



WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION
INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

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NEWS RELEASE

Sisler hosts its largest ever student-led Sustainability Conference

Being environmentally conscious is something Charmaine Aagsalud never used to think about. After four years at Sisler High School, the Grade 12 student is not only committed to living a more sustainable lifestyle, she is part of a group of students organizing, facilitating and presenting at a free conference to inspire other students.

This year's Sisler High School Sustainability Conference is larger than ever, with more than 100 students and teachers signed up for the day of presentations and student-led, hands-on workshops designed to empower students to take action and make a difference. More than half of the attendees this year are from other schools.

"What we do here at Sisler has inspired me to live a more sustainable lifestyle, and has made me a better person. We want to show other students that they can make changes and create positive effects in their community," said Aagsalud, who helped plan the conference and will give a presentation about Sisler's after-school cooking club and demonstrate cooking with Fair Trade ingredients. "A lot of students don't know what Fair Trade is. They don't understand that very little of the money we spend on the things we buy goes to the farmers and their families who produce the food."

When: Thursday, April 24, 2014 – 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Where: Sisler High School, 1360 Redwood Avenue, Winnipeg

Media are invited to attend at any time on April 24. However, the best opportunities for photos, video and/or interviews with teacher Lauren Sawchuk and the Sisler students who are running the conference are from:

11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. – Students will be making smoothies on a pedal-powered Bike Blender, serving and eating a student-made lunch of chili with local, Fair Trade and organic ingredients, and making sustainability awareness buttons.

1:10 to 1:35 p.m. and 2:00 to 2:30 p.m. – Sisler students will be leading hands-on demonstrations including cooking coconut macaroons with Fair Trade ingredients and making a vermicomposter – a compost system that uses worms to turn food waste into rich organic fertilizer and soil conditioner.

"This is kids explaining to kids what they do; it takes it to their level. We want to help other schools that aren't doing this, or maybe they've already started but they want to go further. We are committed to being sustainable, but we can't be sustainable if we just keep our ideas within our walls," said Home Economics teacher Lauren Sawchuk, who has implemented award-winning sustainability initiatives at Sisler including gardening, composting, improved recycling programs and the cooking club.

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