We are so excited to welcome you and your school to the Grades of Green community! This handbook will guide you through the first steps of starting a fun, hands-on and student-driven Grades of Green Team at your school. Let’s get started!
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OUR GOAL

Our goal is to provide students and educators with the support and resources to take action to care for the environment.

Grades of Green Team SUPPORT + customized RESOURCES = student-driven ACTION AND CHANGE

OUR PHILOSOPHY

When students talk, adults listen! Our Grades of Green Activities and programs are built with 21st Century Skills (collaboration, communication, creativity and critical thinking) so students learn leadership skills through action change, all while becoming lifelong environmental stewards. We’re here to mentor and coach students and schools along the way to turn ideas into measurable action change!

OUR MODEL

Our Grades of Green Activities are designed to be led by a small group (5-15 students) of on-campus student leaders called the Grades of Green Team. The Grades of Green Team implements Grades of Green Activities, which combine learning about environmental issues with taking action to create measurable and sustainable campus impact. Grades of Green Activities range from simple, one-time solutions to complex, semester-long projects so there are activities to fit every school! Green Teams that want one-on-one support from a Grades of Green Mentor to tackle a waste or water issue over the course of a semester should register for our Water or Waste Campaigns.

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WHAT’S THE GRADES OF GREEN PROGRAM?

CONGRATS, YOU NOW HAVE ACCESS TO THE FULL GRADES OF GREEN PROGRAM! HERE’S WHAT YOU RECEIVE AS A GRADES OF GREEN SCHOOL:

1. SUPPORTIVE NETWORK
   A GLOBAL NETWORK OF STUDENTS, EDUCATORS AND MENTORS YOU CAN CONNECT WITH VIA THE WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

2. WEBINARS
   ACCESS TO ONLINE TRAINING WEBINARS AND VIRTUAL CAMPAIGNS.

3. VIRTUAL CHECK-INS
   ANNUAL VIRTUAL CHECK-INS WITH A GRADES OF GREEN MENTOR TO HELP YOUR STUDENTS ROLL-OUT A GRADES OF GREEN ACTIVITY OF THEIR CHOICE!

4. DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCES
   FREE ONLINE GRADES OF GREEN ACTIVITIES TO FACILITATE STUDENT-LED CHANGE. RESOURCES INCLUDE STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS FOR 40+ ACTIVITIES AS WELL AS A VARIETY OF DOWNLOADABLE MATERIALS (SUCH AS FLYERS, ARTWORK/SIGNAGE, WORKSHEETS, ETC.) THAT CAN BE CUSTOMIZED AND SHARED

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NEXT STEPS TO BUILD YOUR GRADES OF GREEN PROGRAM:

CREATE A GRADES OF GREEN TEAM

1. Start a Grades of Green Team to ensure your school activities are student-led, long-lasting and... FUN! A Grades of Green Team can be a lunchtime or afterschool club or a classroom of students. We recommend starting with 5-15 students on the Grades of Green Team and creating a schedule to meet bi-weekly or monthly. [View our tips to start your Team here]

SELECT A GRADES OF GREEN ACTIVITY

2. Once you have your Grades of Green Team in place, it’s time to select an activity and start taking action! Your Grades of Green Advisor will help guide you to activities that may work best for your school community and campus. We encourage schools to start small by selecting just one activity for the first year.

ROLL-OUT THE ACTIVITY + SCHEDULE TEAM CHECK-INS

3. As you roll-out your selected activity, we’re here to support you throughout the year! Schedule annual check-ins with your Grades of Green Team and Mentor here to create a game plan and follow-up action items so students can take the lead on creating change.

JOIN A CAMPAIGN

4. When you’re ready to take your movement to the next level, join one of our Campaigns! Grades of Green offers semester-long Campaigns to provide one-one-one Mentor support to Grades of Green Teams. The Campaigns help students research a local environmental issue, develop an innovative solution, and then share that solution with the community. Email info@gradesofgreen.org for more info or schedule a check-in with a Mentor to learn more.
RESOURCES

Our goal is to make being a change maker and taking action to care for the environment easy and fun! Before you meet with your Grades of Green Team, here’s resources to get started:

CUSTOMIZABLE GRADES OF GREEN TEAM LOGO

Edit this fillable PDF with your school’s name to make your own Grades of Green Team logo. Use your logo to promote your Team on campus, add to flyers, t-shirts and more.

