

River Montessori Charter School

Green Policies: Waste, Responsible Purchasing, and Maintenance

The River Montessori Charter School (RMCS) Board of Directors is committed to ensuring that RMCS provides a healthy learning environment for students and staff and that the school serves as an example of how to be responsible inhabitants of the earth. RMCS will conduct its activities and operations to reflect best environmental practices to control and reduce impacts on the environment. Periodically, educational events will be held at school to maintain knowledge and awareness amongst the students and wider school community.

WASTE

The discard of useable or recyclable materials into the waste stream deprives the School of the economic benefit of the value of these materials while creating unnecessary expenses for collection and disposal. Therefore, RMCS will attempt to decrease the amount of waste of consumable materials, diverting from disposal as much solid waste as possible by:

1) reducing the consumption of consumable materials whenever practicable e.g. In communicating with parents, students, community members, and staff, the school will primarily use the website (www.rivermontessori.org), bulletin boards at school, sandwich boards, and electronic mail to further minimize the amount of paper consumed. Paper copies will be used only if all other options are unfeasible or if special attention is warranted;

2) fully utilizing materials prior to disposal or recycling, e.g. RMCS will encourage the use of both sides of all paper used at school both for students' work and for administrative purposes.; and

3) minimizing the use of non-biodegradable products whenever practicable e.g. the use of school funds for purchasing single serving bottles of water is prohibited.

Every room in the school will be provided with at least one highly visible and convenient recycling bin (classroom teachers will alert staff if replacements are needed). RMCS administration will ensure that all staff and volunteers are made aware of the proper disposal of all materials.

RMCS will to the extent practicable, cooperate with, and participate in, recycling efforts being made by the city and/or county where the school district is located.

Responsibility

All staff members are responsible for attempting to divert as much solid waste as possible by understanding above mentioned 1-3, communicating these priorities to their students and volunteers.

RESPONSIBLE PURCHASING

River Montessori Charter School Board will attempt to maximize purchases of recycled products and encourage the use of environmentally preferable products and services. By including environmental considerations in purchasing decisions, RMCS can reduce its environmental footprint and promote practices that improve human health, conserve natural resources, and reward environmentally conscious manufacturers. The products have been fully screened for their environmental benefits, cost, reduced toxicity, and performance.

School personnel are encouraged to actively seek out environmentally preferable products and services for use in day-to-day operations when quality, performance, price, and functionality are comparable to their non-environmentally preferable counterparts.

Definition

Environmentally preferable products and services have less negative effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose. This comparison considers the environmental cost of acquisition of raw materials, production, manufacturing, packaging, distribution, reuse, operation, maintenance, and disposal.

Scope

- Purchase products that minimize environmental impacts, e.g. toxics, pollution, and hazards to workers and the community;
- Purchase products that include recycled content, are durable and long-lasting, conserve energy and water, use agricultural fibers and residues, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, use unbleached or chlorine-free manufacturing processes, and use wood from sustainably harvested forests.
- Seek out vendors that offer to take back or recycle products at the end of their useful life.
- Seek fiscal responsibility by balancing price, performance, and environmental considerations.
- Seek opportunities to pool purchases with others to enhance markets for environmentally preferable products, to obtain favorable prices, and to reduce waste packaging, transportation, and product cost.
- Use life cycle analysis (LCA) to help guide best choices, when possible. LCA is a technique intended to quantify the total impact of a product during its production, distribution, use, recycling, treatment, and disposal.
- Require outside contractors and consultants to use environmentally preferable products, whenever practical, in performance of their services.
- Maximize the proportion of goods and services that come from local providers with acceptable environmental practices, thereby reducing the environmental impact of transportation wherever feasible and supporting a sustainable local economy.

Responsibility

All staff members are responsible for seeking and requesting environmentally preferred products.

Green Building Cleaning and Maintenance

The Federal Environmental Protection Agency estimates that human exposure to indoor air pollutants can be two to five times, and up to one hundred times, higher than outdoor levels. Students, faculty, and other staff members spend a significant amount of time inside the school building. These individuals are continuously exposed to chemicals from cleaners, deodorizers, and other maintenance products. Therefore our goal is to eliminate the use of harmful chemicals known to pose health concerns to individuals, especially those with asthma and allergies.

Use of Environmentally Preferable Cleaning and Maintenance Products

RMCS will use environmentally preferable non-toxic cleaning and maintenance products for purposes of cleaning and maintenance of the school premises. Furthermore unless required for public health reasons, rags will be used for cleaning rather than paper towels in keeping with the above waste section of this policy.

RMCS shall purchase only cleaning and maintenance products that meet nationally recognized standards.

This section shall not be interpreted in a manner that prohibits the use of disinfectants, disinfecting cleaners, sanitizers, or any other antimicrobial product regulated by the federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, 7 U.S.C. 136 et seq., when necessary to protect public health and provided that the use of these products is in accordance with responsible cleaning procedure requirements.

AWARENESS, EDUCATION, and ENGAGEMENT

RMCS administration will ensure that all staff, students, families, and volunteers are aware of the green policy. In addition RMCS administration will encourage student participation into school-wide environmental initiatives, and integrate environmental education when possible.

When fully complied these measures will yield significant environmental benefit and cost reduction.

ADOPTED: October 19, 2010

Date: