Welcome to the fourteenth edition of the Waikato Enviroschools newsletter.

This newsletter includes information on the Enviroschools Youth Jam, the 2007 Enviroschools Awards, funding and key dates to remember.

There are now more than 100 schools involved in the Enviroschools programme with support from Environment Waikato, the Enviroschools Foundation, Hamilton City Council, Waikato District Council, Waipa District Council, Taupo District Council, Matamata-Piako District Council, Hauraki District Council and the University of Waikato.

Congratulations to the 16 schools that achieved Enviroschools awards in 2007 – see page four for more information. Te Miro Primary School became the second Waikato school to achieve a Green-Gold Award while Woodstock Primary School, Hillcrest Normal School and Te Awamutu College all received Silver Awards. Twelve schools also achieved the Bronze Award – they were Melville Intermediate, Rhode Street School, St Peter Chancel, Wharepapa South, Leamington Primary, Matamata Primary, Tatuanui, St Joseph’s (Morrinsville), Marotiri, Broadlands, Tokoroa North and St Francis Catholic (Thames).

If you would like to talk to me about the Enviroschools programme, contribute to this newsletter, or require any of Environment Waikato’s resources for schools, email dean.king@ew.govt.nz or call Environment Waikato’s freephone 0800 800 401.

Dean King
Regional Enviroschools Coordinator
Sixteen Waikato schools achieved Enviroschools awards this year, with Te Miro School becoming only the seventh school in New Zealand to reach the prestigious Green-Gold Award.

The Enviroschools programme helps students integrate environmental education into their school life. Students begin by identifying issues in their school, exploring solutions and actively implementing changes.

Students have the opportunity to realise that they can make a difference as part of a community, and foster the passion and enthusiasm to make environmental learning and action a way of life.

Te Miro School was the only Waikato school to achieve the top Green-Gold award this year, while Te Awamutu College, Hillcrest Normal School and Woodstock School attained Silver awards.

Leamington, Wharepapa South, Tatuanui, Matamata Primary, St Josephs (Morirnsville), St Francis (Thames), Tokoroa North, Marotiri, Broadlands, Melville Intermediate, Rhode Street and St Peter Chanel schools gained Bronze awards.

Schools apply for awards based on criteria set by the national Enviroschools Foundation.

The purpose of the Enviroschools awards is to recognise and celebrate school achievements over time, while providing them with the opportunity for future direction.

By the time a school reaches Green-Gold status, the Enviroschools programme has become an integral part of the curriculum, and students and staff are tackling a broad range of environmental issues.

It’s a huge achievement and Te Miro School is to be congratulated, as well as all the Waikato schools who gained awards this year.

The programme is coordinated in this region by Environment Waikato and supported by Hamilton City Council, Waikato District Council, Waipa District Council, Matamata-Piako District Council, Hauraki District Council, Taupo District Council and the University of Waikato.

Mayors and councillors from around the region showed their support of the Enviroschools programme by participating in Enviroschools award ceremonies last year. The number of awards (Waikato schools) rose to two Green-Gold Awards, with at least 10 schools having achieved Silver or more, and 42 schools having achieved Bronze or greater. Check out www.enviroschools.org.nz for the full list.
Funding your projects

Environment Waikato’s Enviroschools grant fund

Did you know there’s an Enviroschools grant fund? Environment Waikato’s Enviroschools grant fund assists Enviroschools with environmental projects. The fund provides one-off grants to projects that directly enhance and/or benefit the environment or provide environmental education.

Up to $35,000 is available annually to schools involved in the Enviroschools programme. However, proposals designed to generate personal or commercial profit, or compensate individuals, are not eligible for funding.

Types of projects that can be funded
Projects must be aligned with Environment Waikato’s mission, goals and statutory functions and duties as a regional council. Funding can be provided to specific projects designed to:

• enhance the environment
• promote and/or contribute to sustainable management of the environment
• raise community awareness of environmental issues
• provide environmental education.

Application information is available online at www.ew.govt.nz/aboutew/funding.htm.

