



HOW TO GET YOUR FLAG

6 STEPS TO CERTIFICATION



Oklahoma Green Schools Program **6 Steps to Certification**

STEP 1: REGISTER YOUR SCHOOL

Overview:

It is important to register your school with the OK GreenSchools Program (OGSP) including signing up for the OGSP listserv. This process allows the OGSP Committee to document which schools across the state are utilizing any part of our program, to communicate with schools on available resources or funding and to offer personal on-site assistance. In addition, registering on the national Project Learning Tree (PLT) website will give you access to download the 5 PLT School Investigations and their supporting resources as well as learn about PLT's GreenWorks grant program.

Action Items:

- Watch the Step 1 training video!
- Decide HOW you will implement the OGSP materials and activities. During class? After school programs? Enrichment? Environmental Club?
- Go to www.okgreenschools.org and register your school. The online registration form is located next to the Step 1 outline. Select 'YES' on the bottom of the registration page to opt in to the OGSP statewide listserv.
- Go to www.plt.org and register your school. Click on 'Green Schools', then look under 'My GreenSchools! Homepage' to register. Preview the 5 PLT School Investigations and their associated available resources including the overview webinars.

Additional Ideas:

The 5 PLT School Investigations form the core of the OGSP educational, student-led component of the OGSP. Look these over and begin to examine which one might be a good place to start...for you, your students and your school environment.

Completed this Step?

When you complete the Step 1 Action Items, go back to the website, www.okgreenschools.org. Navigate to the '6 Steps to Certification' page and next to Step 1, click on the **FINISHED** button. Complete the question(s) and click **SUBMIT**. You will have the option of requesting a print copy of the 5 PLT School Investigations.



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STEP 2: FORM YOUR SCHOOL GREEN TEAM

Overview:

The Green Team will help guide your efforts to increase the overall health and efficiency of your building. Who you invite, how many members, how often to meet... these are all questions that will be answered by your unique situation and which topics you plan to investigate. In addition to at least 2 teachers and some student leaders, you might consider: custodial or facilities, administration, kitchen staff, health professional, PTA member or parent, community leader, youth leader such as Scouts or 4H, office or accounting staff.

Action Items:

- Watch the Step 2 training video!
- Create your Green Team. Perhaps have students conduct interviews or have an application process. Make sure you have administration support.
- Hold your first meeting! Examine the PLT Investigations. Brainstorm ideas, issues and opportunities for student investigation at your school. Set a preliminary Green Team meeting schedule.

Additional Ideas:

You are creating a collaborative forum where a variety of people from the school community can come together and examine issues and solutions. Green Team member selections should bring a range of strengths to the table. Look for ways to communicate your efforts and accomplishments to a broader audience. Set realistic and attainable goals for your students and your Green Team. Create a timetable. Consider an 'event' to launch your program and don't be afraid of baby steps. Every great adventure begins with them.

Completed this Step?

When you complete the Step 2 Action Items, go to the website, www.okgreenschools.org. Navigate to the '*6 Steps to Certification*' page and next to Step 2, click on the **FINISHED** button. Complete the question(s) and click **SUBMIT**. You will have the option of requesting a personal OGSP liaison for your school who can help guide your 'greening' efforts, assist students with the PLT investigation and completion of the OGSP certification process.



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STEP 3: CONDUCT A PLT SCHOOL INVESTIGATION

Overview- The 5 Project Learning Tree (PLT) School Investigations form the core of the OGSP educational component. These 5 investigations (Energy, Water, Waste & Recycling, Environmental Quality and School Site) encourage students to take the lead in hands on data collection and analysis. Each investigation covers several topic areas and allows students as well as Green Team members to explore the school building, take measurements, begin discussions and look for opportunities to make a difference. A toolkit is available for check out from the OGSP website and can be a fun way to incorporate STEM concepts into instruction.

Action Items-

- Watch the Step 3 training video!
- On the PLT website, www.plt.org, select and download one School Investigation to begin your greening efforts.
- On the OGSP website, www.okgreenschools.org, under 'Resources', examine the toolkit contents and request one if appropriate.
- Conduct the investigation. When completed, organize the data into a meaningful 'report of findings' that is age appropriate for your students.

Additional Ideas- Your data analysis is beginning to paint a picture of the health, efficiency and overall environment of your school. You will likely notice areas that are going well and areas for improvement. Encourage your students to ask questions and explore further if some data measure significantly out of the expected range. Discuss the 'Scientific Method'. If an entire investigation is too much, choose one topic to get started.

Completed this Step? - When you complete the Step 3 Action Items, go to the website, www.okgreenschools.org. Navigate to the '6 Steps to Certification' page and next to Step 3, click on the **FINISHED** button. Complete the question(s) and click **SUBMIT**. You will have the option of requesting a Watt Meter to keep for your classroom and information on how to put together your own toolkit.



