efforts with these. Texas PTA has a substantial list of partners and co-sponsors for all kinds of activities. Check the Environmental Issues section of the Texas PTA Web site for more information on Texas PTA Environmental Partners and the Approved Resource List is in this guide as well as on the Web site at [www.txpta.org](http://www.txpta.org).
- Consider all channels of publicity to get support of and involvement in your project. Utilize not only your own campus communication systems such as fliers, newsletter, Web site, marquee, and email, but also that of the Council and Area PTA, as appropriate. Don’t forget the local news media, the school district’s communications department, the public library, and even local government publications.

## Calendar of Annual Environmental Events

October	Home Indoor Air Quality Action & Awareness Month
October	International Walk to School Day <a href="http://www.walktoschool.org">www.walktoschool.org</a> (Safe Routes to School)
October	National Make a Difference Day <a href="http://www.uasweekend.com/diffday/index.html">www.uasweekend.com/diffday/index.html</a>
October	Kids Care Week (coincides with Make a Difference Day) <a href="http://www.kidscare.org">www.kidscare.org</a>
November 15	Texas Recycles Day <a href="http://www.texasrecyclesday.org">www.texasrecyclesday.org</a>
February	Texas PTA Annual Convention (Environmental Workshops)
March 15	Council/Area PTA Environmental Awareness Program (suggested) Deadline
March-May	Keep America Beautiful Great American Clean Up <a href="http://www.ktb.org">www.ktb.org</a> or your local Keep Texas Beautiful affiliate
April	Don't Mess With Texas Trash-Off , Keep Texas Beautiful <a href="http://www.ktb.org">www.ktb.org</a> (usually first Saturday)
April 15	Texas PTA Environmental Awareness Program Deadline (received by the Texas PTA Office)
April 22	Earth Day and National PTA Earth Week (plan environmental activities all week long in celebration) <a href="http://www.epa.gov/region6/earthday">www.epa.gov/region6/earthday</a>
April	Arbor Day in Texas (usually last Friday)
May 15	Texas PTA Environmental Awards due online to Texas PTA
May 31	World No Tobacco Day- World Health Organization <a href="http://www.who.int/tobacco/wntd">www.who.int/tobacco/wntd</a>
June	National PTA Convention
July	Texas PTA Summer Leadership Seminar in Austin.

# TEXAS PTA ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS PROGRAM

This program is open to all students from PTA schools in grades Pre-K through 12. We hope students will develop high-level thinking skills in relation to environmental education through the TEKS.

The annual theme is chosen by Texas PTA.

The program:

1. The Local PTA environmental chairman or president ~~or~~ provides a Student Entry Form to each student who wishes to participate;
2. Students think of an idea involving the program theme and write a news article (Opinion Editorial or Reported Information), design a print advertisement, compose a photograph, or produce a 30-second public service announcement (6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade only) in audio or video format.
3. Students can enter in multiple categories but must fill out a separate entry form for each.
4. Texas PTA may use winning entries for promotional purposes.

## Local PTA Judging

The judges will choose up to three winners from each grade, per category – (print advertising, news articles, photograph, or public service announcements) – to advance to Council PTA judging by the Council PTA deadline (recommended March 15). If not in a Council PTA, send entries to Area PTA by their deadline. NOTE: Local PTAs may have as many winners as they choose, but only three per category can advance to Area PTA. Ribbons can be purchased through Texas PTA or another source. A reproducible certificate is available for download on the Texas PTA Web site. REMINDER – If the Local PTA is not in a Council PTA, winners should be forwarded directly to the Area PTA for judging.

## Council PTA Judging

The Council PTA judges will choose up to three winners from each grade, per category, to advance to Texas PTA judging by April 15. If Texas PTA receives more than three entries per grade in any category, that category will not be judged at the state level. The Council PTA may wish to award more winners (Award of Excellence, Award of Merit, Honorable Mention, etc.) A reproducible certificate is

available for download on the Texas PTA Web site.

