

# Ministry of Education

## Statement of Environmental Values (SEV)

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<p>The Ontario <i>Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993</i> (EBR) came into force in February 1994. The founding principles of the EBR are stated in its Preamble:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>The people of Ontario recognize the inherent value of the natural environment.</i></li><li>• <i>The people of Ontario have a right to a healthful environment.</i></li><li>• <i>The people of Ontario have as a common goal the protection, conservation and restoration of the natural environment for the benefit of present and future generations.</i></li><li>• While the government has the primary responsibility for achieving this goal, Ontarians should have the means to ensure that it is achieved in an effective, timely, open and fair manner.</li></ul> <p>The purposes of the Act are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To protect, conserve and where reasonable, restore the integrity of the environment, by the means provided in the Act;</li><li>• To provide sustainability of the environment by the means provided in the Act; and</li><li>• To protect the right to a healthful environment by the means provided in the Act.</li></ul> <p>These purposes include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The prevention, reduction and elimination of the use, generation and release of pollutants that are an unreasonable threat to the integrity of the environment.</li><li>• The protection and conservation of biological, ecological and genetic diversity.</li><li>• The protection and conservation of natural resources, including plant life, animal life and ecological systems.</li><li>• The encouragement of the wise management of our natural resources, including plant life, animal life and ecological systems.</li><li>• The identification, protection and conservation of ecologically sensitive areas or processes.</li></ul> <p>To assist in fulfilling these purposes, the Act provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A means by which Ontarians may participate in the making of decisions made by prescribed ministries which could have a significant effect on the environment;</li><li>• Increased accountability of the Government of Ontario for its environmental decision-making;</li><li>• Increased access to the courts by residents of Ontario for the protection of the environment; and</li><li>• Enhanced protection for employees who take action in respect of environmental harm.</li></ul>
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	<p>The EBR requires that all prescribed ministries develop and finalize a Statement of Environmental Values (SEV). Ministries are prescribed for various provisions under the Act pursuant to O. Reg. 73/94, and a list of ministries that must develop an SEV are listed at:  <a href="https://ero.ontario.ca/page/sevs">https://ero.ontario.ca/page/sevs</a></p> <p>The EBR states that an SEV explains how the purposes of the EBR are to be applied when decisions that might significantly affect the environment are made and explains how consideration of the purposes of the EBR should be integrated with other considerations, including social, economic, and scientific considerations.</p> <p>It is each Minister's responsibility to take every reasonable step to ensure that the SEV is considered whenever decisions that might significantly affect the environment are made in the ministry.</p> <p>The ministry will examine the SEV on a periodic basis to ensure the Statement is current.</p>
<p><b>2. MINISTRY VISION, MANDATE AND BUSINESS</b></p>	<p><b>Ministry Overview</b></p> <p>The Ministry of Education is responsible for child care and administering Ontario's publicly funded education system. The Ministry of Education is also committed to protecting a sustainable world-class education system for the students of today and the future.</p> <p>From a child's earliest years, and through elementary and postsecondary school, Ontario's education system is responsible for ensuring children and students have the skills and knowledge they need to reach their full potential and achieve lifelong success.</p> <p><b>Key Responsibilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop policy and programs to support child care and early years programs for children and families</li> <li>• Make sure child care settings are safe and follow the law by funding, licensing and inspecting licensed child care providers.</li> <li>• Fund and provide guidelines for the delivery of core services at EarlyON child and family centres.</li> <li>• Fund and oversee publicly funded elementary and secondary school education.</li> <li>• Develop and publish curriculum documents and teaching resources for Kindergarten to Grade 12.</li> <li>• Set provincial standards and guidelines for all assessment, evaluation and reporting for all students who attend public or private schools in Ontario.</li> <li>• Oversees and sets policies for the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), which administers provincial assessments to help improve student learning in reading, writing and math.</li> <li>• Set requirements for student diplomas and certificates.</li> <li>• Provide funding to build new schools and expand, retrofit or repair existing schools.</li> <li>• Operate schools for blind, deaf and deafblind students.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Register and inspect private schools that offer credits toward an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).</li> </ul> <p>More details on the responsibilities of the Ministry of Education can be found on the ministry website: <a href="https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-education">https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-education</a></p>
<p><b>3. APPLICATION OF THE SEV</b></p>	<p>The Ministry of Education is committed to taking every reasonable step to ensure that the ministry’s SEV is considered when decisions that might significantly affect the environment are made in the ministry, and as it develops Acts and policies.</p> <p>The ministry will consider the following vision when making such decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ontario’s education system will prepare students with the knowledge, skills, perspective and practices they need to be environmentally responsible citizens. Students will understand our fundamental connections to each other and to the world around us through our relationship to food, water, energy, air, and land, and our interaction with all living things. The education system will provide opportunities within the classroom and the community for students to engage in actions that deepen this understanding.</li> </ul> <p>The ministry recognizes that this SEV applies only to the Ministry of Education itself, and nothing in the SEV affects in any way the legal or fiscal responsibility of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• school boards</li> <li>• Consolidated Municipal Service Managers/District Social Services, Administrative Boards (CMSM/DSSABs)</li> <li>• First Nations</li> <li>• child care operators</li> <li>• Ministry of Education transfer payment agencies</li> </ul> <p>Nevertheless, the ministry will encourage the school boards, CMSM/DSSABs, child care operators and Ministry of Education transfer payment agencies to practice environmentally responsible behaviour similar to that set out in this SEV.</p>
<p><b>4. INTEGRATION WITH OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b></p>	<p>The Ministry will take into account social, economic and other considerations; these will be integrated with the purposes of the EBR when decisions that might significantly affect the environment are made.</p>
<p><b>5. MONITORING USE OF THE SEV</b></p>	<p>The Ministry of Education will ensure that the SEV is taken into consideration when making decisions on a proposed policy or Act that may significantly affect the environment and that these decisions are posted on the Environmental Registry, where appropriate.</p> <p>The Ministry will ensure that staff involved in such decisions are aware of the Ministry’s Environmental Bill of Rights obligations and of the appropriate use of the SEV in decision-making.</p>
<p><b>6. CONSULTATION</b></p>	<p>The Ministry of Education believes that public consultation is vital to sound environmental decision-making. The Ministry will provide opportunities for an open and consultative process when making decisions that might significantly affect the environment.</p>
<p><b>7. CONSIDERATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE</b></p>	<p>The Ministry of Education recognizes the value that Indigenous people place on the environment. When making decisions that might significantly affect the environment,</p>