CLICK HERE

RECRUITMENT FLYER

Share your Grades of Green Team’s meeting times with your school community on this flyer. Fill-in the PDF, print it, and hang it on bulletin boards at your school.

CLICK HERE

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Post these sample social media posts on Facebook and Instagram with a photo of your team and/or activity to promote your Grades of Green Team.

CLICK HERE

PRINCIPAL EMAIL TEMPLATE

Customize this email to send to your principal to tell them about your Grades of Green Program.

CLICK HERE

PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE

Customize this press release and send it to local newspapers, your school district’s office and local elected representatives, etc.

CLICK HERE

STUDENT POSITIONS

Help make your Grades of Green Team sustainable year-after-year by creating positions within your team.

CLICK HERE

SAMPLE TEAM MEETING AGENDA

Use this sample meeting agenda to create your monthly Grades of Green Team meetings.

CLICK HERE

GET STARTED WEBINAR

Watch our Get Started Webinar for tips on how to start your own Grades of Green Team.

CLICK HERE

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SUCCESS STORIES:

Here’s a few examples of how Grades of Green schools across the globe are working on Grades of Green Activities and Campaigns. The Grades of Green movement is now 500,000+ students strong across 21 countries!

School: Robinson Elementary, California
Grades of Green Activity: No Idle Zones - The Robinson Grades of Green Team hosted a No Idle Zone rally to encourage parents to turn off their engines while waiting to pick up their students from school. This resulted in 418 students breathing cleaner air.

School: George Washington Academy, Morocco
Grades of Green Activity: Caught Green Handed - Grades of Green student Younes partnered with a reusable water bottle company that uses eco-friendly materials to distribute bottles as a reward for students who are caught implementing waste reduction activities. George Washington Academy has continued their work through the Grades of Green Campaigns.

School: Bottegga della Arti Creative, Italy
Grades of Green Campaign: Water Campaign - The Bottegga della Arti Creative Grades of Green Team discovered that the city they lived in wasted thousands of gallons of water through leaky pipes. They created an interpretive dance about the issue and educated over 2,000 people about the issue.
GET INSPIRED

Inspire others through your work!

Please email us photos and updates of your progress so we can give your school kudos and shout-outs! You can also tag @gradesofgreen when you share pictures on social media.

@gradesofgreen

We love to celebrate our schools’ environmental successes, share updates from our programs, and raise awareness about timely environmental issues.

www.gradesofgreen.org
Faq’s

How do I access the grades of green activities?

Grades of Green’s 40+ Activities are listed on our “Take Action” page. There are six types of environmental categories to choose from: air, energy, toxins, waste, water, and an overall earth category.

What is the time commitment?

Most Grades of Green Teams meet biweekly for one hour as a group, and then have a video call with their Mentor every year. The adult Grades of Green Team lead volunteers estimate it takes about 15 hours per semester to lead an Activity with their student Grades of Green Team.

How do I contact a Grades of Green Mentor?

You can contact a Mentor with any questions or issues by scheduling an appointment with them by clicking here. Mentors offer one live video call check in per year with unlimited email and chat support. If you have general questions please email info@gradesofgreen.org. You’ll receive a reply with the information you need in 1-2 business days.

What is the difference between an activity and campaign?

Grades of Green has Activities in all areas of the environment for students of all ages. Grades of Green Teams implementing our Activities have free access to our website, unlimited email and chat support, and one annual check-in with a Grades of Green Mentor. Green Teams can spend as much time on Activities as they like. Grades of Green Campaigns are one-semester long, focus on either waste or water, and are designed for students grades 5-12. Campaign Teams are provided free one-on-one virtual support from a Grades of Green Mentor throughout the semester to research a waste or water issue, develop a solution, and implement and share that solution with their community - a $1,500 value per group.

How do I join a campaign?

Grades of Green has a Waste Campaign from January - April and a Water Campaign from September - December. When you are ready to join, email info@gradesofgreen.org.

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