The Eco-Schools USA program launched two years ago in 2009. By the end of the 2010-2011 school year, there were 514 registered Eco-Schools located in 42 states, plus the District of Columbia. An online survey was created on May 20, 2011 and sent via email to all registered Eco-Schools. As of July 5, 2011, we have received 118 responses to our survey. The following results are based on these 118 responses.

The intent of the survey was to a) determine the scope and level of activity by the registered Eco-School; b) determine the effectiveness of the program in three critical areas: academic change, behavioral change, and school footprint change; c) discover what challenges teachers face in implementing the program; and d) to receive necessary feedback from our Eco-Schools on how we can improve the program.

The survey data shows that the program is effective in improving the overall school’s environmental footprint; that it does improve student behavior, morale, attitude and academic scores/interest; and that there are still real challenges for teachers in implementing the program and integrating it into curricula. This feedback will allow us to make ongoing strategic adjustments to the program that will improve it and make it more accessible to the schools we work with.
Eco-Schools USA Year 2 Survey Results

Registered Eco-Schools

7 Step Process
Eco-Schools USA Year 2 Survey Results

Pathway Focus Area

Which of the eight pathways has your school focused on? Please check all that apply.

- Energy: 45.8%
- Water: 32.2%
- Climate Change: 19.5%
- Global Dimensions: 5.9%
- Transportation: 11.0%
- Consumption and Waste: 64.4%
- School Grounds: 55.9%
- Green Hour: 22.0%

Created an Outdoor Classroom

Have you created an outdoor classroom (an area where lessons can be taught outdoors) or schoolyard garden as part of the School Grounds pathway?

- Yes: 83.3%
- No: 16.7%
Eco-Schools USA Year 2 Survey Results

Barriers to an Outdoor Classroom

- Budget constraints: 53.6%
- Lack of time: 36.4%
- Lack of district support: 27.3%
- Lack of student interest: 9.1%
- Parent/teacher resistance: 9.1%
- Other (please specify): 9.1%

Certified Schoolyard Habitat

- Yes: 61.8%
- No: 38.2%
Eco-Schools USA Year 2 Survey Results

Award Level

Have you applied for an Eco-Schools USA award?

Applying for an Award

Which level of award did you achieve?

- Bronze Award: 60.0%
- Silver Award: 40.0%
- Green Flag Award: 5.0%
Eco-Schools USA Year 2 Survey Results

Plans for Applying Next Year

Do you plan on applying for an award in the next year?

- Yes: 53.9%
- No: 10.4%
- Maybe: 35.7%

Which Award Level

- Bronze: 42.7%
- Silver: 17.5%
- Green Flag: 29.8%
Eco-Schools USA Year 2 Survey Results

Observed Improvement in School’s Overall Environmental Impact

- Yes: 71.4%
- No: 3.6%
- Unsure: 25.0%

Type of Improvements Noticed

- Increased recycling: 77.5%
- Increased student participation: 70.5%
- Better student engagement: 65.0%
- Reduced solid waste: 58.8%
- Reduced overall environmental impact: 57.5%
- Increased student time outdoors: 57.5%
- Students take more leadership / more active: 55.0%
- A safer, healthier school environment: 52.5%
- Better behavior and an improvement in attitude: 48.8%
- Reduced energy use: 48.8%
- All Other Responses: 18.3%
Eco-Schools USA Year 2 Survey Results

Areas of Academic Improvement

- Better test scores: 28.4%
- Improved reading abilities: 32%
- Improved math skills: 23.9%
- Better understanding of science concepts: 80%

Facility Expenses Decreased as Part of Program

- Yes: 94.1%
- No: 12.9%
- Don't know: 3.9%
Eco-Schools USA Year 2 Survey Results

Your facilities expenses have decreased by approximately what amount?

- Less than 10%: 17.5%
- 10 - 20%: 42.5%
- 20 - 30%: 25.0%
- 30 - 40%: 3.6%
- 40 - 50%: 10.7%
- 50 - 60%: 0%
- More than 60%: 0%
- Not Applicable: 0%

What features of the Eco-Schools USA program do you like best?