## Area PTA Judging

The winners from a Local PTA not in a Council PTA advance to Area PTA for judging and up to three winners from each grade, per category will advance to Texas PTA judging by April 15. If Texas PTA receives more than three entries per grade in any category, that category will not be judged at the state level. Area PTAs may award more winners (Award of Excellence, Award of Merit, Honorable Mention, etc.)

## Texas PTA Judging

Texas PTA judging takes place in early May and winners will be notified of the results by the end of the school year.

Award of Excellence and Merit winners will be recognized at a Student Awards Ceremony, date and location to be announced. Honorable Mention recipients will receive their certificate by mail. Any questions about the program can be forwarded via email to [programs@txpta.org](mailto:programs@txpta.org) or by calling 1-800-TALK-PTA.

# Texas PTA Environmental Awareness Program

## Judging Criteria and General Instructions

### Judging Criteria:

- Does the entry effectively convey the theme?
- Does the entry communicate a message that makes the public want to take care of the environment?
- Is the entry creative, based on the grade and age level of the entrant?
- Does the entry meet the criteria of the individual category?

When looking for judges, select people that have expertise in the media industry such as photographers, magazine and newspaper reporters, graphic and commercial artists; as well as those who work in the environmental field such as businesses, science/biology professors, advocates, etc.

Judges should not be familiar with the students or their work and should have assistance during judging to ensure they do not see the students' names or personal information.

Judges reserve the right to move entries to a different category if it qualifies.

### General Instructions for submitting entries:

- All entries must include a COMPLETED entry form.
- All entries for News Article, Print Advertising, and Photography should be placed with the entry form in a page protector or manila envelope.
- PSA entries should be placed in a manila envelope with a clasp closure with the entry form attached to the outside of the envelope. Label all audio and VHS cassettes, CDs and DVDs with the name, grade level, and phone number of the student.

- Do NOT mount, wrap or seal ANY entries.

For Local PTAs:

- Have all Local PTA winning entries separated by grade level and category when sending on to Council PTA for judging.
- Fill out Local PTA Participation Form and enclose it with entries.
- Check to make sure the entry forms are COMPLETE before sending on to the next level – either Council or Area PTA.

For Council PTAs:

- Before sending entries to Texas PTA, make sure ALL entry forms are COMPLETE.
- When sending winning entries to Texas PTA (If Texas PTA receives more than three entries per grade in any category, that category will not be judged at the state level) include the following:
  - A second copy of the entry form for all winners.
  - Council and Local PTA Participation Forms.
  - A packing list identifying the contents of the package being sent.
  - Certify the package or mail it using a traceable method for tracking purposes. Be aware that audiocassettes can be erased during mail, so be sure to plan for that at the post office.
- E-mail a list of Council PTA winners advancing to Texas PTA in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to the Texas PTA Programs Department at [programs@txpta.org](mailto:programs@txpta.org).

For Area PTAs:

- Receive and judge only those entries from PTAs not in a Council PTA.
- Follow same guidelines as Council PTAs (above)

## Planning Your Texas PTA Environmental Awareness Program

### Local PTA

- Most schools find it best to conduct the Environmental Awareness Program (EAP) in the second half of the school year due to the spring deadline and fall Reflections Program.
- In the fall, visit the [www.txpta.org](http://www.txpta.org) Web site to download the current program theme, criteria, and entry forms.
- Contact your Council PTA Environmental chairman for training dates, Council PTA EAP deadline, and details of delivery of entries to them. If not in a Council PTA, contact your Area PTA Environmental chairman.
- Meet with principal and president to determine dates and format for program implementation.
  - Consider kickoff date
  - Incentives for participation
  - Deadline for submissions
  - Location of submission drop off
  - Judging dates and location
  - Awards presentation
- Be sure your plan of work and budget request will be sufficient. If not, propose an amendment to both.
- Kickoff your program
  - Send fliers home with students
  - Announce at meetings
  - Use marquee, newsletter, email, Web site to get the word out
  - Work with teachers and principals to incorporate the program into curriculum. Science, Language Arts, Journalism, and other teachers and likely to welcome a new way to teach environmental science.
  - Host after-school workshops to help students learn about the theme or the techniques of the various categories of entry such as photography, videography, nonfiction writing, etc.

