

**JAMES BAY LOWLANDS  
SECONDARY SCHOOL BOARD**

**BOARD GOVERNANCE POLICY  
NO. GOV-18**

Date Adopted	October 24, 2018
Last Revised	
Board Motion	5598-10-18

---

## ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND EDUCATION

---

### 1. PURPOSE

This governance policy highlights the commitment of the James Bay Lowlands Secondary School Board to supporting staff members and students in sharing responsibility for minimizing their impact on the environment and taking an active role in protecting it.

This policy also recognizes that students are more likely to appreciate the natural environment and to see themselves as stewards of the natural world if they participate in an effective outdoor education program.

### 2. DEFINITIONS

**Ecological Footprint:** The ecological footprint is a person's or an organization's cumulative impact upon natural resources.

**Outdoor Education:** Outdoor education is education about the environment, for the environment, and in the environment that promotes an understanding of, rich and active experience in, and an appreciation for the dynamic interactions of:

- the earth's physical and biological systems;
- the dependency of social and economic systems on these natural systems;
- the scientific and human dimensions of environmental issues; and
- the positive and negative consequences, both intended and unintended, of the interactions between human-created and natural systems.

[Ontario Ministry of Education. *Shaping Our Schools, Shaping Our Future*, p. 6]

**Culture and Land-Based Learning Facilities:** Culture and land-based learning facilities and sites refer to locations where students can participate in outdoor, environmental education and land-based learning in a more focused setting through teacher or facilitator-led cross-curricular activities connected to classroom programs. These facilities may be approved through partnerships and agreements with community organizations.

### 3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 3.1. The James Bay Lowlands Secondary School Board is committed to supporting the goals of the Ontario Ministry of Education's *Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools: Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow*.

- 3.2. In striving to prepare students in Northern Lights Secondary School to become responsible members of a democratic, sustainable, and just society, the Board supports curriculum initiatives that support this commitment to sustainable environmental initiatives.
- 3.3. The staff will implement the Ontario Curriculum Grades 9 to 12, *Environmental Education: Scope and Sequence of Expectations*, with the goal of preparing students with the knowledge, skills, perspectives, and practices they need to be environmentally responsible citizens.
- 3.4. Students need to understand the connections among people on this planet and with all living things. Students need to be aware of their connections with the natural world through relationships with food, water, energy, air, and land.
- 3.5. The Board will provide opportunities within the classroom, in outdoor education, and in the community for students to engage in activities that deepen this understanding.

## **POLICY**

### **4. POLICY: ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP**

- 4.1 The James Bay Lowlands Secondary School Board promotes changes in organizational practices that will result in reducing the Board's ecological footprint.
- 4.2 The Board will model environmental stewardship in the selection and use of all resources; for example:
  - reducing the use of consumable supplies and energy while simultaneously reducing waste;
  - reducing the impact on air quality of mobile emission sources;
  - engaging all members of the Board in activities that reflect the Board's commitment to environmental sustainability; and
  - providing leadership that supports environmental/outdoor education as part of student learning.
- 4.3 The Board will:
  - a) strive to ensure that Northern Lights Secondary School students progress towards being environmentally responsible citizens;
  - b) encourage the staff and students to reduce the generation of waste material, to reuse products and materials, and to recycle non-hazardous materials;
  - c) store and dispose of hazardous materials in a safe manner and in accordance with legislative requirements;
  - d) recognize responsible environmental actions and leadership within the organization; and
  - e) integrate local and global environmental awareness into the curriculum.

## 5. POLICY: OUTDOOR EDUCATION

- 5.1 The James Bay Lowlands Secondary School Board is committed to providing students with multiple opportunities to learn about themselves and the natural world through outdoor education.
- 5.2 The Board believes that the goal of outdoor education is to empower students toward a comfort with, and appreciation of, the natural environment as well as developing the knowledge and competence necessary to interact safely and respectfully on the land.
- 5.3 As future stewards of the natural world, students will also need to refine their critical thinking skills upon which to base respectful and sustainable decisions in the future.
- 5.4 The Board is dedicated to promoting outdoor learning opportunities that allow all participants to experience the restorative benefits of being immersed in nature and immersed as well in the cultural practices inherent in traditional land-based learning.
- 5.5 The Board is committed to enhancing the lives of all learners through experiential outdoor education activities that are connected to the curriculum and delivered outside the school, within the community, and at approved outdoor education camps and facilities.

