

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Code **IHAO** *Issued* **4/05**

Purpose: To establish the board's vision for environmental education.

The board bases its policy concerning environmental education on the belief that the quality of life and ultimately the question of survival depend upon our ability to live in harmony with the physical environment. Our school must provide cross-disciplinary experiences leading to the knowledge, skills and positive attitudes that will enable society to develop a balanced use of natural resources. The balanced use must recognize the concurrent rights of present and future generations.

A basic aim of all environmental education is to succeed in making individuals and communities understand the complex nature of the natural and the built environments. This complex nature results from the interaction of biological, physical, social, economic and cultural aspects. Environmental education must allow individuals and communities to acquire the knowledge, values, attitudes and practical skills to participate in a responsible and effective way in anticipating and solving environmental problems and in the management of the quality of the environment.

A further basic aim of environmental education is clearly to show the economic, political and ecological interdependence of the modern world in which decisions and actions by the different countries can have international repercussions. Environmental education should help to develop a sense of responsibility and solidarity among countries and regions as the foundation for a new international order which will guarantee the conservation and improvement of the environment.

The following are the goals of environmental education.

- to foster clear awareness of, and concern about, economic, social, political and ecological interdependence in urban and rural areas
- to provide every person with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, values, attitudes, commitment and skills needed to protect and improve the environment
- to create new patterns of behavior of individuals, groups and society as a whole towards the environment

The board believes that environmental education gives dimension to our appreciation of the earth. Environmental practices should take the student one step beyond learning and appreciation by encouraging a commitment to personal action in daily life. Our ultimate objective is to improve the attitudes and life styles of our students, both as individuals and as members of society, so as to be in harmony with the environment.

The board believes that environmental education should be developed as a theme woven through the existing program at all levels. Environmental education should relate topics, concepts, knowledge and skills now found in the existing curriculum and/or in supplementary programs to an overall program of environmental education.

The board encourages all teachers, within the bounds of individual teaching style and subject choice preference, to weave environmental concerns into other subject matter in ways comfortable and satisfying to the teacher and meaningful and relevant to the students.

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Teachers should encourage students to interact with one another and their teachers, sharing their observations and opinions on the need for wise, compatible uses of our air, water, soil, forest, mineral, fuel, wildlife and human resources. Where appropriate, teachers should encourage students to develop their attitudes of awareness and concern into meaningful and constructive action.

The administration will assist and support the teaching staff in developing and coordinating programs and activities relevant to environmental education. The board supports the use of, and inservice education in, existing programs in environmental education where these programs meet district criteria concerning program quality and orientation.

Adopted 10/16/84; Revised 8/13/91, 4/12/05