- Consider offering incentives to classes that participate as a class such as extra recess, fun school supplies, etc.
- Ensure that all entries:
  - Meet the specific criteria (size, number of words, etc.)
  - Are placed with the entry form in a page protector or manila envelope
  - Do not include personal information on the front of the entry
  - Are not stapled or mounted
  - Have signed entry forms (both parent and student must sign, unless student is over the age of 18)
- Arrange for non-biased judging (see criteria above)
- RECOGNIZE! All children who enter should receive a certificate.
- Host an award ceremony and publish winners' names.
- Ensure all advancing entries are received by Council PTA as directed.

### Council /Area PTA

- Be familiar with the program so you can answer Local PTA questions. Consider it a networking opportunity for Local PTAs to share ideas.
- Frequently communicate your deadline to the Local PTAs you serve. Be clear about when and where entries are to be delivered.
- Ensure your judges have not judged the same work for a Local PTA in your area.
- Recognize all students who participate. Host an award ceremony.
- Council and Area PTA MUST have the winning entries to the Texas PTA Office NO LATER THAN published deadline.
- Do NOT pack anything else in the envelope/box with the Environmental Program entries.
- Still need help? Call 800.TALK.PTA, ext. 319, or e-mail the Texas PTA Environmental Chairman at [programs@txpta.org](mailto:programs@txpta.org).

# TEXAS PTA ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS

Each year Texas PTA honors Local and Council PTAs who show outstanding commitment to environmental concerns and issues. PTAs may apply for Bronze, Silver or Gold Level Recognition.

Visit [www.txpta.org](http://www.txpta.org) for specific details and criteria.

## **Purpose of the Awards**

Honoring past Texas PTA President Annie Becker, and Texas PTA's partnership with the **Go Green Initiative** and **Keep Texas Beautiful**, this award recognizes participation of Local PTAs/PTSAs and Council PTAs in environmental projects, programs, and education.

## **Awards Criteria**

- Local PTA must be in good standing with Texas PTA.
- Council PTA must participate in Texas PTA Environmental Awareness Program.
- Involvement of students, faculty, parents and community.

Award levels are cumulative. The Bronze distinction requires a basic commitment to environmental projects. Silver recognition builds on the Bronze level, and the Gold level is the successful completion of Bronze and Silver criteria plus an additional demonstration of a PTA's dedication to these important issues.

## **About PTA Awards...**

We want to hear what you have been doing so we can share it with others.

All efforts are valued!

Innovative, creative projects that are well planned, involve a variety of people, and are wide-reaching will be most successful.

Be specific and to the point in your descriptions.

**Awards must be received by the deadline!**

Check with the Texas PTA partner organizations and those on the Texas PTA Approved Resource List found in this guide for more awards programs and ideas.

# Texas PTA Approved Resource List

## Major Programs/Partners

Texas PTA	<a href="http://www.txpta.org">www.txpta.org</a>
Texas PTA Environmental Chairman	<a href="mailto:programs@txpta.org">programs@txpta.org</a>
Go Green Initiative	<a href="http://www.gogreeninitiative.org">www.gogreeninitiative.org</a>
Abitibi Consolidated's Paper Recycling Program	<a href="http://www.paperretriever.com">www.paperretriever.com</a>
Environmental Protection Agency	<a href="http://www.epa.gov">www.epa.gov</a>
Keep Texas Beautiful	<a href="http://www.ktb.org">www.ktb.org</a>
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality	<a href="http://www.tceq.org">www.tceq.org</a>

