



SD42 Sustainability and Energy Management Newsletter

An initiative by the Energy and Environmental Sustainability division of the SD42 Facilities Department

ISSUE NO. 6 – February 2026

1. About Us

Sustainability remains one of the most significant movements of our time, and SD42 students play a crucial role in leading it. The Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows School District facilities department collaborates with BC Hydro, FortisBC, and CleanBC to make our schools more energy efficient while reducing our carbon footprint and operating costs.

This newsletter highlights the district's ongoing sustainability initiatives and achievements. Across our schools, students and staff are taking action to make our community—and our world—more sustainable.

We welcome stories from schools and students for future editions and encourage contributions from anyone passionate about sustainability and environmental stewardship.

2. SD42 Eco-Challenge Week Is Now Live (Feb 23-27)

The energy and sustainability team, with support from BC Hydro, invites schools to take part in SD42 Eco-Challenge Week — a voluntary, district-wide sustainability challenge for students.

Classes or student groups can form one team per school (10+ students) to complete simple daily activities focused on energy conservation, waste reduction, and climate action.

Daily themes (Feb. 23–26):

- Reduce Electricity
- Reduce Natural Gas
- Reduce Waste
- PowerSmart for Schools

Teams submit a short description and photo using the QR code in the Eco-Challenge package (*student image guidelines apply*).

Climate Action Pledge Day (Feb. 27):

Students submit an individual climate action commitment (no photo required).

Prizes

- Eight pizza lunches (up to five large pizzas per team) for days 1 to 4
- 125 individual prizes for day 5



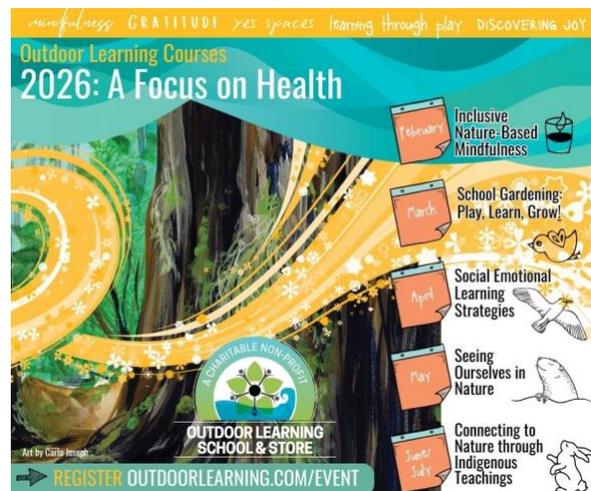
Program Reference 1: Energy Wise Network (BC Hydro)

3. Outdoor Learning Spaces

This article has been written with contributions from Jade Barrell, Director of Learning with the Outdoor Learning School and Store.

Outdoor learning spaces provide valuable opportunities for students to connect with nature, support well-being, and engage in hands-on, place-based learning. Using outdoor environments as an extension of the classroom can enhance learning across subject areas and foster curiosity, collaboration, and engagement.

A variety of organizations offer resources to support educators interested in outdoor and place-based learning. These may include practical guides, activity ideas, professional learning opportunities, and tools designed to make outdoor instruction accessible and easy to implement in school settings.



Program Reference 2: Outdoor Learning Spaces & Store

One of these resources is the free online virtual workshops offered by the Outdoor Learning School and Store for teachers. For more information, visit <https://outdoorlearning.com/events/category/workshops/>

4. Understanding Energy and How We Can Use It More Wisely

Energy is essential to how our schools and communities function every day. It powers our lights, heats and cools our buildings, runs computers and classroom equipment, and supports transportation systems. While energy enables learning and comfort, it also comes with environmental and financial impacts — making energy conservation an important part of sustainability efforts.

What Is Energy?

