

Paper Use Reduction in Schools *Suggestions & Guidance*

General Tips

- Adopt a school “Paper Use Reduction” goal and policy that promotes the use of electronic media and incorporates paper use reduction requirements, such as double-sided copying and printing.
- Change the default setting of all photocopiers and printers to double-sided copying. Post signs to promote double-sided copying.
- Reuse paper that has been printed on one side for draft printing or note paper.
- Educate staff and students about the environmental and economic impact of paper and ways to conserve.
- Choose paper products that contain recycled content, including office paper, paper towels, and napkins.
- Centralize purchasing to reduce unnecessary purchases and ensure that waste reduction purchasing policies are followed. Track paper usage to optimize ordering.
- Consider installing hand dryers in restrooms instead of paper towel dispensers.
- Start a school “material exchange” for paper, unwanted paper, and other items.
- Promote recycling and have easily accessible bins in classrooms, libraries, study areas, at all copiers and printers, and hallways.

In the Classroom

- Encourage on-line learning.
 - Upload lesson plans, books, and activities onto classroom computers and read aloud to students or have students read independently, instead of printing instructional materials.
 - Allow students to hand in work via email. Review and grade on computer.
- Email school assignments or post on the school Website instead of handing them out.
- Encourage staff, teachers, and students to edit and review materials on the computer and only print the final version—if necessary.
- Use the chalkboard/whiteboard more and handouts less.
- Ensure that necessary paper handouts make the most efficient use of a sheet of paper, by using the appropriate size – half or quarter sheets instead of full, decreasing margins, using fonts that are space efficient (for example Times Roman instead of Arial).
- Collect paper used only on one side to make new notebooks or place in a box for use as scrap paper.
- Reduce or eliminate newspaper, magazine, and catalogue deliveries and subscribe online.
 - Use the [Catalog Choice](#) Web tool to prevent unwanted catalog deliveries.
- Select only the Yellow Page directories you want (or none at all) by using the [Local Search Association Web tool](#).
- Eliminate “junk mail” by using the [Direct Mail Association opt-out tool](#).

Office/Teacher Work Area

- Create and distribute publications, reports, and memos electronically.
- Post memos or announcements on a central bulletin board or electronically on the school Website.
- Use routing slips (backs of used paper) for periodicals and other necessary printed materials instead of sending out individual copies.
- Reuse file folders by reversing the folders or applying new labels.
- Reuse envelopes for internal mailings or filing.
- Use the public address system or homeroom representatives to convey messages.
- Don't print out emails unnecessarily.
- Review and edit draft documents on-screen by using the word processing "track change" feature instead of printing out hard copies for markup. Check spelling and grammar, and use the "print preview" feature to review prior to printing.
- Implement office intranet or Web-based solutions that allow open or password-protected access to documents, presentations, or databases for school staff file sharing.
- When printing documents is necessary, adjust the default settings to use a smaller font and wider margins.
- Reuse old cardboard boxes for storage or for packaging outgoing materials.
- Make scratch pads from used paper.
- Eliminate unnecessary forms. Double-side forms or redesign them to fit on a half sheet or to be used via electronic mail.
- Use electronic storage whenever practical instead of storing hard copies.
- Set up a "reuse box" near the copy or print machines to store one-sided sheets.
- Fill the fax machine with paper already used on one side and print faxes on the other side, or switch to paper-less fax delivery.
- Use fax "stickies" instead of full page cover sheets, or write or stamp the first page of the fax with transmission information.

Measurements of Success

- *Paper measurements:*
 - Decreased paper purchasing
 - Increased paper recycling
 - Reduced waste generation
 - Increased recycled content paper purchasing
- *Financial measurements:*
 - Reduced paper purchasing costs
 - Reduced toner and ink cartridge costs
 - Reduced printing, postage, and handling costs
 - Reduced disposal costs
 - Total annual savings. Remember to include any labor costs associated with your program.
- *Other measurements:*
 - Staff satisfaction
 - Reduced copy and printer wear and repairs
 - Reduced storage needs.

- *Environmental Measurements:*

Every one ton (2,000 pounds) of paper and cardboard recycled can save¹:

- Save enough energy to power the average American home for six months.
- Save 7,000 gallons of water.
- Save 3.3 cubic yards of landfill space.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by one metric ton of carbon equivalent (MTCE).

A “Sample Paper Reduction Memo” and “Sample Signage for posting by Copy Machines and Printers” are attached to this document.

NERC’s [Rural School Waste Reduction, Recycling, and Composting Tip Sheets, Case Studies, and Webinar Presentations](#) are available for free download (<http://www.nerc.org/documents/#SchoolWaste>).

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¹ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (<http://www.epa.gov/osw/consERVE/materials/paper/basics/>)

INTERNAL MEMO

TO: Teachers and Staff
FROM: School Superintendent
RE: School Paper Use Reduction
DATE:

Over that past few years we have been successful at reducing our paper usage. However, I know we can do better!! The School District still uses several tons of paper and spends thousands of dollars on paper purchases. In times of limited school budgets, reducing our paper use can save us significant amounts of money. Starting immediately, the School District is embarking on a new Paper Use Reduction Campaign.

The core components of Paper Use Reduction Campaign will be:

- Reducing paper usage by relying on email distribution, Website file sharing and posting, and emphasizing a creator use of online and computer-based learning and working.
- Implementing a District wide policy of double-sided copying, reuse of one-sided copies as scrap paper, and appropriately sizing memos that must be printed (e.g., half sheet instead of whole.)

Everyone's participation in our Paper Use Reduction Campaign is vital. This is an important effort for the School District, not just because it will save us money in paper purchasing and disposal, but because it can make an important contribution to the environment. The production of paper has a substantial impact on the environment, significantly reducing forests, emitting toxic pollution from production processes, and unnecessarily filling our landfills with paper products.

Attached is a list of guidelines for you to follow in participating in our Paper Use Reduction Campaign. Please review it and begin implementing these procedures immediately.

Every individual effort makes a huge collective difference! Thanks for participating in our paper use reduction campaign!

Two sides are better than one

**Please make double-sided copies for all
memos, reports, and other
printed materials.**