## Nationwide Programs and Events

America Recycles Day	<a href="http://www.americarecyclesday.org">www.americarecyclesday.org</a>
Arbor Day	<a href="http://www.arborday.org">www.arborday.org</a>
Earth Day- USA	<a href="http://www.earthday.net">www.earthday.net</a>
International Earth Day	<a href="http://www.earthsite.org">www.earthsite.org</a>
World Asthma Day	<a href="http://www.respirar.org/eng/wad/">www.respirar.org/eng/wad/</a>

## Nationwide Organizations

American Lung Association	<a href="http://www.lungusa.org">www.lungusa.org</a>
Children's Environmental Health Network	<a href="http://www.cehn.org">www.cehn.org</a>
Keep America Beautiful	<a href="http://www.kab.org">www.kab.org</a>
Natural Resources Defense Council	<a href="http://www.nrdc.org">www.nrdc.org</a>
Sierra Club	<a href="http://www.sierraclub.org">www.sierraclub.org</a>
Stop Global Warming	<a href="http://www.stopglobalwarming.org">www.stopglobalwarming.org</a>

## Wildlife Conservation

National Audubon Society	<a href="http://www.audubon.org">www.audubon.org</a>
National Wildlife Federation	<a href="http://www.nwf.org">www.nwf.org</a>
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department	<a href="http://www.tpwd.org">www.tpwd.org</a>
World Wildlife Fund	<a href="http://www.worldwildlife.org">www.worldwildlife.org</a>

## Recycling Companies/Organizations

EcoPhones	<a href="http://www.ecophones.com">www.ecophones.com</a>
PhoneRaiser	<a href="http://www.PhoneRaiser.com">www.PhoneRaiser.com</a>
Plastics Resources	<a href="http://www.plasticsresource.com">www.plasticsresource.com</a>
Waste Management	<a href="http://www.wm.com">www.wm.com</a>

## Environmental Education

Energy Hog — Children's Web site	<a href="http://www.energyhog.org">www.energyhog.org</a>
EPA's Enviro Kids Club - Elementary Ages	<a href="http://www.epa.gov/kids">www.epa.gov/kids</a>
EPA's Student Center - Secondary Ages	<a href="http://www.epa.gov/students">www.epa.gov/students</a>
Kids Gardening	<a href="http://www.kidsgardening.com">www.kidsgardening.com</a>
North American Association for Environmental Education	<a href="http://www.naaee.org">www.naaee.org</a>

## Texas Specific Resources

Clean Texas	<a href="http://www.cleantexas.org">www.cleantexas.org</a>
Recycling Alliance of Texas	<a href="http://www.recycletx.com">www.recycletx.com</a>
Texas Adopt-A-Beach	<a href="http://www.glo.state.tx.us">www.glo.state.tx.us</a>
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality	<a href="http://www.tceq.org">www.tceq.org</a>
Texas Forest Service (Arbor Day Poster Contest)	<a href="http://www.tamus.edu/agencies/tfs.html">www.tamus.edu/agencies/tfs.html</a>
Texas Recycles Day	<a href="http://www.texasrecyclesday.org">www.texasrecyclesday.org</a>

# Environmental Protection Agency

[www.epa.gov/epahome/students.htm](http://www.epa.gov/epahome/students.htm)

## Healthy School Environments

More than 53 million children and about six million adults spend a significant portion of their days in more than 120,000 public and private school buildings. Many of these buildings are old and in poor condition, and may contain environmental conditions that inhibit learning and pose increased risks to the health of children and staff. The schools Web site is designed to provide one-stop access to the many programs and resources available to help prevent and resolve environmental issues in schools.

**HealthySEAT (Healthy School Environments Assessment Tool)** EPA has released the enhanced Version 2 of its HealthySEAT software tool to help school districts establish and manage comprehensive school facility self-assessment programs.

**Siting of School Facilities** (also on the National PTA Web site [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org))

In the next few decades, thousands of schools around the country will be built and renovated. Where and how schools are built will profoundly affect the communities they serve and the quality of their air and water.

