



EcoSchools U.S.
NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

Get Inspired

Build a Strong Action Team

GO GREEN, ACTION TEAM!

At the core of a strong EcoSchool is an active group of students and adults. A range of grades makes for a well-rounded team and involves school principals, teachers, parents, custodial staff, and community members giving students the support they need to succeed.

Tips:

- Invite students to join your school action team early in the school year, and plan fun team-building games so students can get to know one another.
- Have meetings at regular intervals (weekly, biweekly) so students can lead, plan, and organize events and actions.
- Consider developing an application process and leadership training for the action team members to add value to their participation.
- Consider team succession and plan to have a range of grades and backgrounds on your team so students grow into leadership roles over the course of years.



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ACTION TEAM REPS AND ROLES

Defining roles and representation in your Action Team can help students understand their responsibilities as well as spread the word about your actions quickly and effectively.

Tips:

- Action team reps can be from each classroom or divided into subcommittees.
- Action team reps can be assigned to specific tasks in the classroom as well as attend action team meetings, communicate action plans, and monitor for areas of improvement and success.
- Elect a secretary of the environment as part of your school's student council.
- If you have a small action team, consider focusing on one action at a time throughout the year.



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GREEN MENTORS

Both elementary and secondary Action Teams can benefit from mentorship throughout the school year. It builds strong student leadership, capacity, and a succession plan for future years.

Tips:

- Have green mentors conduct energy and waste monitoring together to support the training of new members.
- Create a reading-buddies program that focuses on environment-, nature-, and community-based books, or have older students plan and facilitate an event, with fun activities for younger students.
- Secondary-school mentoring can be a great way to teach EcoSchools tasks, such as mulching trees, composting, or recycling.
- School-to-school mentorship is an excellent way for seasoned EcoSchools to share Action Team tips and program ideas with other schools.



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BUILDING SKILLS

Workshops, webinars, and whole school presentations are invaluable ways to add skills and knowledge to your EcoSchools program. Invite community members, students, and staff to participate.

Tips:

- Check out local organizations that can host workshops on sustainability topics or outdoor teaching techniques.
- Invite an environmental organization to give a whole school presentation on an environmental issue. As a follow-up, ask students to write reflections, make pledges, or take action on that issue.
- Webinars are a great way for your entire Action Team to get expert information. Watch them live and participate, or watch a recording to get your team informed and activated around local and global environmental actions and nature-based solutions.



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COMMUNITY AND STAFF APPRECIATION

It's important to acknowledge the great efforts of community partners and school staff. This can build support for Action Team activities, maintain goodwill, and recognize all the work your community supporters and staff do to support your Eco-Schools program.

Tips:

- Give monthly community and teacher awards to recognize eco-achievements.
- Have community and teacher appreciation days; for example, bring them fairtrade coffee or organic treats in thanks for their efforts.
- Host a lunch for all those impacting the Action Team's success. This will give students an opportunity to ask questions and say thank you.



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IT'S ALL IN A NAME

Eco-Heroes, Earth Eagles, EcoLeaders, Green Dreams: these are examples of fun, catchy names that will capture your mission and distinguish your Action Team.

Tips:

- Many Action Teams divide up tasks in their group. One idea is to have fun names associated with each task – for example, Green Bin Gators, Recycle Rangers, and EcoMonitors.
- Make buttons, reuse old T-shirts, and create costumes that highlight your Action Team name. This is a great way to increase visibility in your school.
- Make sure your Action Team name is on all communications to create your own unique identity.
- Write an Eco-Code for your school. This can help solidify your long-term vision, give direction to your actions, and communicate your overall goal to the entire school. Post it somewhere prominent and announce it in the school newsletter to promote getting the word out.



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ECO MASCOTS

Mascots are a fun and visible way to represent your Action Team.

Tips:

- Give the school mascot a green makeover: for example, if your mascot is an eagle, paint the eagle a shade of green or add leaves to its wings.
- Keep your mascot in a visible area, or use it as part of Action Team announcements and assemblies.
- Run an Action Team mascot contest: students can create mascots out of recycled materials or submit design ideas on GOOS (good on one side) paper. Invite students to vote for their favorite.



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