Crucial questions to consider

• Who will be responsible for the ongoing management of the project?
• How do you intend to monitor the success of your project?
• How does this project fit with your existing curriculum?
• How have the students been involved in planning this project?
• What will be the ongoing involvement of students?
• How will your school use this project as an ongoing educational resource?
• How do you plan to provide funds for ongoing developments and maintenance?

For more information, contact Dean King on 0800 800 401 or email dean.king@ew.govt.nz.

Hamilton City Council’s

Envirofund 2008

Got an idea to make Hamilton more sustainable? Need financial support for a school project? Hamilton City Council’s Envirofund could provide the financial support your project needs.

Types of projects that are funded

• Local environmental restoration projects.
• Environmental seminars and workshops.
• Environmental research that could provide direct benefits to Hamilton’s environment.
• Educational or promotional activities that raise awareness about environmental issues.
• Practical environmental initiatives that involve community participation or increase community involvement.

Applications for the next Envirofund round close on 31 March 2008.

Apply Now! Applications are easy. Application guidelines, and other information is available online at www.hamilton.co.nz/envirofund. Alternatively, contact the sustainable environment team on (07) 958 5885.
The inaugural Enviroschools Youth Jam was held in Rotorua in September last year. This national event brought 250 secondary school students, teachers and facilitators together from all over New Zealand to discuss ‘changing the climate on climate change’.

Over three days these motivated students and teachers were involved in a wide range of activities. These activities increased their knowledge and awareness, and gave them the enthusiasm to inspire others in their school communities about climate change and education for sustainability.

Workshops run by students were a highlight. The students focused on the ‘action’ taking place in their school and/or community, and how it was having a positive impact on climate change – such as the reduction of waste going to landfills, ecological restoration, energy consumption and alternative resources. The creative energy, enthusiasm and commitment was inspiring.

The presentations reflected different ways of taking ‘action’ for the environment by youth. Many of these student groups had sought expert advice from the community, and were directly involved with key people who could influence decision-making. Communication was a major factor that had contributed to change.

Entertainment included dance by Soul Speed, theatre by Antonio Te Maioha and music by reggae band Cornerstone Roots. Inspiration from these artists, along with video telecasts from leading politicians and All Black legend Anton Oliver, helped reinforce that ideas can be effectively conveyed by using creative approaches.

The students also had the opportunity to ask questions to an expert panel. The panel included Al Morrison from DOC, Heidi Mardon from the Enviroschools Foundation, Green Party MP Nandor Tanczos, Justin Ford-Robertson a climate and energy consultant, Wiremu Tawhai from Te Wananga o Awanuiarangi and Nelson student Brittany Packer.

The Enviroschools Youth Jam is about youth teaching others, and was based around a youth-teaching-youth model, mentored by the Enviroschools Foundation and the Australian-based Firestarter Communications team.
Easy steps
for preparing a quality Enviroschools award application

By Robyn Irving and Marianne Robertson

The panel that met to assess last year’s Enviroschools award applications discovered that schools took a varied approach. Although the supporting submission material was creative and unique, it resulted in inconsistencies. There was confusion as to what criteria these applications were trying to meet.

We have identified some key tips that will help you to overcome these difficulties and therefore aid successful applications.

Purpose

Tracking your journey has multiple values – it provides an ongoing record of your school’s journey, an assessment tool for students, awards, evidence for ERO reports, recruitment for new families and funding applications.

It becomes a resource to support past action and guide students and staff in the future. It’s a great way to celebrate your success and achievements over time. The different levels of the awards require an understanding that effective practice takes time to develop, consolidate and sustain. This shift requires increased evidence in depth and breadth across the awards levels (bronze to silver to green-gold).

Work with your facilitator

The Waikato region has a team of facilitators that can offer support. With their vast experience they can provide insightful information that will help you to interpret and evaluate your school’s readiness. They can also provide you with the tools required to streamline the awards process, and can give you access to a number of useful examples. Remember to contact your facilitator early this year if you’re considering an awards application, or if you would like to plan for an award the following year.

