

CARBON SINK SCHOOLS PROGRAM Newsletter

Hello CSS,

You are a brave band! 20 schools attempting to chart a pathway for all schools towards a 'decarbonised' world. Not easy and it will take a few years but your efforts over the short term could be very influential across Australia. Like Hovell and Hume, Flinders, Cook and many others you are mapping the terrain and searching for the passage to a new society and economy. As they say, 'a journey of a thousand miles starts with the first few steps' and these are the ones we are now taking together.

So what are these first few steps? We have sent you this special newsletter to remind you of what we need to have done by now and where we are headed next.

Check your folders and CDs.

It is essential that you have now completed these initial steps:

- the MoU and payment of \$500
- the introductory visit
- have planned or completed the whole staff presentation
- have all your billing data (including 2008) for waste, water, energy, etc on SETS (note if you are not on SETS we pay to put you on..it is vital you have your data on SETS for your own ease of access and use). Check the new SETS feature later this month which will accept your original baseline data and have an extra space for tree planting numbers and automatic greenhouse gas conversions for the waste stream etc.
Could these schools pay special attention to their SETS record: Billanook College, Brunswick South PS, Croydon Hill PS, Eltham North PS, Kingswood College, St. Francis of the Fields.
- started using some of the ideas and surveys in the 'School Greenhouse Saver' to generate new ideas
- check your existing energy audit to see how you are performing against the recommendations
- tick off on your accreditation checklist (new version) to ensure you are progressing

And now we are preparing the next few steps:

(some references to these have been made in previous CERESly Sustainable Newsletters and extracts are provided here).

- **Solar Schools** - see **extract 1**. All our CSS should be thinking of a submission singly or as a group. Mark Smith is able to advise on submissions (0425 734 904)
- **Green Electricity** - see **extract 2**. Are you choosing green electricity for the school? Would you like to use green electricity as a fundraiser through Jack Green? See **graph** from a school.

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- **Carbon assessment.** If you have completed the initial steps, book in Mark Smith and your own mentor (Eric or Glenn) so they can do a walk through assessment at your school. Do this booking through Mark. See **extract 3** for range of measures to think about
- **Home calculator from Carbonetix** <http://fossilfueldiet.com.au>. Have your students use this on their own homes and collect the data at school so you can track changes in homes you have influenced (great homework assignment and link to Jack Green fundraiser)
- **Offsets for your CO2** - Consider a student fund raiser if you need to buy carbon offsets to neutralise your emissions. This could take the form of supporting renewable energy projects in villages in developing countries through purchase of approved offsets. Contact Eric (9380 1556) about these opportunities.
- **School travel offsets** - see **extract 4**. Purchasing offsets for school excursions to make them carbon neutral.
- **Media Releases** - see **extract 5**. Publicise your accomplishments and please remember to refer to Dept.of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts-Commonwealth Government, CERES, Planet Savers, Carbonetix, Australian Carbon Traders as appropriate. We need to encourage the government funding bodies by citing them.

Looking forward to making early contacts in Term 2,
Eric Bottomley

EXTRACTS REFERRED TO IN CHECKLISTS:**Extract 1****National Solar Schools Program**

Following the news by Lindsay Tanner, Minister for Finance, in our last issue, Peter Garrett has now elaborated on the National Solar Schools program. The website provides details of which elements can be funded.

We are still urging that this support be linked to an expanded AuSSI to ensure educational and organisational changes accompany the technologies

Dear Principal,

The Australian Government recognises that we all want clean air, healthy waterways and green spaces for our children to play in. That's why the Government is committed to helping our schools take practical action to tackle climate change and conserve our precious water supplies, providing every student in Australia with a working example of solar power, and energy and water efficiency.

You may already be familiar with the previous government's Green Vouchers for Schools program to support schools in installing rainwater tanks and solar hot water systems. Following feedback from schools, the government is replacing this program with a new, more flexible initiative.

Under the \$489 million National Solar Schools Program, every school in Australia is eligible to apply for grants of up to \$50,000 to install 2 kilowatt solar panels and a range of energy efficiency measures such as lighting upgrades, sky lights and shade awnings, in addition to rainwater tanks and solar hot water systems. This new program represents an additional Australian Government investment of \$153 million, allowing schools to choose the most effective way to meet their energy and water efficiency goals. I expect this new program to be in place by 1 July 2008.

