

Leadership and The Way We Green

Using the Leadership Cards in an Elementary Classroom

Introduction

Clean air, land and water are all required for Edmontonians to enjoy healthy lives and a high standard of living that fulfills social and cultural needs. A healthy environment is the foundation for our existence and quality of life.

Six broad topic areas are addressed in The Way We Green. Within these six topic areas are 12 long-term goals that describe a sustainable and resilient Edmonton. The “classroom cards” provide information and questions to spark discussion about Edmonton’s environmental future and Edmonton’s environmental strategic plan, The Way We Green.

Context

The Way We Green (TWWG) is one of six plans the City of Edmonton is implementing. These plans are part of the Transforming Edmonton initiative that describes a long-term vision, achievable through careful planning and decision making. The cornerstone of Transforming Edmonton is the City’s strategic plan, The Way Ahead. This 10-year planning framework guides the evolution of the City and is accompanied by six detailed plans.

1. The Way We Grow (Municipal Development Plan)
2. The Way We Move (Transportation Master Plan)
3. The Way We Live (People Plan)
4. The Way We Finance (Financial Sustainability Plan)
5. The Way We Prosper (Economic Development Plan)
6. The Way We Green (Environmental Strategic Plan)

The Way We Green is Edmonton’s environmental sustainability plan supporting the City’s vision and 10-year strategic goals. It is a bold and visionary strategy for making Edmonton the nation’s leader in setting and achieving the highest standards of environmental sustainability in its own practices and by encouraging the same of citizens, businesses and institutions.

Like each of the other strategic plans, The Way We Green will be revisited and updated as necessary. It is critical that this plan remain current and continues to reflect the changing external pressures, demographics, ideas and values of Edmontonians.

The Way We Green’s two main focus areas are sustainability and resilience.

Contributing to The Way We Green

We each have a role to play in ensuring a healthy environment. This set of “classroom cards” is a great tool to familiarize yourself and your students with the goals outlined in The Way We Green, and discussing the role we can all play, as leaders, to bring this strategy to life.

Using the Cards

The classroom cards were designed for use in elementary school, grades one to six. They are meant as a foundation for discussion, with an adult or mature student leading each group.

Originally formatted for double-sided printing on 11"x17" paper, they will also print on 8.5"x11" paper without distortion. Laminating the cards will make them durable for long-term use.

Print one set of cards, double-sided.

To introduce the topic, hold the card up for the class to see the large image or word, and follow the text on the back of the card, reading pertinent information aloud or asking questions to lead the class in a discussion. Next, find the leadership card that matches the topic, and circulate to small groups for students to learn how citizens are taking leadership roles that contribute to achieving the goals of The Way We Green.

Alternatively, you might conserve paper by projecting the cards onto a screen or viewing the cards on personal electronic devices.

Other ideas for using the cards

A. Weekly Conversations

Spread the learning over several weeks. Each week, choose two or three topics to discuss and eventually your students will have had the opportunity to learn about all of the topics addressed in The Way We Green, and learn about leadership at many levels. In what ways do your students show leadership?

B. Small Group Work

Using a "jigsaw method" assign groups of students to become experts in one of the topic areas. After each small group has had time to review, research and discuss their topic, they can present their discoveries to the whole class.

C. Focus on a Few

Choose two or three of the topic areas that tie directly to your curriculum and focus your conversation around those. This could naturally lead to whole-room, in-depth discussions about the study concepts. You may want to cover all topics over the course of the year, aligning discussions with the curriculum.

More Information

Visit edmonton.ca/TheWayWeGreen.

There you will find discussion papers, interviews, videos and summary documents to provide you with a wide range of information through a variety of media.

Click the "Take Action" tab and scroll to Green School Programs to find information about student grants and teaching resources pertaining to sustainability or environmental leadership.

Share your and your students' insights and ideas by sending them to:

thewaywegreen@edmonton.ca