## 6. BOARD EXPECTATIONS

### 6.1 Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- reviewing the *Environmental Stewardship and Education Policy* in accordance with the priorities in the trustee's Multi-Year Plan and the approved policy review cycle; and
- understanding and communicating with members of the community about the *Environmental Stewardship and Education Policy* as required.

### 6.2 Responsibilities of the Supervisory Officer

The Supervisory Officer is responsible for:

- implementing the application of the *Environmental Stewardship and Education Policy* and ensuring that all necessary procedures are in place to subsequently ensure the safety and care of students at all times.

### 6.3 Responsibilities of the Superintendent of Student Success

The Superintendent of Student Success is responsible for:

- supporting the application and implementation of the *Environmental Stewardship and Education Policy*, and in particular, ensuring that staff have access to all necessary training and support as required for the safe execution of outdoor and land-based learning opportunities;

- ensuring that all necessary administrative operational procedures are in place and updated as required to support the safe undertaking of all outdoor and land-based learning experiences.

#### **6.4 Responsibilities of the School Principal**

The school principal is responsible for:

- encouraging teachers to incorporate outdoor education experiences into their programs, where appropriate;
- informing teachers and parents of opportunities that exist for students at outdoor education facilities such as Culture and Land-Based Learning sites;
- engaging parents in discussions regarding the nature and value of outdoor education programs;
- ensuring that all staff are aware of the administrative and operational procedures relating to outdoor and land-based learning and are following the guidelines correctly in terms of the specific activities and learning experiences taking place outside of the school and classroom.

#### **6.5 Responsibilities of Teachers**

Teachers are responsible for:

- incorporating outdoor education into their instructional program where appropriate and adhering to all administrative procedures and operational guidelines for the safe conducting of outdoor and land-based learning opportunities.

#### **6.6 Responsibilities for Students**

Students, with direction from the principal and teachers, are responsible for:

- actively participating in outdoor education programs and activities;
- acting with reasonable care towards themselves and others in accordance with all Board and school policies and procedures during their participation in outdoor education programs to contribute to a safe and educational experience.

#### **6.7 Responsibilities for Parents**

Parents/Guardians are responsible for:

- encouraging their child's participation in outdoor education programs.

**REFERENCE DOCUMENTS****Legal:**

*Education Act: Section 169.1 Duties and Powers of Boards: Responsibility for student achievement and stewardship of resources*

*Education Act, Paragraph 218.1 (f): Day to Day Management: Chief Executive Officer*

*Education Act: Subsection 283 (2) Chief Executive Officer: Develop and maintain an effective organization*

Canadian Council of Ministers of Education (2008) *Learn Canada 2020*.

Ontario Ministry of Education (2007) *Shaping Our Schools, Shaping Our Future: Environmental Education in Ontario Schools, Report of the Working Group on Environmental Education*.

Ontario Ministry of Education (2009) *Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools*.

Ontario Ministry of Education (2017) *Environmental Education: Scope and Sequence of Expectations. The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 to 12*.

**Board References:**

Board Policy GOV-01 Values, Vision, and Mission

Board Policy GOV-05 Multi-Year Strategic Plan

Administrative Procedure 205 Land Based Learning

Administrative Procedure 206 School Excursions

FORM 206-A Local Excursion Approval

FORM 206-B School Excursion Parental/Guardian Consent

FORM 206-C Medical Information

FORM 206-D Extended Excursion Approval

FORM 206-E Out-of-Town Excursion Approval in Principle

FORM 206-F Parent Information and Consent for High-Risk Activities

**Resource:**

Ontario Ministry of Education (2007) *Ready, Set, Green! Tips, Techniques, and Resources from Ontario Educators*