

NO: R208

COUNCIL DATE: **September 12, 2016**

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## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **August 8, 2016**

FROM: **General Manager, Planning and Development  
General Manager, Engineering  
Manager, Sustainability**

FILE: **0512-02**

SUBJECT: **Sustainability Education Program in Surrey Schools**

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## RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Development Department, the Engineering Department, and the Sustainability Office recommend that Council receive this report as information.

## INTENT

This report provides an update on a sustainability education program delivered in Surrey schools during the 2015-2016 school year, and outlines next steps for the program.

## BACKGROUND

On May 30, 2016, Council received Corporate Report No. R112; 2016 titled "Sustainability Charter 2.0 for a Thriving, Green, Inclusive City", and approved the updated Sustainability Charter as the overarching policy document for the City. The Charter includes desired outcomes under eight community themes, including Education and Culture, Infrastructure, and Ecosystems.

## DISCUSSION

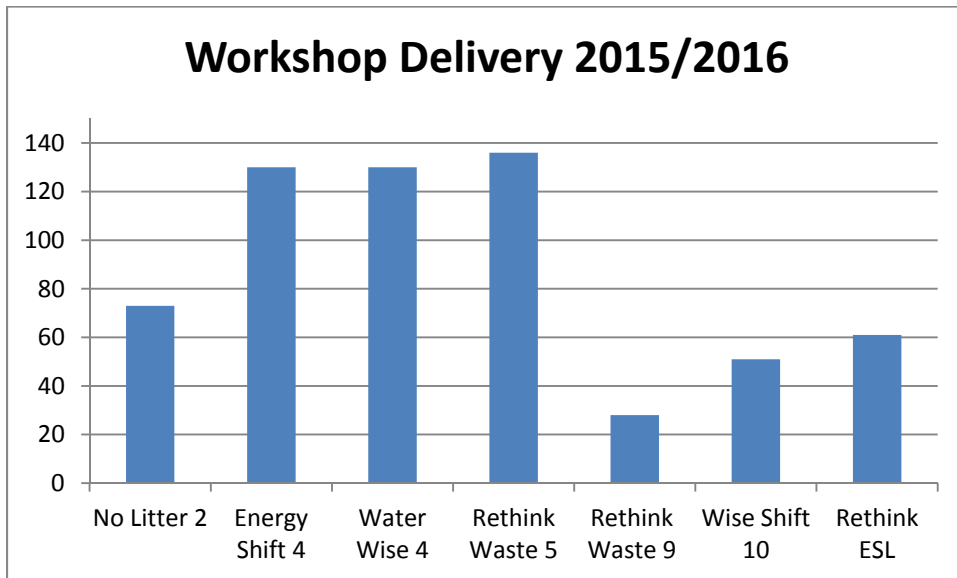
In 2015, the Sustainability Office and the Engineering Department developed a school education program focused on sustainability. Building on the success of previous educational programs delivered by the City – including Swap for Five and the Climate Change Showdown – the new program combined waste diversion and no-litter education with water and energy conservation to form a comprehensive sustainability education program geared to Grades 2 through 10.

Specifically, the Grade 2 program focused on no littering, the Grade 4 programs included both water conservation (Water Wise) and energy conservation (Energy Shift) modules, and Rethink Waste programs were developed for both Grades 5 and 9. A Grade 10 program called "Wise Shift" combined water and energy conservation learnings. Finally, a Rethink Waste module was also developed for an adult ESL audience.

The goal was to create a more comprehensive sustainability education program that could connect these important issues - for example, water and energy conservation are closely linked - while creating program efficiencies and streamlining City educational outreach to schools in Surrey. Staff further integrated City projects and messaging into the programs.

Following a procurement process, Skye Consulting was retained to deliver this collaborative program in the pilot 2015-2016 school year, with an annual budget of \$142,000.00. The original goal was to deliver a total of 550 workshops spanning all modules and grades. During this first delivery year, the program was able to reach a total of 609 classrooms and well over 13,000 Surrey students in 95 schools across the City. The schools included Surrey School District 36 elementary, secondary and adult learning centres, and a few private schools. It should be noted that some schools received multiple modules; for example, a Grade 4 teacher may have booked both the Water Wise and the Energy Shift workshops.

The consultants were able to spread the program deliveries out over the school year. Midway through the school year, the City approved a slight increase in program delivery numbers to significantly reduce the wait list, as the demand was very high from teachers. Below is a chart showing workshops delivered:



Feedback from teachers at all levels was extremely positive. They found the programs to be very informative, visually engaging, and clear and interactive, with many hands-on activities, such as building a solar car.

The contract allows for up to three one-year extensions; the consultant will be retained to deliver the second year of the program in 2016-2017. The budget for program delivery in 2016-2017 is \$150,000.00, with financial contributions from Engineering and the Sustainability Office.

Program improvements and outreach goals for the upcoming school year include: aligning with the new BC curriculum; expanding the number of programs offered particularly to Surrey secondary schools; and developing a more quantitative measure of impact from program delivery (e.g., through a student survey to capture the take-away learnings).

## **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

The sustainability education program in Surrey schools provides education to Surrey students on waste diversion as well as energy and water conservation, which are related to the Sustainability

Charter 2.0 themes of Ecosystems, Infrastructure, and Education and Culture. Specifically, the education program supports the following Desired Outcomes:

**Ecosystems DO 6:** Water supports healthy ecosystem functioning.

**Education and Culture DO 1:** Surrey has a culture of learning, with a broad range of diverse learning opportunities available and accessible to meet the needs of all residents.

**Infrastructure DO 15:** All water is used efficiently and per capita water use is decreasing year over year.

**Infrastructure DO 19:** Residents and businesses are conscious of their consumer choices and reuse existing materials first.

**Infrastructure DO 21:** The City is moving toward a zero waste target, in line with regional waste diversion goals.

The program also supports the following Strategic Directions:

**Education and Culture SD 6:** Cultivate a culture of sustainability through community education and engagement.

**Infrastructure SD 14:** Provide tools and educational resources that support residents and businesses to reduce consumption.

## CONCLUSION

The sustainability education program delivered throughout schools in Surrey during the 2015-2016 school year reached over 600 classes and well over 13,000 students, and will continue into the new school year. Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council receive this report as information.

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