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STEP 4: IMPLEMENT A STUDENT ACTION PROJECT

Overview- The goal of the PLT School Investigation and preliminary data analysis is to bring awareness to specific opportunities for improvement around the school. Simple changes and adjustments can reap significant rewards in terms of cost savings, utility efficiency and of course student body involvement. The student action project provides the basis for implementing service learning techniques and concepts which connect student leadership, community outreach and classroom learning.

Action Items-

- Watch the Step 4 training video!
- Based on your findings, brainstorm projects that the students would be able to implement at the school. Look for community partners!
- Organize your data into a formal (fun) presentation. Select a decision maker(s) such as a principal, superintendent, head custodian, School Board, PTA, community group, or school assembly. A powerpoint, short written report, charts/graphs poster, skit, are all great ideas. Make the presentation.
- Implement your project! Don't forget documentation such as photos, videos, posting on the school website, newsletters and newspapers, etc. Contact info@okgreenschools.org if you would like a GS committee member to attend your presentation or project. We love this part!

Additional Ideas- Your data analysis is the basis for the student project. This lends validity to the students' presentation to the decision maker(s) and may help with any funding requests. Have the students set up the presentation or make the appointment. Rehearse beforehand. Check the website, under 'Resources', for ideas on both student projects and funding opportunities. Many grants can actually be written by the students. Poster contests and bulletin board challenges can engage younger students.

Completed this Step? - When you complete the Step 4 Action Items, go to the website, www.okgreenschools.org. Navigate to the '6 Steps to Certification' page and next to Step 4, click the **FINISHED** button. Complete the question(s) and click **SUBMIT**.



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STEP 5: CHALLENGE OTHERS

Overview- The foundation of service learning is classroom connections partnered with community involvement. Service learning is also one of the key concepts within the OK Green Schools Program. Your findings from the PLT School Investigation as well as the presentation and student action project may offer opportunities or open doors for community collaboration. Other schools within your district or region might also be potential partners. Reaching out to the larger community can help your 'greening' efforts be sustainable over time while broadening their impacts.

Action Items-

- Watch the Step 5 training video!
- Based on your findings, brainstorm potential community partners. They may be able to assist with ongoing project funding, or be interested in hearing the presentation, or help sponsor a community environmental event. Talk to adult social and business organizations like Lions, Elk, Kiwanis, Rotary, Chambers of Commerce, etc.
- Identify other youth organizations such as faith based groups, scouts, 4H, etc., that students are involved in. Buildings where meetings are held may present opportunities for students to conduct PLT Investigations outside of the school building and offer suggestions for efficiency and cost savings.
- Other schools may be interested in participating in OK Green Schools. Contact schools within your area particularly those that feed into your school or where your students will be attending in future years. Look at the OGSP map on our website for schools in your area who may already be involved.

Additional Ideas- An area often overlooked as community outreach are school fundraisers. Look for 'green' alternatives to the traditional items or methods of soliciting orders. Many recycling programs, particularly paper or aluminum, can be money makers when larger quantities are collected from the community. Contact info@okgreenschools.org for specific ideas and opportunities in your area. Search the website 'Resources' for ideas.

Completed this Step? - When you complete the Step 5 Action Items, go to the website, www.okgreenschools.org. Navigate to the '6 Steps to Certification' page and next to Step 5, click the **FINISHED** button. Complete the question(s) and click **SUBMIT**.



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STEP 6: APPLY FOR OK GREEN SCHOOLS CERTIFICATION

Overview- When you registered your school with the OK GreenSchools Program (OGSP) you began a journey. Perhaps it has taken a school year or two, or maybe you have arrived at this final step in a semester. The journey is the most important, but the destination is great too! The OK GreenSchools committee would love to share this last step with you and recognize all of your school's hard work. Congratulations!

Action Items-

- Watch the Step 6 training video!
- Go to www.okgreenschools.org and navigate to the '6 Steps to Certification' page and next to Step 6, click on the **FINAL REPORT** button. Complete this report form and click **SUBMIT**.
- Gather documentation such as photos, videos, newsletters, articles, event programs, student reports or powerpoints, etc. We love student quotes or stories! Submit items to info@okgreenschools.org. Consider creating a 'greening our school' page on your school website and then we can simply link to it from the OGSP website. Make sure any needed photo/video release forms are on file according to school or district policy.
- Go to www.plt.org and explore the PLT GreenSchools National Certification process as a possible 'next step'.

Additional Ideas- The OK Green School flag can be presented at an event or setting that you decide is appropriate. We have made presentations at football games, school assemblies, school board meetings and environmental festivals. On the '6 Steps to Certification' page, **NEXT STEPS** provides ideas and suggestions for continuing the program. Keep your greening efforts going to provide a healthier more efficient school environment! 'Like' us on the OGSP facebook page or 'follow' us on Twitter. Stay connected on the listserv. Provide feedback!

Completed this Step? - When you complete the Step 6 Action Items and everything has been received and reviewed by the committee, you will be notified if anything needs to be clarified or if further information is required. Once your application is accepted, we will send a confirmation and a flag presentation can be scheduled! Your submitted items or website link will be posted on the website under 'Featured Schools' and added to the OGSP map.