Systems

Develop systems as a team. Ensure good records are kept, starting from the early stages of your journey. Set up a folder on the school computer system where everyone can contribute photos, stories, articles, planning, examples of student learning and action. Place a file box in the library or staffroom so people can add to it when they like.

Remember to take photos of students participating in all aspects of environmental education for sustainability. Take photos throughout the year – make sure you’ve got good examples so they can be used as a record of achievement, for example, a scrapbook, album, digital log. Remind colleagues to regularly contribute. Get each classroom to keep a simple scrapbook – this will encourage them to take responsibility! You will also get a balanced range of material from across the school. Don’t forget to support all staff, such as caretakers – they might want to contribute!

Documentation

This needs to reflect the criteria with evidence cross-referenced – this can be done by annotating material specifically. A checklist that identifies the criteria and your evidence can be developed as an on-going record. See your facilitator for further ideas.

Any documentation you use should be multi-purpose – it’s about making it easier, not about creating extra work. You will need to include evidence to support teaching, learning and the action process. Remember, there are excellent tools and templates in the Enviroschools Kit and handbook.

Timeframes

Get started early in the year, ensuring there’s a clear understanding of what’s expected from everyone! Set milestones to avoid chasing people up towards the end of the year.

The award applications close early in term four.

Don’t leave things to the last minute – it always results in overloaded individuals and possible disappointment.

Schedule regular meetings with your facilitator. This will help you to keep track of your progress and to identify any needs. At these meetings you can also check over your application material – work out what you have already, and sort out what evidence is still required. Emails are a great way to keep in touch with your facilitator – especially if you need gentle reminders about keeping on task! Chat to your facilitator about this.

A suggested timeframe between awards is at least two years. Practice has shown that schools are more likely to develop and sustain a whole school approach in the four key areas over this timeframe. This strengthens the Enviroschools programme within the school community. Again, in order to develop the depth and breadth expected at silver and green-gold levels, staff, students and the greater community need time for consolidation.
Task responsibility and delegation

A team approach to application preparation is invaluable. This allows for delegation, student participation and contribution, creativity and a strong sense of ownership by all.

Quantity, quality and format

A range of evidence that shows your school’s achievements is desirable. Present it in a way that’s easy to understand and is collated against the criteria. We’re not requiring loads of ‘stuff’, but enough to provide a good case for your school. It’s important to continually gather your evidence throughout the journey.

By being creative, this information can contribute towards class-shared books, school powerpoint presentations, funding applications, student profiles, community notices and newsletters and the Enviroschools scrapbook page.

Ensure your submission is easy to read and follow. The ability for outsiders to understand the steps taken across the action learning cycle is important.

Although formatting is not prescriptive, an effective means of presentation is hard copy documentation. It allows multiple usage and easy reference. Student participation in this process allows opportunities for them to learn about layout and creative design which can be implemented through the English and arts curriculum.
Trash to Fashion 2008

This year's Trash to Fashion event will be held on Saturday, 26 July.

Trash to Fashion, coordinated by The Body Shop, is a 'wearable art' competition that is open to students and designers in the greater Waikato region, encouraging them to design wearable art that is made by recycling and reusing organic and inorganic materials.

The objectives of the competition are:
- to raise awareness of waste minimisation issues, in particular the concept of recycling and reusing
- to encourage youth to get involved in environmental initiatives
- to encourage creativity and design talents.

2008 Categories

Intermediate school section

- **Come to the party** – create an amazing party outfit. What's the theme for your party? Designers are encouraged to enter garments showing creativity and originality. A unique garment must be made from waste collected from our city.

Secondary school section

- **Funk the junk** – there are no boundaries for designers in this category. The garment must be created from waste – must show originality, uniqueness, imagination and individuality.

- **Green, the new black darling** – imagine the future of fashion where we can no longer rely on cheap oil to process and manufacture fabrics. Where high transport costs mean companies can no longer use cheap labour to mass produce clothing and ship garments to markets on the other side of the world. Show us the future of real fashion with your truly sustainable fashion item. Your garment will be one of a kind, earth friendly, wearable, washable, durable and styley. Re-design or re-create real clothing from discarded and salvaged items. Use salvaged resources efficiently to minimise wastage and be innovative in how and what you use.