- My school can work through the program at our own pace: 73.7%
- People like the vision for a clean green environment: 60.0%
- It's a holistic program that helps us learn about the school's sustainability: 51.6%
- Ability to use interactive map feature to connect with other Eco-Schools: 28.4%
- The program helps me learn a lot about various curriculum resources: 11.6%
- Other (please specify): 12.5%
Eco-Schools USA Year 2 Survey Results

What aspects of the Eco-Schools USA program need improvement?

- Provide regionally specific information and resources: 52.6%
- Provide a better introduction to the program and how it is structured: 23.2%
- Provide better guidance on how to work towards certification: 44.2%
- Provide updated website navigation to increase ability to easily find: 30.5%

What challenges has your school faced in implementing the Eco-Schools USA program? Please check all that apply.

- Lack of district support: 55.3%
- Lack of time to implement the program: 40.0%
- There has not been enough interest among students: 29.5%
- There has not been enough parent/volunteer involvement: 18.9%
- Have faced no challenges: 20.0%
Eco-Schools USA Year 2 Survey Results

Able to Introduce Program into Class Curriculum

Have you been able to integrate the Eco-Schools USA program into your class curriculum?

- Yes: 25.3%
- No: 21.1%
- Unsure: 53.7%

Challenges of Introducing Program into Class Curriculum

If you answered "no," why not or what challenges have you faced in doing so?

- Lack of administrative support: 42%
- Lack of donor support: 12.5%
- Lack of team support: 83%
- Testing requirements: 75%
- Scheduling conflicts: 75.0%
Eco-Schools USA Year 2 Survey Results

Awareness of Program Features

Did you know that...Please check all that apply.

- Eco-Schools USA has student and adult recognition certificates on its website: 48.4%
- We have a free Sustainable Schools webinar series you may sign up for: 37.3%
- Our Sustainable Schools webinars are archived for viewing at your own time: 23.8%
- The Eco-Schools USA Pathways roads behind guide to the National Science... 37.3%
- None of the above: 34.5%

Use of Social Media

Do you use social media (such as Facebook and Twitter)?

- Yes: 38.3%
- No: 60.2%
Eco-Schools USA Year 2 Survey Results

Types of Social Media Used

If you answered "yes" to using social media, what types of social media do you use?

- Facebook: 44.5%
- Twitter: 44%
- Flickr: 11.5%
- YouTube: 19.1%
- SchoolTube: 48.5%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestions for Program Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Response Text

- more elementary friendly requirements for green flag designation... getting students involved in weighing waste etc can be problematic.  - Alternatives suggested for some challenges elementary schools may have in comparison to secondary schools.

Already given :)

Assign us an Eco-School mentor

Congratulations for doing a good job!

Connect with the upcoming Green Ribbon Award (NWF already is connected). I think your program will be a wonderful resource for schools like ours that hope to add a Green Ribbon to our Blue Ribbon (nomination).

Could the audits be leveled so that elementary students could more easily participate?

Create Smart Notebook presentations for September introduction to both school staff and for students that explain the program and FAQ's

Encourage Broward schools to participate in Eco-Schools as part of our Green Initiative. Both programs have similar ideas.

Encourage groups to start small with an outdoor area and increase it each year so the groups feel they have contributed from year to year.

Help schools to become of part the Eco-programs in their area. Many school are outside the program areas. Maybe these school could get parents within the areas to join the programs.

Help, advise with the Energy reduction. We are working very hard for the Green Flag, but we cannot replace light bulbs, etc. We have a record of our energy expenses, but dealing with a bureaucracy is challenging.

I didn't find the supporting activities for the lesson plans.

I do not know much about this program yet but am looking forward to getting more involved. No suggestions.

I have mistakenly registered my home school twice in Rowan County, KY. Please remove Haight Homeschool and leave Haight Home School.

I haven't been a part long enough to really know.

I need information on how to receive certification.

I need more guidance on how to show that what these young children have done (admittedly limited) is working. Our building is new and relatively energy efficient. Second graders cannot install alternative energy! How can their efforts really make a change?

I need to become more familiar with what is offered through your program.

I need to go over the entire scope of your program as I am totally blown away by the questions you asked me on this survey. I am so unaware.

