



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY
AND COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

September 2007

TO: District Superintendents of Schools
Superintendents of Public Schools

FROM: Richard P. Mills

SUBJECT: Recycling

New York schools have an important role to play in promoting recycling. It's the right thing to do to protect our environment, and it is required by state and local laws. Waste reduction and recycling are critical elements of a well-rounded education that incorporates good social and environmental behaviors. For these reasons, I am encouraging all schools to establish or expand waste reduction and recycling programs.

In 1988, the New York State Legislature adopted the Solid Waste Management Act, which directed every community in New York State to adopt a local law establishing mandatory recycling. The following materials are typically included in an effective recycling program: paper, cardboard, metal, glass containers and plastic containers. I am writing to remind you of this important requirement and to request that you inform us of the status of recycling in your school district by completing the attached survey.

To help you establish or expand viable and effective programs and make your schools more community friendly, I encourage you to work with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and your local recycling coordinator. Recycling Coordinator contact information can be found at www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8511.html. The DEC also has helpful information on its "Green Schools" initiative at - www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8803.html. The site contains useful links and resources and several guidance booklets (available both in hard copy and on the web) including "A School Waste Reduction, Reuse, Recycling, Composting and Buy Recycled Resource Book" and "STOP- Save That Office Paper." Whether you are setting up a new program, or expanding on your existing activities, these resources will be useful to you.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. Please fill out and return the attached form by October 15, 2007, so that we can get a sense of the status of your program and what assistance we may be able to provide. Return the form to:

School Survey
Bureau of Solid Waste, Reduction and Recycling
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-7253

School Waste Prevention and Recycling Survey
Return no later than October 15, 2007

Name and Address of School:

School District:

Recycling Program Contact Person:

Do you have a recycling program established in all school buildings?

Yes No

If yes: what materials are included:

What quantities of materials do you recover?

If No, what assistance do you need to establish a recycling program?

Do you have any waste prevention, reuse or composting programs?

Yes No

If yes, please describe:

For more information or assistance, please contact the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's Bureau of Solid Waste, Reduction & Recycling, 518-402-8705 or dshmwrr@gw.dec.state.ny.us.