## EPA School Programs

- IAQ Tools for Schools Program
- Indoor Air Quality Design Tools for Schools
- ENERGY STAR for K-12 School Districts
- Smart Growth And Schools
- Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in Schools
- Asbestos in Schools
- Schools Chemical Cleanout Campaign (SC3)
- Drinking Water in Schools and Child Care Facilities
- Clean School Bus USA
- SunWise
- Protecting Health and the Environment at K-12 Schools, Including Art Programs (EPA Region 2)
- Managing Your Environmental Responsibilities: A Planning Guide for Construction and Development
- Children's Health Protection
- Environmental Education
- Protect the Environment at School-- Information for Students
- PCBs in Building Caulk
- Formaldehyde Emissions from Pressed Wood Products

## Students

[Environmental Kids Club](#) – for elementary school children. Learn how to protect the environment through art and science projects, games, and more.

[Student Center](#) – for middle school students.

[High School Environmental Center](#) – for high school students. Young people can learn the issues and get involved in protecting the environment.

## National Service Center for Environmental Publications (NSCEP)

EPA's premiere publications resource, features more than 7,000 print publications and 26,000 digital titles, all of which are available *free of charge* to search and retrieve, download, print and/or order.

## Hotlines and Clearinghouses

## Grants

## What is the Go Green Initiative?

[www.gogreeninitiative.org](http://www.gogreeninitiative.org)

The Go Green Initiative is a simple, comprehensive program designed to create a culture of environmental responsibility on school campuses across the nation. Founded in 2002, the Go Green Initiative unites parents, students, teachers, and school administrators in an effort to make real and lasting changes in their campus communities that will protect children and the environment for years to come.

Schools in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, Africa, Asia, Canada, Mexico and Europe have adopted the Go Green Initiative. They are making great strides in teaching their students to be good stewards of our planet's natural resources. Tons of paper, plastic, and other materials are being recycled, and, in many cases, schools are earning money for recycling. Go Green communities are finding creative ways to teach children earth-friendly habits while reducing their contributions to the waste stream.

We believe...

- People care about protecting children's health and safety through environmental stewardship.
- People will do the right thing when given trustworthy information, expert training, and simple tools.
- People appreciate a program like the Go Green Initiative, which provides a framework for success, many options, and the freedom to choose the options that work best for them.
- People want a panoramic, three-dimensional approach to environmental education, which will equip young people with the skills necessary to manage the environmental impact inherent in all activities.

### Why start in schools?

Schools represent a large sector of the waste producers in this country, and they are typically

some of the larger institutions in every municipality. If schools embrace environmentally-responsible behaviors, there will be an immediate impact on its community's contribution to the local landfill. The Go Green Initiative has tracked waste diversion data for Go Green schools since 2002, and found that tremendous amounts of waste diversion and recycling are possible.

Schools that model and teach principles of environmentally-responsible behaviors to students will have a long-term impact. Teachers and parents are working everyday to educate the next generation of business owners and government officials. We can equip them with the knowledge and skills they will need in the future to manage the complexities of the environmental impact inherent in all activities.

Schools will serve as a catalyst for the community at large. We call this the "spillover effect" of the Go Green Initiative. By involving parents, teachers, administrators, city government and local businesses in the Go Green Initiative, we find that the environmentally-responsible behavior that is modeled at school is taken into the community at large. Parents who see recycling in the classrooms often report reinforcing that behavior at home and working to institute recycling at work, as well. City governments who support the efforts of their Go Green schools often look for ways to expand recycling and waste reduction efforts citywide.

### The Five Principles

The Go Green Initiative comprises five principles that provide the framework for teaching environmentally-responsible behaviors on campus. These principles serve as a guide for schools to evaluate every aspect of their environmental impact. Schools may implement as few as three principles in creating their own unique programs designed to address local concerns. (For a detailed discussion of the five principles of the Go Green Initiative, see the Go Green Planning Guide).

1. **Generate compost.** This is nature's way of recycling. Through basic and worm

composting programs, children learn about ecology, biology, and waste reduction.

