SUSTAINABILITY

Policy Code: **1120**

~~"Every single day you live you make a difference in the world. And you got to choose the difference that you make" Jane Goodall~~

The ~~Buncombe County~~ Board ~~of Education~~ recognizes sustainability as a guiding principle and commits to developing and integrating sustainability practices throughout the ~~Buncombe County Public School System~~ school system. For the purpose of this policy, sustainability is the concept of meeting our current needs through behaviors, practices, and policies that do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The concept of sustainability requires balancing three primary goals:

Economic: Creating conditions and systems that support the fulfillment of economic requirements for both current and future generations of students.

Social: Developing and maintaining institutions and practices that are viable over the long term, support democratic values, and create conditions where every student can meet their full academic potential.

Environmental: Ensuring that natural resources are conserved and protected to help maintain long-term ecological balance and healthy environments for students to learn and thrive as a school community.

This policy establishes a framework ~~and decision-making priorities that support environmental~~ for advancing sustainability in ~~BCS~~ the school system ~~around~~ by prioritizing four tenets: ~~manage~~ managing resources, ~~conserve~~ conserving resources, ~~reduce~~ reducing and ~~eliminate~~ eliminating waste, and ~~reuse~~ reusing and ~~recycle~~ recycling materials. This framework is intended to guide sustainability practices in a manner fully consistent with existing Board policies, the Superintendent's authority over daily operations, and nothing herein shall be construed to modify or supersede current policies governing facilities, purchasing, finance, or personnel. Nothing in this policy is intended to, nor shall it be interpreted to, authorize any action that is inconsistent with or in violation of applicable federal or state law. Compliance with all federal and state laws, including those laws regarding purchasing and bidding, is always required.

~~I.~~ A. MANAGE RESOURCES

The ~~Buncombe County Schools (BCS)~~ school system will prioritize effective resource management to promote sustainable operations across all aspects of the ~~district~~ system with a focus on long-term and future sustainability. This includes:

- Energy Management: Reducing energy consumption and costs by implementing energy-efficient practices and maximizing the use of clean energy resources and technology.

- Financial Resource Planning: Investing in cost-effective strategies that offer favorable returns on investment (ROI), particularly in areas like energy efficiency. This includes considering ROI as a critical factor in resource planning and decision-making.
- Manage Multiple Priorities: When purchasing supplies and materials and not otherwise required to purchase the lowest bid or cost option, the school system will consider the tenants set forth in this policy. ~~Purchasing agents are not necessarily limited to the lowest cost options when balancing multiple priorities. When considering purchasing decisions, it is essential to account for the impact on economic, social, and environmental wellbeing. All of which are worthy priorities that may require additional resources while also improving the ROI.~~

~~II.~~ B. CONSERVE RESOURCES

The ~~district~~ school system is committed to conserving natural and financial resources by incorporating sustainability goals into its decision-making processes. This involves:

1. Conservation Practices: Promoting the conservation of water and energy through efficient operations and maintenance of buildings and grounds. The district will seek to exceed statutory requirements in reducing energy and water usage, providing excellent air quality, and enhancing productivity. With this, ~~Buncombe County~~ the school system strives to become a leader among school districts through their implementation of effective conservation methods.
2. Sustainable Design and Construction: Ensuring that all new facilities, major renovations, and maintenance projects utilize high-performance building standards. This includes using green building materials, reducing volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and employing regional resources to minimize environmental impact.

~~III.~~ C. REDUCE AND ELIMINATE WASTE

The district will seek to minimize waste generation through targeted strategies aimed at reducing waste at the source:

1. Waste Reduction Strategies: Implementing procedures to reduce the amount of waste generated across all ~~district~~ system operations. This includes single-use materials, water, and electricity management practices and optimized purchasing decisions that prioritize minimal waste.
2. Efficient Operations: Employing environmentally preferred purchasing ~~(EPP)~~ practices to reduce costs and environmental impacts ~~This encompasses the~~, including, when feasible, the procurement of products and services that are low in toxicity, energy-efficient, and made from renewable resources.

~~IV.~~ D. REUSE AND RECYCLE MATERIALS

~~BCS~~ The school system will maximize recycling efforts and promote the reuse of materials within the ~~district~~ system:

1. Recycling Initiatives: Evaluate ~~district~~ system-wide recycling program efficiency, which could include the processing of materials such as paper, plastic, glass, metal, textiles, and electronics. The ~~district~~ system will also encourage the reuse of materials wherever possible.
2. Sustainable Business Practices: Fostering the use of recycled and reusable content in products and services purchased by the ~~district~~ system. This supports the broader goals of reducing waste and conserving resources across the supply chain.

~~V.~~ E. ~~Monitoring and Reporting~~ COLLABORATION

~~BCS The school system will regularly monitor and report on the outcomes of its sustainability efforts, ensuring alignment with federal, state, and local requirements. The district system will implement continuous conversations of regularly review ways for improvement and innovation in its sustainability practices. This includes collaborating with local governmental agencies and community partners to achieve shared sustainability goals.~~

The school system affirms the value of collaborative reflection on sustainability efforts and the importance of maintaining alignment with federal, state, and local expectations. Sustainability is understood as an ongoing conversation rather than a fixed destination, one that invites continual learning, shared responsibility, and openness to new ideas. In this spirit, the district recognizes the role of collaboration with governmental agencies and community partners as part of a broader commitment to collective stewardship and long-term environmental responsibility.

Cross References: Energy Conservation (policy 560), Participation by Historically Underutilized Businesses (policy 6402), Contracts with the Board (policy 6420), State Purchasing Requirements for Equipment, Materials and Supplies (policy 6430), Purchase of Services (policy 6450), Hazardous Materials (policy 6540), Hazard Communication (policy 6541), Disposal of Surplus Property (policy 6560), Federal Grant Administration Procurement Procedures (policy 8305), Planning to Address Facility Needs (policy 9000), Facility Design (policy 9020), Facility Construction (policy 9030), Selection/Use of Architects, Engineers, Surveyors, and Construction Manager at Risk (policy 9110), Prequalification of Bidders for Construction or Repair Work Projects (policy 9115), Bidding for Construction Work (policy 9120), Participation by Women and Minority-Owned Businesses (policy 9125), and Care and Maintenance of Facilities (policy 9200).