



***Evaluating the Sustainability of School Recycling Programs
through the Five Categories of Sustainability.***

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The logo features a large yellow five-pointed star in the background. Overlaid on the star is the text "Star of Sustainability" in a colorful, bubbly font. The word "Star" is pink, "of" is orange, "Sustainability" is green, and "ity" is blue. The letters have a slight 3D effect with shadows.

Star of Sustainability

Assessment Form Instructions

1. **Make contact** with an interested school.
2. **Schedule a meeting with all interested parties and the principal.** The best way to help the recycling program succeed and sustain is to meet with the person who can make the necessary changes and/or decisions. The principal is almost always this person.
3. **Complete the pre-assessment form (PRE-VISIT)** by contacting the town transfer station/recycling center and exploring the school's website. Try to identify potential extra-curricular groups, PTO contacts, events, and other potential resources for the recycling club. Read the handbook, school newspaper, and letters from the principal. Your goal is to identify possible avenues for the recycling program and to learn about the school.
4. **Arrive at the school twenty or thirty minutes prior to your scheduled meeting** with the principal and interested parties. Take this time to walk around campus, look at recycling and garbage dumpsters, identify recycling receptacles, and try to get a feel for how the recycling program looks for a visitor. Is it easy to identify recycling containers? Where are containers and dumpsters located? Do you see any information about recycling or waste generation? Record information in the appropriate sections.
5. **Meet with the principal and interested parties.**
 - During this meeting complete the assessment form pages for collection, education, participation, motivation, and evaluation.
 - Discuss strengths and weaknesses of the program
 - Communicate educational and program resources available through Northeast Resource Recovery Association
6. **Discuss waste generation and potential savings** by increasing the productivity of their recycling program.
7. **Outline follow-up** for the meeting by setting a date for each of the following:
 - Summary email outlining the assessment and their "Star of Sustainability" results
 - When they can expect requested resources and/or suggestions
 - Check-in phone call
 - Next school visit
8. **Enter data into the School Assessment Template** in Excel.
9. **Document results** and complete a write-up on the last page of this form.
10. **Complete follow-up** email, resource help, phone call, and visit.

Pre-Assessment

Visit Date:
Meeting with:

PRE - VISIT

COLLECTION

EDUCATION

PARTICIPATION

MOTIVATION

EVALUATION

RESULTS

School:

District: School Size:
(use this number in the waste generation section below)
Grades:

School Address: School Phone:
School Hours:

Principal:

Phone: Email: District Contact:
Phone: Email:

Staff Contact:

Phone: Email: Business Contact:
Phone: Email:

Facilities Contact:

Phone: Email: Food Services :
Phone: Email:

Town: Address: Town Contact:
Phone: Phone: Email:

Town Recycling Information

Recycling Options (check all that apply)

- Single Stream Dual Stream Commingled Sorting
 Sign Points Pick-Up After Hours Entry Bins

Materials (circle materials collected at town transfer station)

White Paper	Mixed Paper	Newspaper	Cardstock	Cardboard	Text Books
PETE #1	Plastic #2	Other Plastic	Glass	Aluminum	Tin
Toner/Ink	Batteries	CFs	Clothing	Compost: Yard	Compost: Food
Electronics	Drink Pouches	Other: _____		Other: _____	

Waste Generation Potential*

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content;"> <i>n</i> number of students </div>	$n \times 1.50 \text{ lbs/student} \times 180 \text{ days} =$ _____	Annual Total Waste Generation
	$n \times 0.72 \text{ lbs/student} \times 180 \text{ days} =$ _____	Annual Paper Generation
	$n \times 0.48 \text{ lbs/student} \times 180 \text{ days} =$ _____	Annual Organic Waste Generation
	$n \times 0.18 \text{ lbs/student} \times 180 \text{ days} =$ _____	Annual Plastic Generation
	$n \times 0.14 \text{ lbs/student} \times 180 \text{ days} =$ _____	Annual Other Waste Generation

*Figures according to the California Department of Resources, Recycling & Recovery (CalRecycle School Waste Composition 2008)

School:
Principal:

Met With:

Collection: What and Where

1. Place a mark in each place currently collecting each material.
2. Mark each location with clearly defined containers (color, size, liner - consistent & distinctive).
3. Place a mark for each location with containers located next to trash barrels.
4. Mark each location with clear and concise signs indicating recycling materials.
5. Mark each location that has pictures and/or actual materials located on the signs.
6. Signs that are consistent from one location to the next receive a mark.