Open section

- **Avant-garbage** – designers are encouraged to create garments that are innovative and extroverted. Let your imagination run wild. The creation is to be made from business waste.

- **Recycled retro** – use recycled and discarded garments to create a unique design. Search for the pre-loved and out of date cast-offs and off-cuts. The garment must be an original design made from a minimum of four discarded garments. No more than half of any garment may be used.

For more information about Trash to Fashion, visit www.hamilton.co.nz/trashtofashion or call Aaron on (07) 838 6483.

Ngaruawahia Primary wearable art.
What does it mean to be an Enviroschool?

Robyn Irving

Frankton School staff have recently spent some time considering ‘what it is to be an Enviroschool’. Frankton School joined the programme in 2003, being one of the first group of schools to join the programme and achieving a Silver Award in 2006.

Like many large urban schools, over time there have been staff changes. It seemed appropriate to get together to share their views on what it was to be is to be an Enviroschool, the role teachers play and what they could do individually or as a team to help facilitate the process.

A continuum of ‘level of knowledge’ of the Enviroschools principles and environmental education guidelines was conducted, which showed there was a broad range of understanding. There was sound knowledge of what sustainability was, emphasising that this was a good foundation to build on.

Over the years as an Enviroschool, systems have been developed at Frankton School to provide opportunities for environmental education – integrating it into every aspect of school life. There’s also participatory and democratic management involving a range of people – students, teachers, senior management, school community and of course their caretaker!

In the day-to-day running of the school, sustainability is becoming something that’s considered, and combined with the values programme, students and staff are encouraged to work towards making Frankton School a healthy, peaceful and sustainable place.

The Frankton School strategic plan is peppered with references to education for sustainability. This plan is strengthened by a yearly ‘action plan’ that’s put together by the Enviro-team, in consultation with the rest of the school.

There’s a clear vision for strengthening the Frankton community – to be empowered to take part in creating and maintaining a beautiful, peaceful school environment.

Term one’s inquiry focus ‘the Frankton kid’ incorporates the virtues of responsibility, self discipline, care, friendliness and excellence. It provides a canvas for students to understand, participate and contribute to their local (national and global) community, and enables them to engage critically with societal issues and evaluate the sustainability of alternative social, economical, political and environmental practices. NZ Social Science Curriculum 2007 – please note this is not the only aspect of the curriculum covered.

An upcoming bio-blitz will give students an opportunity to discover life within the school grounds. Observation and measurement will be used so they can plan on increasing biodiversity within the school and community.

As part of a fundraiser, 1000 cabbage trees will be nurtured by the students.

Changes to canteen policies also mean that students will need to know where their food is coming from, especially fresh fruit and vegetables. Learning to grow their own vegetables will help develop sustainable practices.

Senior school students will monitor school power consumption over a period of time, leading to discussions and decisions about school-wide savings.

Tools from activities and planners from the Enviroschools kit are used, and the action learning cycle followed. An integrated approach at Frankton School means that they are well on their way towards becoming a sustainable school.

Key dates to remember

Term one - 4 February to 18 April

Wednesday, 27 February
‘Getting started’ workshop for new Enviroschools.

Wednesday, 19 March
‘Re-energising’ workshop for existing Enviroschools.

Wednesday, 19 March
‘Youth Jam’ workshop.

Term two - 5 May to 4 July

Thursday, 19 June
‘Awards and scrapbook’ workshop.

Term three - 21 July to 26 September

Wednesday, 10 September
Enviroschools information evening for interested schools.

Thursday, 18 September to Friday, 19 September
Enviroschools regional event.

Term four - 13 October to 19 December

Monday, 20 October
Applications for Enviroschools awards close.
Applications to join the Enviroschools programme close.

Wednesday, 29 October to Friday, 31 October
School visits and judging for Enviroschools awards (if necessary).

For more information on any of these events, please email dean.king@ew.govt.nz.