

Educational institutions are a critical venue for teaching and motivating students to understand and act on sustainability issues, but there has been little study of the inclusion of sustainability in education across Canada at the ministry of education or school division levels. The Sustainability and Education Policy Network (SEPN) conducted a nation-wide census to address this gap.

13 PROVINCIAL AND TERRITORIAL MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION 374 SCHOOL DIVISIONS

Ministry of Education Policies

The provincial and territorial ministries of education engage with sustainability issues through sustainability-specific policies and general curriculum frameworks

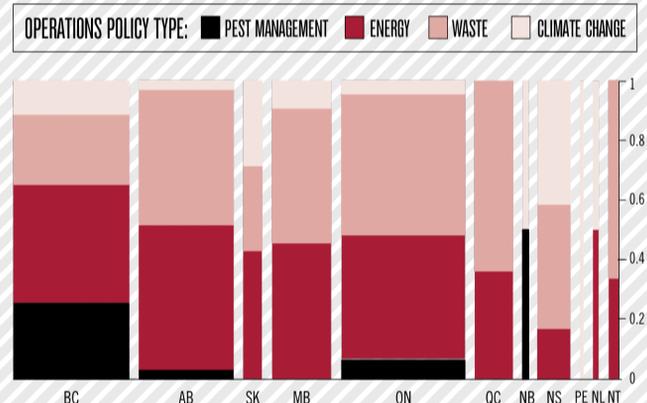
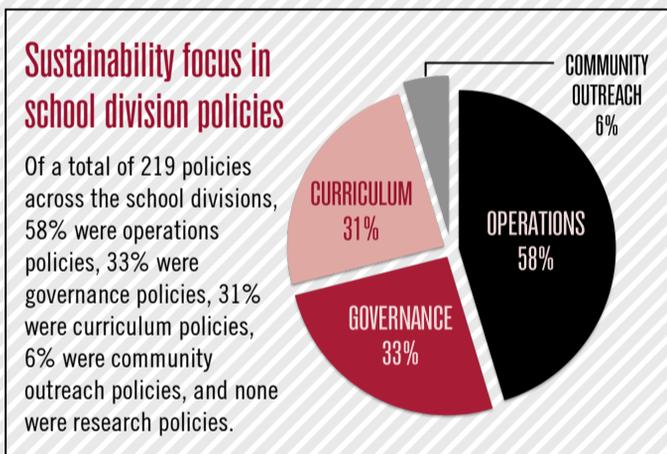
Province	Sustainability-Specific Policy Documents					Sustainability in Curriculum Framework
	Governance	Curriculum	Operations	Research	Community Outreach	
AB	X	X	X	X	X	✓
BC	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X
MB	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NB/NL/NS/PE	X	X	X	X	X	✓
NT	X	✓	X	X	X	N/A
NU	X	✓	X	X	X	✓
ON	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	N/A
QC	✓	X	X	X	X	✓
SK	X	X	X	X	X	✓
YU	X	X	X	✓	X	N/A

School Division Policies

Over half of Canada's school divisions had sustainability-specific policies.

The majority of sustainability-specific policies were operations policies

Almost half of all 177 operations policies focused on either waste (81 policies) or energy (77 policies).



31% OF SCHOOL DIVISIONS HAD UNDERTAKEN A SUSTAINABILITY CERTIFICATION

The most common eco-certification programs were EcoSchools and Établissement vert Brundtland.

ONLY 7% OF CANADA'S 374 SCHOOL DIVISIONS HAD SUSTAINABILITY STAFF

"ENVIRONMENT"

was the dominant term used in school division policy titles across the country

Sustainability-specific policies increase after 2006

Sustainability-specific school division policy dates followed a distinct temporal trend, with few policy dates before 2006, a rapid increase until 2010, and a slow decline to the present. Only 77 policies were dated between 1978 and 2005. 187 policies were dated between 2006 and 2014.

Average Provincial Sustainability Initiative Scores

Average scores of school divisions in a province. Each school division gets 1 point for each of the three sustainability initiatives they have (eco-certification, staff, policy). SI scores have a possible range of 0-3 points.

Province	NS	ON	QC	MB	BC	NL	AB	SK	PE	NB	NT	YT	NU	ALL
Average Score	1.7	1.5	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0	1.1

SEPN's findings suggest that while there has been a steady increase in uptake of sustainability in K-12 education over the past decade, more can be done both at the ministry of education and school division levels to further mobilize knowledge and solutions that enable change for a more sustainable future.