I started one week ago

I think there should be regional places where on-site training can take place for teachers- where they can earn CEU's. I know I would be willing to help organize something in my area for Eco-Schools. I am in the Southeast (Birmingham).
I will need to look at the website again. I am not sure that I looked at the curriculum links. I learned about the Eco-School at the Houston Environmental Education Summit on April 9, 2010.

I would like to have our school to have a personal contact/mentor who would review what we are doing and makes suggestions on how we could achieve our bronze goal or better still a green goal. We feel that we are on our own to figure out if we are doing all we need to do/more than we need to do/not enough of what we need to do. We have a dedicated student group whose enthusiasm is thrilling and we could use advice on how to capitalize and sustain that enthusiasm.

I'm appreciative of the support and advice you have given. Continue with the emails. That helps. I do appreciate having Marya's support as well. With all of the other challenges we are currently facing as a result of new standardized testing requirements and significant reduction in class size, my available time and resources are going to be a fraction of what they were this year. What fraction at this point is hard to tell, but I will continue to do my best to move this forward. The fact that it is real world applicable makes a lot of sense and does give me more pull with campus administration, however, again due to resource constraints of time and money, I'm not certain what I'll be able to accomplish next year.

It is a great well working program full of a lot of work that has great benefits.
Keep helping schools connect with the program.
Keep it up!
Keep promoting it! It's a great way for schools to get a start on something they are interested in! Are you accepting new schools? If so-please let me know and I can help promote it
keep up the good work
Keep up the great work!
Keep up the great work! Love your program.

Make more presentations at school level and connect to more teachers.

Monitoring my blog instead of having me fill out forms Did you consult actual teachers? If so, did you really listen to the feedback? Running a green program is very time and labor intensive.

network with state groups that are endeavouring to do the same thing--in Kansas we have the Kansas Association of Conservation and environmental educators (KACEE), see www.kacee.org for website and contact links. I am a member of the KS Environmental Literacy Team who has been working on a plan to implement once the no child left behind act is passed federally--part of the plan is to have all high school graduates be environmentally literate. Check it out at the KACEE site.

No
no
No
no

Nope.
Not at this time.
**Eco-Schools USA Year 2 Survey Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at this time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>not for now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not yet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on-going support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please make it easier to join with other existing groups, like greenribbonschools.com</td>
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<tr>
<td>as they are helpful and all-inclusive.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Please send me a pamphlet with the highlights of the program so it's easier to read and</td>
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<tr>
<td>refer to and share with others. I don't find online stuff very accessible!</td>
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<tr>
<td>present program early with requirements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide more support to schools that are interested, but are having a hard time finding the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time and support to really get off the ground. A webinar won't do it; perhaps 1 required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>webinar, and then you can go online to a help area and people can pose questions and share</td>
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<tr>
<td>answers.ETHER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send updates via email on environmental awareness days or Eco School focuses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>separate category for non-formal centers such as ours.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thank you for what you are doing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The time question above depends upon what time my classes are in session which changes every</td>
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<tr>
<td>year. there is no option for that.</td>
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<tr>
<td>To help schools keep engaged by offering grants to all each year to help with the cost of</td>
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<tr>
<td>keeping the program healthy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>We did not get as far into the implementation as I had hoped we would. I would love to have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more assistance in getting people to participate in the program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>We have testing constriant. The more this program can replace two other things, the more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>likely people will be to do it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>we need more guidance on the high school level. we have followed the model of elementary and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middle schools, but we have different roadblocks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>What elementary programs do we have school wide that I can implement. Can you develop a</td>
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<tr>
<td>meet the scientist kids blog and speaker serieSri and an online vbookclub is there a hard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copy newsletter cop.</td>
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<tr>
<td>You have a wealth of information available, which is great. For me, there has been almost</td>
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<tr>
<td>too much, and it has been hard to chunk it into bite sized pieces for my 5th grade class. I</td>
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<tr>
<td>think my experience will help me progress next year, but I had to dedicate considerable</td>
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<tr>
<td>class time to figure out what I can use as a plug in lesson plan, and what would take</td>
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<tr>
<td>development time.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>