

Status Update, August 2014.

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Summary

At the close of the 2013-2014 school year, we had successfully engaged with eight schools to reach step 2 of 7 within the Eco-Schools framework.

In the winter, we participated in various public outreach events: presenting at Pecha Kucha, visiting a school's Earth Hour event, and participating in BZS's Environmental Youth Conference.

In the spring, we facilitated schools' participation in Earth Day events. We also welcomed our FEE (Foundation for Environmental Education) mentor to the island. She assisted with programme planning and stakeholder engagement by hosting our delivery partners and teachers at informational/networking events as we build involvement in the programme.

In June, we attended the FEE bi-annual General Assembly in Copenhagen to learn from our colleagues around the globe and contribute to the strategic direction of the international members' organization.

Throughout the summer, we have focused on developing support materials to enable a strong continuation, enhancement and development of the programme. Firstly, our "Eco-Schools Bermuda Handbook" is complete and digitally available for anyone interested. We have also secured the opportunity to offer teacher professional development in October on how to effectively implement Eco-Schools. We plan to host teacher focus groups to evaluate links to the curriculum. We will also start to form our Accrediting Committee, who will be responsible for evaluating schools' portfolios for consideration of Green Flag Awards.

Schools

Since November 2013, 8 schools ranging from preschool to college, both public and private, have reached step 1: to form an eco-committee and step 2: to conduct an audit of the 7-step Eco-Schools framework. This range represents an important diversity of participants as we learn about their unique strengths and needs. Their focus in the new school year will be step 3: to create an action plan.

School	Pathway	Eco-Committee Members	Total students at school	Step 2 (audit) completed
Sandys Middle School	Waste	9 students, 2 teachers	240	24 March
Bermuda College	Waste	5 students, 1 professor	1,270	11 April
Warwick Academy	Energy	9 students, 2 teachers	770	7 May
Elliot Primary	Biodiversity	13 students, 1 teacher	270	22 May
Victor Scott Primary	Waste & Energy	14 students, 8 staff	100	2 June
Somersfield Academy	School Grounds	12 students, 2 teachers, 1 parent	460	4 June
West Pembroke Primary	Waste & Energy	26 students, 8 staff	260	6 June
Stepping Stones Preschool	Healthy Living	5 parents, 3 teachers	50	18 July
Total		88 students, 33 adults	3,420	

With a total of 88 students and 33 adults engaged in the programme, they are actively participating in the eco-committee meetings and school campaigns to educate their community on the selected pathway. What has worked well is having a point-person at the school that is dedicated to seeing it through, as well as, of course, students who are excited to be involved. As these core groups expand their reach to the whole school community, through assemblies, events, calls-to-action and other efforts, there is potential to reach over 3,000 students within these 8 schools.

During the 2013-14 school year, 11 other schools (3 public middle, 4 public primary, 4 private) were invited to participate in the programme through staff meetings and follow up conversations. As well, 4 School Roadshows were provided to student and staff audiences in assemblies. This outreach provides a pipeline for future participation. As September approaches, 5 more schools have indicated they will likely sign on in the next school year: Saltus, Heron Bay Primary, West End Primary, Prospect Primary, and Chatmore (based at Windreach).

These schools have been identified as 'ready' to join the programme as they have started various related efforts at their schools and want to benefit from the comprehensive model and resource network (both local and international) available to them. While the programme remains open to any and all schools who are 'ready,' we will focus on supporting these schools to earn their Green Flags.

Elliot Primary School eco-committee planting their cedar tree and conducting their biodiversity audit.



Sandys Middle School conducting their waste audit and showcasing their Eco-Club bulletin board.



Delivery Partners

As one of our core values is collaboration, we have successfully built a network of organisations and government departments who have education and/or environment in their mandates. They will provide the Eco-Schools programme with an element of expertise in their respective areas and benefit from being part of a larger partnership with a comprehensive and expansive reach.

In the first 8 months of the programme, we have secured commitment from various partners: Government Departments of Waste Management, Conservation Services, Planning, Energy, Parks, Health, (Healthy Schools Programme) and Sustainable Development as well, as Keep Bermuda Beautiful, Permaculture Bermuda, Cooper Gardner Architects, Bermuda Environmental Consulting, and Global Action Plan, UK. As the programme grows, we hope to bring on more partners with diverse skill-sets and welcome any recommendations from the community.



Delivery Partners info and networking session with FEE mentor, Lourdes Diaz. (see details below)

Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)

Our mentor spent 2 full days with us and our stakeholders to help enhance and focus our efforts. We hosted our Delivery Partners who were given an overview of the programme's format and some highlights of its success around the world, followed by the opportunity for specific questions. Feedback was extremely positive and inspiring as we look to strengthen these relationships and add more partners to the table.

We also hosted 18 teachers, from 10 schools (6 currently participating and 4 prospective new schools). They were given an overview, an opportunity for questions, followed by a facilitated discussion of what works and where they need further support. Similarly, feedback was encouraging and we came away with a stronger focus of how we can support their progress. They saw the value of being part of an island-wide programme, rather than isolated ad-hoc efforts, as well as being part of an international programme which has been developed over 20 years.



Greenrock was represented at FEE's General Assembly at the UN City in Copenhagen, a requirement of our membership, joining 93 other delegates from 60 of the 68 member countries. We discussed past achievements and areas for future focus. We participated in strategy workshops on how to implement meaningful programmes and develop "actionable knowledge," providing people with the tools to improve the quality of life and focusing on larger systems that impact how we live.

We elected a new, more diversely representative, board of directors, which attests to the global outreach of FEE and its programmes. They ensured that FEE and its members will continue to expand and influence environmental education globally. We were assigned our new mentor from the USA who has a great deal of experience with Eco-Schools and will continue to guide and support us as the programme grows.