In simple terms, energy is the ability to do work. In schools, energy is commonly used in the form of:

- Electricity – lighting, computers, projectors, and other equipment
- Natural gas – heating classrooms, gyms, and common areas
- Fuel – transportation and fleet vehicles

Much of the energy we use is still produced from non-renewable sources, which contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. Using energy efficiently helps reduce emissions, lower operating costs, and support a healthier environment for current and future generations.

Why Energy Conservation Matters in SD42

Energy conservation directly supports the district’s commitments to environmental stewardship, climate responsibility, and resource management. Reducing unnecessary energy use allows the district to reinvest savings into classrooms, learning resources, and facility improvements, while also modelling sustainable practices for students.

Conserving energy is not about sacrificing comfort or learning — it is about using energy thoughtfully and avoiding waste.

Simple Actions That Make a Difference

Small, consistent actions across schools and homes can lead to meaningful energy savings.

In Classrooms and Offices

- Turn off lights when rooms are unoccupied or when natural daylight is sufficient
- Shut down computers, monitors, and projectors at the end of the day
- Keep doors and windows closed when heating or cooling systems are operating
- Report heating, cooling, or lighting issues so they can be addressed promptly

In Common Areas

- Be mindful of after-hours use of gyms, multipurpose rooms, and meeting spaces
- Ensure equipment is turned off after events and activities
- Encourage shared responsibility for energy awareness

At Home

- Turn off lights and electronics when not in use
- Use energy-efficient settings on appliances
- Dress appropriately for the season to reduce heating and cooling demands

Energy conservation is a shared responsibility. By understanding how energy is used and taking simple steps to reduce waste, students and staff contribute to a culture of sustainability that aligns with the district's broader climate and environmental goals.

Every action — no matter how small — helps reduce our environmental footprint and supports a more sustainable future for our school community.

5. Supporting Green Transportation Through the Food Infrastructure Program

As part of School District 42's ongoing commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable operations, the district added an electric vehicle (EV) to its fleet earlier this year through the Food Infrastructure Program (FIP), funded by the Ministry of Infrastructure.

The Food Infrastructure Program supports investments that strengthen school food programs and related operational infrastructure. Integrating an electric vehicle into this program helps ensure that food services are supported by reliable, efficient, and low-emission transportation, aligning operational needs with the district's sustainability goals.

To support this initiative, SD42 has successfully commissioned a dedicated EV charging station at Riverside Centre. The charger has been installed specifically to support the new EV and ensure dependable charging for Food Infrastructure Program operations.

The electric vehicle and dedicated charging station demonstrate how programs can support modern, efficient, and environmentally responsible infrastructure. This project reflects the district's commitment to integrating sustainability into operational decision-making, while continuing to support essential student programs.



Program Reference 3: Food Infrastructure Program

6. An Update on the Tree Planting Drive with the City of Maple Ridge

The City of Maple Ridge continues to work closely with School District 42 to engage students in hands-on environmental action through tree planting initiatives across the city.

Since the last planting event, students from Laity View Elementary, Samuel Robertson Technical, and Thomas Haney Secondary have come together to help green their community. The energy, teamwork, and positive spirit shown by students at each planting made the events truly memorable. 116 trees were planted in total, marking a significant contribution to local green spaces. This project was funded through the [Growing Canada's Community Canopies](#) initiative and supported by the city and district staff.

Beyond planting trees, the activity provided students with an opportunity to learn about the important role trees play in addressing climate change, improving air quality, and enhancing community well-being. Students worked collaboratively and took pride in knowing their efforts would benefit the community for years to come.

Following the success of this initiative, SD42 schools and the City of Maple Ridge are planning to host more tree planting events together in the future. Photos from the recent planting events are below, capturing the enthusiasm and impact of the day.



Program Reference 4: Growing Canada's Community Canopies Program, Government of Canada, 2025

7. What is going on at your school?

If your school is leading an environmental initiative or hosting a green project, we'd love to hear about it and feature your story in the next issue.

Please contact:
Ashish Dev
Energy and Environmental Sustainability Manager
ashish_dev@sd42.ca

Together, we're building a greener and more sustainable SD42!