2. **Recycle everything that cannot be reused and purchase items that can be recycled.** With fast shrinking landfill space and diminishing natural resources, recycling has never been more important. Recycling items such as paper, plastic, aluminum, and ink cartridges reduces toxic greenhouse gas emissions and conserves energy. Manage E-waste by finding creative solutions to divert obsolete computer parts, cell phones, and other such devices from the waste stream. Schools that recycle provide much-needed materials to manufacturers who produce recycled products.
3. **Educate students, teachers and parents on environmentally-responsible behavior.** When students, teachers and parents work together to make their schools environmentally friendly, they are more likely to take the same behaviors into their off-campus lives. Our goal is to create environmentally-responsible school communities throughout the nation and across the globe.
4. **Evaluate the environmental impact of every activity.** Identify products and practices that could threaten the health of children and the world around them. Consider improving the campus environment with activities such as eliminating excessive energy consumption; evaluating the toxicity of pesticides used in classrooms and on playgrounds; improving outdoor air quality through increased carpooling efforts; and working to improve indoor air quality.
5. **Nationalize the principles of responsible paper consumption.** Consider purchasing post-consumer recycled paper and office products. Use technology to communicate electronically as much as possible. Seek ways to provide Internet access to all school families.

### **Intended Results**

1. Teach children to be responsible caretakers of the planet.

2. Heighten community awareness of and participation in environmentally responsible behavior.
3. Create national interest in establishing standards and procedures for environmentally-responsible practices.

### **Measuring Success**

1. Students possess and practice grade-appropriate knowledge and skills in environmental protection concepts.
2. Environmental impact becomes a routine consideration for all activities.
3. Programs and incentives are established to reward businesses, non-profit organizations and individual citizens for environmentally responsible behavior.

### **How does the Go Green Initiative relate to existing school curriculum?**

The Go Green Initiative is not a curriculum program; it is a foundation upon which school communities make intelligent choices about what type of environmental education (EE) curriculum best suits their needs. Over the past 30 years, hundreds of EE curriculum programs have been written. The Go Green Initiative staff can help schools identify the best EE curriculum available based upon two factors:

1. Which of the five principles of the Go Green Initiative does the curriculum address, e.g., generate compost, recycling, etc.; and
2. How well does the curriculum align to your state's existing educational standards.

For instance, if a school in California wanted to focus heavily on recycling education (the 2nd and 3rd elements of the GGI), the Go Green Initiative staff would help that school find recycling curriculum that is aligned to the California state science standards. By doing so, teachers are not teaching a superfluous lesson when they engage in recycling education in their classroom, they are folding recycling education into state standards they are already required to cover.

## What's the problem?

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the world population is expanding at a mind-boggling rate. The world reached one billion people in 1800; two billion by 1922; and over six billion by 2000. It is estimated that the population will swell to over nine billion by 2050. That means that if the world's natural resources were evenly distributed, people in 2050 will only have 25% of the resources per capita that people in 1950 had.

The world has a fixed amount of natural resources – some of which are already depleted. So as population growth greatly strains our finite resources, there are fewer resources available. If we intend to leave our children and grandchildren with the same standard of living we have enjoyed, we must preserve the foundation of that standard of living. We save for college educations, orthodontia, and weddings, but what about saving clean air, water, fuel sources, and soil for future generations?

Some of the greatest threats to future resources come from things we throw away every day. Household batteries and electronics often contain dangerous chemicals that may, if sent to a local landfill, leak through the bottom barrier and pollute the groundwater. This can contaminate everything from the soil in which our food grows to the water which will eventually come out of aquifers and into our tap water. Many of these chemicals cannot be removed from the drinking water supply or from the crops that are harvested from contaminated fields. The risks to human health are tremendous.

Throwing away items that could be recycled diminishes energy, water, and natural resources that could be saved by recycling.

Did you know...

- For every ton of paper that is recycled, the following is saved: 7,000 gallons of water; 380 gallons of oil; and enough electricity to power an average house for six months.
- You can run a TV for six hours on the amount of electricity that is saved by recycling one aluminum can.