Enclosed is a brief fact sheet outlining the broad scope of the National Solar Schools

Program, which may assist in your future planning. Given the broader range of items available, I expect that most schools will wish to wait and access this new program. I will write to you to outline the next steps for participating in the program as soon as the details are finalised.

However, reflecting the importance of tackling climate change and to ensure that no schools are disadvantaged by the changeover, Green Vouchers for Schools will remain open for claims until the new program opens and schools can choose to claim for eligible items either purchased for contracted prior to 1 July 2008. Amounts claimed under Green Vouchers will be deducted from a school's entitlement under the new National Solar Schools Program.

If you wish to access Green Vouchers funding, further information about registering and lodging a claim is available at <http://www.environment.gov.au/greenvouchers> or by contacting the Australian Government Community Water Grants Team on 12800 020 065.

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The Australian Government is keen to support schools in developing energy and water efficiency initiatives. This new and more flexible program is designed with the individual needs of schools in mind. We look forward to helping you take practical action to tackle climate change, use energy and water more efficiently and to save money in your school.

*Yours sincerely,
Peter Garrett AM
6 February 2008*

The National Solar Schools Program will help Australian schools take practical action over the next eight years to tackle climate change as part of the government's Solar Schools - Solar Homes Plan. The program is expected to be launched in July 2008.

The National Solar Schools Program will offer grants of up to:

- \$20,000 for solar technology and to support the installation of 2kW solar panels; and
- \$30,000 to invest in any combination of solar hot water systems, rainwater tanks, and passive solar innovations such as sky lights, shade awnings, lighting upgrades, extended solar power systems or other energy efficiency measures

The maximum amount any school can claim under the National Solar Schools Program is \$50,000. The amount of funding a school is eligible for will be reduced by the full amount of any claim made under the Green Vouchers for Schools Program.

Projects funded under the National Solar Schools Program must meet certain requirements.

- The works must be carried out at a clearly defined school site
- The supply and installation of any photovoltaic system must be done by an accredited renewable energy designer/installer
- All works must be completed by a suitably qualified person and installed according to relevant Australian Standards
- The cost of on-ground works must be related to the installation of eligible items
- All the necessary Federal, State and local government regulations must be met and approvals obtained.

It is anticipated that schools will complete their projects within six months of receiving funding.

Schools will need to carefully research options to ensure they get the best value out of their National Solar Schools Program funding. This may include conducting an energy and water use efficiency audit at the planning stage and contacting an accredited designer/installer to discuss the best solar system options, and the best combination of energy and water efficiency improvements.

For more information on the Federal Labor's National Solar Schools Program, please visit <http://www.alp.org.au/media/1007/msCCloo250.php>

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Extract 2 - Green Electricity

Jackgreen Energy

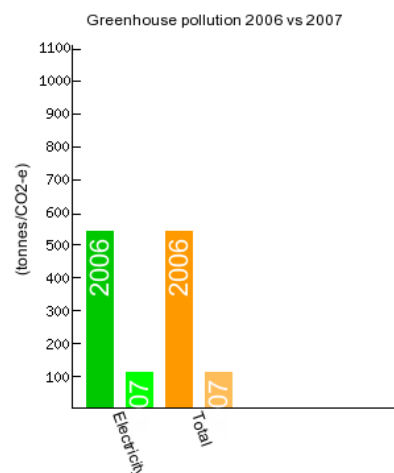
Jackgreen Energy, one of Australia's leading retailers of accredited renewable energy is working with schools to encourage as many people as possible to switch to GreenPower.



Jackgreen have agreed to donate \$35 to schools for each parent and teacher household which switches to Jackgreen GreenPower and select their school.

