

Sustainability on College Campuses



Day 5: Greener Challenge
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College Spotlight: Northwestern University



Some of Northwestern's Sustainability Efforts:

1. Sustainability “governance”
2. Solar Energy
3. Student-Led Sustainability Organizations

“Northwestern is committed to fostering **environmental and ethical stewardship**; providing a living-learning environment that supports student-, faculty-, and staff-led **sustainability initiatives**; and **improving our built environment and natural ecology.**”



1.) Sustainability “Governance”

- Groups including a **Sustainability Steering Committee** and several working groups
 - The groups meet regularly to discuss the college’s progress in reaching its sustainability goals
 - Progress is regularly communicated to the greater college community

ACCOUNTABLE!



***This is a powerful model that would help any school campus stay accountable for its progress in reaching environmental goals**



2.) Solar Panels



- In 2011, students implemented a solar panel system that now produces **20,000 kilowatt-hours/year**
- Students were in charge of the planning, fundraising, and implementation of **the \$117,000 project**



3.) Encourages Student-Led Sustainability Organizations

- Over 18 student-led sustainability organizations
- For example, an organization that publishes an environmental magazine, a club that leads outdoor adventure trips, a group that advocates for divestment from all fossil fuels etc.





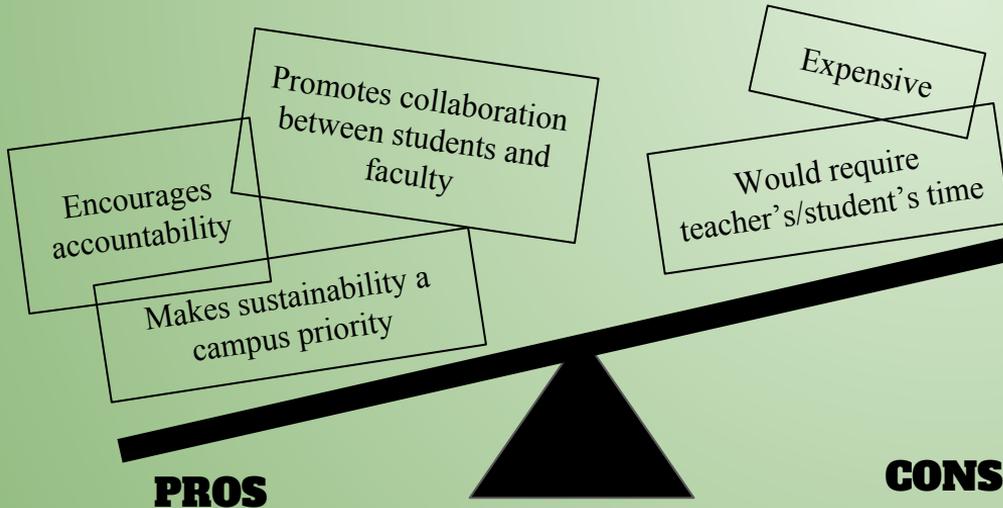
Sustainability Efforts At My School

***Disclaimer**: I currently attend a private school with the financial resources to invest in various environmental projects. While the privilege of attending such a school is something I am very aware of and at times uncomfortable discussing, **I feel as if money, especially in relation to the environmental movement, is something that should certainly be acknowledged and discussed.** I believe that attending a school with financial resources comes with a certain responsibility to give back. It is my hope that my school can continue to make sustainability a priority, and, in doing so, will continue to give back to a very important cause that requires immediate action. That being said, here are a few actions I believe my school can and should take.

Sustainability “Governance” at Newark Academy

What It Would Look Like:

- Creating an official sustainability “coordinator” position (a faculty member dedicated to environmental issues)
- Establishing an official board of students and teachers dedicated to increasing sustainability at school
- Writing a list of ambitious but still realistic school-wide environmental goals for the next 4 years
- Communicating our progress to the school community



How We Can Take Action:

- Meet with our school Green Committee advisor to discuss creating an official student/teacher/administrator board
- Take advantage of our school’s procedure for making student “proposals” to suggest creating a sustainability coordinator position

Solar Panels at Newark Academy



What It Would Look Like:

- Working with a solar panel installation company to discuss a cost-effective and practical solar power energy system for our school
- Encouraging physics/environmental science classes to use the solar panels as a part of their curriculum
- Educating the school about the value of reusable energy



Would help our school earn a reputation as eco-conscious

Would eventually save our school money

Would have education value

Makes sustainability a campus priority

School administrators would have to be convinced

The installation would take time

Expensive

Could be unreliable

PROS

CONS

How We Can Take Action:

- While the idea of installing solar panels is definitely ambitious, I will do some research about whether other schools nearby have installed solar panels
- I will research the logistics/expenses
- I will schedule a meeting to discuss the idea with a school administrator

Encouraging Student-Led Sustainability Organizations at Newark Academy



What It Would Look Like:

- Our school already has a Green & Blue Committee, an Outdoors Club and a Garden Club
- Continuing to promote/encourage student involvement with these clubs
- Giving these clubs more opportunities to communicate with the school community (bulletin boards, assemblies etc.)



Allows students to exchange ideas, make proposals etc.

Encourages students to get involved

Makes sustainability a campus priority

Promotes collaboration between students

None that I can think of :)

PROS

CONS

How We Can Take Action:

- Continue to attend these clubs' meetings and participate in club events
- Encourage others to attend as well
- Ask the administration for an assembly opportunity, more bulletin board room etc.