	Classrooms	Cafeteria	Hallways	Copy/fax machines	Offices	Lounges	Auditorium	Gym	Library	Other
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Collecting

Mixed Paper										
Newspaper										
OCC										
Text Books										
PETE 1 & 2										
Glass										
Aluminum										
Tin										
Food Waste										
Toner										
Fluorescent Bulbs										
Clothing										
Other: _____										

Containers

Distinctive/Consistent										
Next to Trash Barrels										

Signage

Clear and Concise										
Visual Aids										
Consistency										

School:
Principal:

Met With:

Education: Classroom

Which grades are receiving recycling education in the classroom at least once a year?
(Circle grade levels receiving; underline school grade levels)

Example: 4 5 6 7 **8** Freshman

K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 FR SO JR SR

Education: Collection Sites

Collection sites are an excellent place to educate stakeholders. Education can come in many forms – from signs posted above/on containers to recycling monitors helping recyclers understand the system.

Rank each education type 1 – 5,* with 5 representing “excellent education at collection sites.”

	LOW			HIGH	
Signs (on or above containers)	1	2	3	4	5
Recycling Monitors	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5
Frequency (how often changed/updated)	1	2	3	4	5

Education: Stakeholders

Each stakeholder group should be targeted for recycling education. Rank the education of the following stakeholder groups on a scale of 1 – 5 with “5” representing “stakeholder group receives weekly recycling education.” Each stakeholder receives a star if they participate as an educator.

STAR	STAKEHOLDERS	LOW			HIGH	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Students	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	Faculty	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	Facilities Manager	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	Food Services	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	Parents	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	Municipality (Town)	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

Notes:

* Please use “1” for “none” or “not available” for the entire assessment.

Initial Visit Assessment

Visit Date:

School:
Principal:

Met With:

Participation: Stakeholders

Each stakeholder group should be involved in the recycling program. The more stakeholders involved, the more sustainable the program! Participation can be anything from carrying bins to organizing assemblies and poster contests.

Rank each stakeholder group's participation on a scale of 1 – 5. "5" represents stakeholder groups who participate in the program on a weekly basis (transporting materials or helping the club).



Fill in a star for each group participating as a *recycler*:

"Recycler" refers to the action of sorting trash into recycling and trash barrels, making the appropriate steps to remove materials from their personal waste stream.

STAR	STAKEHOLDERS	LOW					HIGH				
☆	Students	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
☆	Staff	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
☆	Faculty	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
☆	Facilities Manager	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
☆	Food Services	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
☆	Parents	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
☆	Community	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
☆	Municipality (Town)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
☆	Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Participation: School Culture and Climate

School is a member of the NRRRA School Recycling Club	YES	NO
Updated NRRRA club membership information	YES	NO
Student Handbook contains recycling program information	YES	NO
Student Government role/participation/leadership	YES	NO

Participation: School Recycling Club

The next questions address the role and presence of the school recycling club. Rank the club on a scale of 1 – 5 with "5" representing a very active and effective recycling club. If no club exists, skip section.

	LOW					HIGH				
Holds Meetings	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Plans Activities	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Presence on Campus	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Mission Statement/Goals/By-laws	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

School:
Principal:

Met With:

Motivation: Events and Celebrations

Events are a great way to motivate stakeholder groups into action! Events are poster contests, assemblies, speakers, workshops, or any activity aimed at a large group of stakeholders at one time.

List all of the recycling centered **events** both planned and completed for the current school year.

COMPLETED

PLANNED (not yet completed)

List all **recycling program celebrations** held this school year in the spaces below and rank each on a scale of 1 – 5. A school with several celebrations targeting majority of the stakeholders is a “5” on the scale.

	LOW			HIGH	
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

Motivation: Goals

If the school has established recycling goals, rank their progress and effectiveness on a scale of 1 -5. A school that has identified several recycling goals, tracked progress and goals, and publicized both progress and results to stakeholders is ranked at a “5.”

	LOW			HIGH	
Set recycling goals	1	2	3	4	5
Tracked progress of goals	1	2	3	4	5
Announced goal results to stakeholders	1	2	3	4	5

Motivation: Incentives

Community service credit, scholarship programs, or even financial incentives can help to motivate a school recycling program. Please rank recycling incentives on a scale of 1 – 5. “5” represents a school community aware of and fully engaged in the different recycling incentives.

