



Green Buildings & Retrofits Resource Guide

A practical guide for initiating or improving green building projects and retrofitting initiatives at your school!

This collection of resources will assist you in designing, building, and maintaining green building projects and retrofits at your school, whether you're starting from scratch or aiming to enhance an existing initiative.

Know of a great resource we're missing?

Share it with the FES N:OW for Net-Zero team: nowfornetzero@fesplanet.org

Key Concepts for Green Buildings & Retrofits

Energy Audits & Efficiency

Building Envelope Improvements

HVAC System Upgrades

Lighting System Retrofits

Water Efficiency Retrofits

Community Engagement & Education

Learning Materials & Resources

CaGBC Education

Empowering the green buildings sector in Canada through professional development, this program offers courses and certifications for individuals involved in designing, constructing, and managing sustainable buildings.

[Learn more](#)

Continue to the next page...



Living Building Challenge

An international certification program focused on creating regenerative and sustainable buildings.

[Explore the program](#)

N:OW for Net-Zero Green Building Lesson Plans

A Canadian-focused curriculum grounded in Project Drawdown's science and solutions. These lesson plans integrate practical green building concepts into classroom learning, fostering awareness and action among students.

[Access lesson plans](#)

LEED for Schools

Provides guidance and real-world case studies to help schools achieve LEED certification.

[Learn about LEED for schools](#)

K-12 Resource Factsheet

Although published by the U.S. Department of Energy, this toolkit designed to engage the K-12 education community in green building initiatives includes strategies, resources, and tips for fostering sustainability in schools.

[View the factsheet](#)

Habitat for Humanity - Building Green

Offers articles and lesson plans aimed at teaching students about alternative energy sources, their benefits and challenges, and how energy-efficient building features contribute to environmental sustainability.

[Read more](#)

ENERGY STAR Kids

A fun and interactive platform with games, quizzes, and activities that educate young learners about energy efficiency and conservation in buildings.

[Visit ENERGY STAR Kids](#)

Here are some other links to PDFs with helpful information on retrofits and zero-carbon building design guidelines:

[Major Energy Retrofit Guidelines](#) by Natural Resources Canada

[Green Schools Resource Guide](#) by ZAS Architects Inc.

[Zero Carbon Building](#) by Canada Green Building Council

Need Funding?

If you haven't already, be sure to checkout our N:OW for Net-Zero Grant [here](#) and our additional funding opportunities [here](#)!

Resource Name	Description	Link
EcoSchools Funding Opportunities	Offers financial support to schools across Canada for environmental initiatives, including green building projects and sustainability efforts.	Learn more
Samsung Solve for Tomorrow Contest	A global competition encouraging elementary and high school students to apply STEM-based learning to real-world challenges, including sustainability projects.	Learn more
Canada Infrastructure Bank's Building Retrofits Initiative	Provides financing to reduce investment barriers and decarbonize buildings.	Learn more
Green Municipal Fund's Community Buildings Retrofit Initiative	Supports Canadian municipalities with funding for every stage of green retrofit projects.	Learn more
Natural Resources Canada's Green Building Programs and Funding	Offers multiple programs and funding opportunities to enhance energy efficiency and support sustainable building practices throughout Canada.	Learn more



Tips & Tricks for Common Challenges

Addressing Initial Cost Barriers

Many schools and communities struggle with the upfront costs of green building and retrofitting projects. Start small by focusing on high-impact, low-cost improvements such as energy-efficient lighting and water-saving fixtures.

Navigating Bureaucracy

Securing approval and funding for retrofitting projects can be time-consuming. Building strong partnerships with local governments and community organizations can help streamline the process.

Balancing Educational and Practical Goals

Engaging students and the broader community in the process of retrofitting can be challenging. Consider creating hands-on projects, such as green building design competitions, to foster engagement and ownership of the process.

Overcoming Resistance to Change

There may be resistance from staff or stakeholders unfamiliar with green technologies. Providing clear examples of cost savings and educational opportunities, such as energy audits or sustainability workshops, can help ease concerns.

Want to learn about some of our solution stories? Visit
<https://nowfornetzero.org/solution-stories/>

Every retrofit makes a difference - toward greener schools, lower emissions,
and a brighter future.