They have one of the lowest prices on 100% GreenPower and even have a 10% GreenPower product for no extra cost. Register your interest with michelle@ceres.org.au

Energy Source	Measurement	2006	2007	Yearly Reduction	Percent Reduction
Electricity ^a	Usage (kWh)	392,658	79,877	312,781	80%
	Cost (\$)	12,045	3,978	8,067	67%
	Greenhouse pollution (tonnes/CO ₂ -e)	536	106	430	80%
Yearly Totals	Usage (GJ)	1,414	288	1,126	80%
	Cost (\$)	12,045	3,978	8,067	67%
	Greenhouse pollution (tonnes/CO ₂ -e)	536	106	430	80%
Yearly Metrics	Number of Students	363			
	Greenhouse pollution per student (tonnes CO ₂ -e/student)	1.48			%



Extract 3

Planning the carbon 5 Rs For Your School

1. REDUCTIONS and avoidance of all unnecessary heating, lighting, air-conditioning, travel, material use, waste generation, etc.
2. REFINEMENTS - energy use by using energy efficient alternatives, passive solar designs and well planned behavioural approaches (monitors and managers, tracking systems and reporting etc)
3. RENEWABLES - use green electricity and utilise biogas and biomass where appropriate
4. REVEGETATION AND RETENTION - Planting trees and shrubs as carbon sinks, retention of vegetation, maintaining ground cover and soil storage of carbon in fertile soils
5. REIMBURSEMENTS FOR OFFSETS! - paying for carbon use by purchasing offsets (as with

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Greenfleet and Landcare tree plantings)

This could be a standard approach by schools working through the 5 Rs.

Extract 4

North Fitzroy PS Offsets Excursion

North Fitzroy Primary School has become part of the Carbon Sinks Program in an effort to become carbon neutral. Eric Bottomley recently spoke to the whole staff about climate change and reducing carbon emissions, and has been a great support to the school. NFPS has become a five-star Sustainable School by focusing on reducing energy and water consumption, minimising waste and increasing biodiversity. The process took three years.

With the world moving towards a carbon offset trading scheme, the school has gotten in early, looking to offset the amount of carbon used in getting students to and from excursions. During February, thirty students in grades 5 and 6 from North Fitzroy visited the sustainability festival in Federation Square. The students enjoyed a mini film festival on sustainable themes, viewed many fascinating solutions to environmental problems, and reinforced their knowledge of how to reduce people's impact on the environment. "The presenters were impressed with our students' knowledge of topics such as fair trade," said grade 5 teacher Kathy Peters after the trip.

The unique thing about the excursion was that North Fitzroy included the price of a carbon offset credit in the bus price. It was surprisingly cheap! For only \$23 grade 5 teacher Jenni Jamieson purchased an offset of one tonne of carbon from an accredited online source. This made the excursion more than carbon neutral. Grade 6 student Charlotte said of the offset that "it's great we can buy an offset so we don't feel guilty about putting carbon into the atmosphere."

North Fitzroy is looking at offsetting all of its excursions in future.

For more information on this article, please contact David Ruddick from North Fitzroy Primary School on 9481 5860 or by email at ruddick.david.d@edumail.vic.gov.au

Extract 5 - Media Release

Local School Aims to be the (Ecological Footprint) Sole of Sustainability

Independent school Billanook College, in Mooroolbark is committed to reducing their environmental footprint through a range of exciting initiatives.

The College has been chosen to be one of only 20 Victorian schools who will participate in the 2008 Ceres Carbon Sink Schools Program.

As one of only 20 participating pilot schools in Victoria, students and Staff at the College will endeavour to further reduce their carbon emissions, through a wide application of green energy

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use, carbon sink plantings and continuous carbon auditing. The rigorous program aims to create a reduction in the College's current carbon emissions, create a platform for carbon trading and embed sustainable environmental practices within the School and wider community.

The College was selected for the program on the basis of its demonstrated commitment to the environment, its 5 Star Sustainable Schools rating, Land for Wildlife Accreditation and continuous environmental efforts, initiated through curriculum based and student run initiatives.

The Federal Government has also recognised the College's commitment to the environment by awarding a Community Water Grant of \$50,000.

The grant is for the installation of a 100,000 litre water tank in the vineyard which will collect the water from the Viticulture Skills Centre and surrounding areas eg car parks and ovals. After filtration this water will be used to irrigate the vineyard and the top oval.

This initiative will save 3,870,000 litres of water per year.

The next stage will be to implement a program that collects the water from all over the campus to use for flushing toilets and watering the gardens.

Billanook College aims to be a model green School which is energy efficient, waste wise and with a whole School approach to sustainable behaviours.

The College runs regular tours of their 32 hectare campus. For further information regarding the sustainability programs and the educational opportunities at the College please contact Mrs Josephine Reed on 9724 1109 or by email at registrar@billanook.vic.edu.au