	<p>the Ministry will provide opportunities for involvement of Indigenous people whose interests may be affected by such decisions so that Indigenous perspectives and interests can be appropriately considered. This commitment is not intended to alter or detract from any constitutional obligation the province may have to consult with Indigenous people.</p>
<p><b>8. GREENING OF INTERNAL OPERATIONS AND ENERGY CONSERVATION</b></p>	<p>The Ministry of Education believes in the wise use and conservation of natural resources. The Ministry will support Government of Ontario initiatives to conserve energy and water in its own operations, and to wisely use our air and land resources in order to generate environmental, health and economic benefits for present and future generations.</p> <p>The Ministry will support Government of Ontario initiatives to reduce Ontario’s greenhouse gas emissions and to prepare for the impacts of a changing climate.</p>
<p><b>9. CLIMATE CHANGE – NEW SECTION</b></p>	<p>The Ministry of Education believes that the public interest requires a broad effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to build a cleaner and more resilient province.</p> <p>The ministry will work to advance the province’s core climate change goals by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring policies and programs consider the impacts of a changing climate.</li> <li>• Helping the province do its part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</li> <li>• Working with partner ministries including the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks to consider climate change mitigation and resilience to climate impacts as part of the government decision-making process.</li> <li>• Embed learning about the environment in the classroom, including learning about protecting our air, land and water, addressing climate change, and reducing the amount of litter and waste in our communities.</li> </ul>