- By recycling just one glass bottle, you save enough electricity to power a 100-watt bulb for four hours.

The more we throw away, the more space we take up in landfills. When a landfill becomes a “landfull,” taxpayers have to build a new one. The less we throw away, the longer our landfills will last. The amount of taxpayer money we save by extending the longevity of our landfills is an important community benefit.

## Get Started

The key to successfully implement the Go Green Initiative and create meaningful environmental change at your school is to get buy-in and support from parents, teachers, custodians, and administrators. We're here to help you!

First, register with the Go Green Initiative Association in order to access all the tools, training and funding opportunities you'll need to make your program a success. Once registered, you will be eligible for any funding opportunities in your area. As resources, grants and special events are available, you will be notified, so that your Go Green school can choose from an ever-increasing menu of options through the Go Green network.

Once you have registered your school you will automatically be signed up for our e-mail blasts and monthly newsletter. As a registered school, you will also be invited to join our online forum, available exclusively to our registered schools.

Read the Go Green Planning Guide. This document provides insight on establishing the foundation of a program that is tailor-made for your community. By following the step-by-step instructions, you will create the environmental action plan that is best for your campus.

### STEP ONE: Build the Team

The first step is to build a Go Green Team that includes at least one representative of every sector in the campus community, e.g., parents, teachers, custodian, administrators, and, where age appropriate, students.

### STEP TWO: Set Goals

It is vitally important to set realistic, measurable goals as you implement the Go Green Initiative in your school community. Students, teachers, parents, custodians, and school administrators participating in the program need to know what they are working toward and the course to get there. Use the Go Green Planning Guide to assist you in your efforts.

### **STEP THREE: Plan to Evaluate Success**

The Go Green Initiative has built-in evaluation tools to help you track your progress and make changes along the way, if necessary. By measuring results, you can motivate participants and show value added to your sponsors and the community. Before you begin to implement your GGI program, review the goals your team has set for itself, and use the Quarterly Progress Report to gauge the data you need to collect as you implement the program. Through quantifying and advertising your measures of success, your Go Green Team will capture the interest and support of your entire campus community!

### **STEP FOUR: Form Partnerships**

The success of the Go Green Initiative depends on the strength of partnerships formed within the school system and throughout the community it serves. "Build the Team" provides detailed information on creating partnerships among parents, teachers, custodians, students, and school administrators. Here are some other partnerships that will strengthen your Go Green Initiative efforts.

#### **Partner with Recycling Coordinators:**

Identify the recycling coordinator in your community by contacting the city government office. Contact the coordinator to learn about relevant ordinances and laws regarding recycling and any resources that may be available to lend support to your efforts. The Recycling Organization Support Spreadsheet will help you identify what resources they have available as they pertain to the five principles of the Go Green Initiative.

#### **Partner with City/County Governments:**

The Go Green Initiative is beneficial to children's health and their school communities. When Go Green Teams work to make their campuses environmentally responsible, there is a natural progression of earth-friendly behaviors into surrounding homes and businesses. The net effect is that communities with Go Green schools send less waste to landfills; recycle and reuse more goods; and make choices that result in a cleaner, healthier place to live, work, and play.

City governments recognize the benefits inherent in the Go Green Initiative and are often eager to partner with local schools. In the Go Green model community, the city government gave local schools grant funding in order to implement the program. The Pleasanton PTA Council drafted a successful Memorandum of Understanding with its city council when eight of its schools worked together to implement the Go Green Initiative in their town. Go to the Go Green Web site for their template.

#### **More Go Green Initiative Resources:**

- Public Relations Kit
- Support for Principals
- Tips for Teachers
- Resources for Schools
- Links
- Best Practices

*“All schools prepare our children for the future,  
but Go Green schools prepare the future for our children.”*

Jill Buck

Founder of the Go Green Initiative  
[www.gogreeninitiative.org](http://www.gogreeninitiative.org)