

2022 Department of Education Sustainability Plan

1. Department of Education (ED) Sustainability Plan Summary

ED is committed to meeting or exceeding the standards outlined in the Executive Order 14057. As part of that commitment ED has, or is in the process of, preparing action plans to build a long-term strategy for reducing the Agency's environmental impacts by:

- Improving facility designs that incorporate more natural light, are more space efficient, and increase collaborative spaces
- Ensuring all projects follow Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and Energy Star appliance practices
- Ensuring furniture, fixtures and equipment procurement and installation meet LEED requirements outlined in OEQ 4.5 Low Emitting Furniture or ANSI/BFIMA X7.1-2007 indoor air quality
- Ensuring disposal and decommissioning of space is done through proper channels and re-using excess furniture to the maximum extent possible
- Advancing sustainable procurement
- Personnel training
- Upgrading agency vehicle fleets to Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEVs)

2. Priority Actions Towards Goals

A. 100 Percent Carbon Pollution-Free Electricity

All property ED occupies is leased by the General Services Administration (GSA). There are currently no leases in place that provide 100 Percent Carbon Pollution-Free Electricity environment, however all new projects are LEED Gold or higher.

B. 100 Percent Zero-Emission Vehicle Fleet

The Department fully complies with the current Executive Orders and GSA mandates on transitioning to a zero-emission fleet. During FY22 and FY23, eligible replacements are being updated to either Zero Emission vehicles (PHEV/ZEV) or Hybrids. Forward-looking strategies include:

- Adherence to the FY22 Zero-Emission Vehicle Planning Requirements
- Eliminating underutilized vehicles
- Increasing the acquisition of ZEVs
- Completing installation of electric vehicle charging stations in FY22 and FY23

C. Net-Zero Emissions Buildings, Campuses, and Installations

As noted above, ED resides in all leased buildings through the GSA. However, to work towards reducing emissions, ED is reducing its real estate footprint through implementation of new workspace standards, supporting initiatives for remote work, and relocating from commercial

leases to Federal buildings. All ED construction renovation projects associated with these efforts are LEED Gold or higher.

ED established a Blanket Purchase Agreement for Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment in which only environmentally responsible products are purchased and installed. The vendor conserves materials and natural resources, uses clean technologies in manufacturing, and has achieved certifications from third party organizations such as GREENGUARD and Smart Certification. This program represents between \$3M-\$5M commitment annually towards sustainable acquisitions.

i. Design and Construction for Net-Zero Emissions

ED, in partnership with the GSA uses the LEED rating system as a framework for healthy, highly efficient and cost-saving green buildings. Architects, Engineers, and Construction Contractors must submit plans and product data as official Environmental Product Declarations (EPD) and Health Product Declarations (HPD) before products are purchased and installed.

ii. Increasing Energy Efficiency

As part of LEED design standards, all fixtures installed are high efficiency, LED lighting, Energy Star appliances and office equipment. ED is also investigating the installation of a photovoltaic cell project on the roof of its headquarters in Washington, DC.

iii. Increasing Water Efficiency

As part of LEED design standards on all ED renovations, all fixtures installed are high efficiency low flow, low flush devices in all restrooms and pantries.

D. Reducing Waste and Pollution

In compliance with LEED waste design guidelines, a construction waste management plan is submitted for all projects which identifies the sources of waste, the chain of custody flow of materials and waste diversion goals. The percentages of debris diverted from landfills or incineration through extraction, harvesting and recovery are calculated as the 'capture rate' in the waste report at the conclusion of the project.

Building Management Operations and Maintenance through GSA leases has exceeded the minimum goal of 50% Waste Diversion (WD) as mandated by EO 14057. FY 2021-FY2022 WD increased from 66% to 85%.

E. Sustainable Procurement

The Department completed twelve contracts in FY21 that align with sustainability requirements, achieving 100 percent compliance. ED's established policy is to ensure that wherever applicable, sustainability clause language is used to satisfy policy and guidance.

- ED encourages Acquisition professionals to take sustainability training offered annually

- Requests annual sustainability briefings from contract awardees to ensure best practices at the vendor level

F. Climate- and Sustainability-Focused Federal Workforce

The Department's approach to sustainability addresses the climate crisis through support and engagement from its most valuable resource, the ED workforce. The Department will provide new employees joining the agency with climate education information for awareness and the agency's focus on combatting the climate crisis using internal controls. The training will provide an overview of key areas concerning sustainability, recommended strategies, and sustainability efforts to include techniques to educate ED's workforce about the challenges to the planet. ED plans to:

- Implement climate education information (CEI) agency-wide to raise awareness among employees about the climate crisis by October 2022.
- Create and present briefing materials and content to familiarize new employees on sustainability and climate adaptation priorities as part of the standard new employee onboarding curriculum. Projected launch is September 2022.
- Deliver CEI in on-demand webinars to educate how to combat the climate crisis through adaptation and resilience strategies.

G. Incorporating Environmental Justice

The Department has taken significant steps to address the environmental justice and new programs have been implemented related to sustainable schools at agencies across the Federal Government. ED has:

- Clarified guidance about Title IV Part A funds to indicate the many ways they can be used to support outdoor, environmental, and sustainability education.
- Designated a Special Advisor for Infrastructure and Sustainability to help drive public engagement, programs, and guidance with consideration to these matters.
- Held public listening sessions related to sustainability and infrastructure.

H. Accelerating Progress through Partnerships

The Department achieves its mission through its workforce's core capabilities and competencies. To support the Department's learning culture, the agency provides leadership opportunities through external resources and partnerships to generate innovative ideas, enhance leadership capabilities, and provide training and development prospects for ED employees to support strategies to achieve business objectives. The Department identifies specific ED-wide and global competitive leadership training options to continue building a cadre of leaders, closing competency gaps, and supporting employees' professional development.

- The Department's partnerships with top-tier external development programs afford the ED workforce to carry their ED business acumen to further heights of productivity and effectiveness when working on government-wide initiatives through a cohort framework.
- Sustainability efforts to reap new gains from policies and practices installed agency-wide and led by an educated, climate-focused workforce.

- ED worked to improve its federal collaboration around sustainable schools, infrastructure, and environmental learning with federal partners, including EPA, DOE, NOAA, DOI, and others.

3. Progress Examples

100% Zero-Emission Vehicle Fleet

ED is taking priority actions to adhere to the President’s goal of electrifying the fleet. To date the agency has installed two dual port charging stations and is working towards replacing eleven of the eligible fleet vehicles with ZEVs and Hybrids. Continued priority actions through the end of the calendar year include, additional EVSE infrastructure installations, and further vehicle replacements in FY23.

Climate and Sustainability-Focused Federal Workforce

ED developed a CEI platform that will deliver CEI in on-demand webinars to educate how to combat the climate crisis through adaptation and resilience strategies. The department will be putting this program in place for new employees joining the agency beginning in September 2022.

Sustainable Procurement

ED made sustainable procurement a priority when developing contracts and project plans. During FY21, only 0.52 percent of overall contract actions required such language, ED achieved 100 percent compliance on all contract actions. Our approach is to ensure that wherever applicable, sustainability clause language is used to satisfy policy and guidance.