	LOW			HIGH	
Awards	1	2	3	4	5
Scholarships	1	2	3	4	5
Conference Participation	1	2	3	4	5
Financial Incentives	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

School:
Principal:

Met With:

Evaluation

Sustainability is dependent upon a feedback loop. If a school recycling program is to remain effective and intact for the life of the school, it is essential it undergo periodic evaluation.

Listed below are different types of evaluation available to the school. Using a scale of 1 – 5 rank each item. “5” represents a school that has made progress in most areas (participation, collection, education, motivation) and made efforts to evaluate and change the current program.

	LOW			HIGH	
Achieved established goals	1	2	3	4	5
Realized recycling potential	1	2	3	4	5
Increased collection	1	2	3	4	5
Increased participation	1	2	3	4	5
Increased education	1	2	3	4	5
Increased motivators	1	2	3	4	5
Evaluated program	1	2	3	4	5
Set new goals	1	2	3	4	5

Evaluation: Strengths and Weaknesses

List the different strengths and weaknesses of the school recycling program.

STRENGTHS

WEAKNESSES

Evaluation: Follow-up

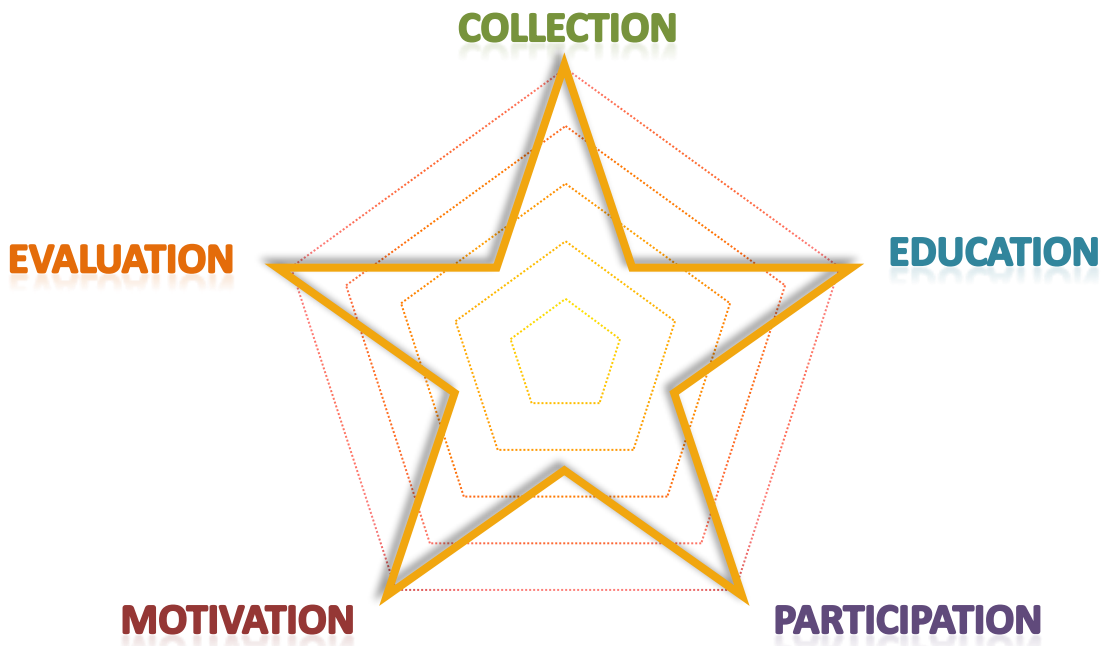
Use this location to list follow-up ideas and suggestions.

Star of Sustainability

*This star represents the sustainability of your school recycling program.
A completely filled-in star represents a school with a very successful and sustainable school recycling program.*

Understanding the Star

Identify those areas mostly filled-in as well as those with the least fill. The areas most filled-in are your **strengths**. The areas with the least fill are your areas for **improvement**. Below we have identified possible suggestions and helpful hints to enable your program to be a fully functioning and sustainable recycling program!



School Sustainability Summary

This page documents the strengths and weaknesses of the school recycling program based on the five categories of sustainability.

1. Record the results from the assessment form in the excel template.
2. Replace the blank star graph with the completed one generated from the template.
3. Use this space to summarize possible improvements and/or changes for the program in this space.
4. Send this results page to the school as a follow-up email.