

Title

Green Deal Scholen – sustainable schools initiative

Short description

Green Deal 'Verduurzaming Scholen' (More Sustainable Schools) is a Dutch Green Deal between the national government, education sector and the Association for Dutch Municipalities, which aims to create a healthy learning and working environment for students and employees, in a building that is affordable for schoolboards. To implement this deal, an approach based on needs from target groups is used. The aim is to provide independent and trustworthy knowledge, agenda setting of indoor environments and energy, and insights into sustainable quality and solutions of school buildings. In addition, more knowledge about financial options should be developed. There is a website, greendealscholen.nl, which provides independent knowledge for healthy, sustainable, and affordable school buildings. Experience experts share their solutions and there is a helpdesk with experts who answer questions and support. Success stories from participating schools are shared on the website as well. In addition, ten schools will be renovated to become more sustainable, and about 2000 schools should be in the progress towards becoming more sustainable in 2017.

Topic

Energy efficient housing: Energy efficiency of buildings

Characteristics (type, level)

Umbrella program/Policy, national level

Country/Countries of implementation

The Netherlands

Aims and Objectives

A healthy learning and working environment in a building that schoolboards can afford. The mission of this Green Deal is to, using a broad coalition of parties, make, on a large scale, healthy learning and working environments for teachers and student happen. This should result in an acceleration towards a sustainable and affordable building. This Green Deal has six result lines regarding putting the program on the agenda, articulating questions, data, quick-wins, match between demand and supply, and innovation. An example of a goal for putting the program on the agenda: "In 2017, 90% of schoolboards and municipalities indicate that the indoor climate and energy costs are of great importance for healthy and affordable learning and working environments, and that they have taken action in the previous years".

Target Group

There are about 9000 school buildings in the Netherlands, in which 2.4 million students are taught and about 200 000 educational professionals work. In many of these buildings, the indoor climate and energy quality are not optimal, which leads to decreased performance of teachers and students and a higher sickness absence.

Status

Ongoing

Start and Completion dates

This program runs from 2015 to 2017, with monitoring and evaluation until 2019.

Lifestyle and Behavior Change

It is stated that it is important to make sure that school boards and municipalities but also staff, students and parents are aware of the importance of sustainable, healthy school buildings. The school will become more sustainable because of this behavioural change, and the school can function as a good example for the social environment of students. Therefore, they state it is important to involve students when refreshing and making the school more sustainable, in order to influence future behaviour. Several educational packages have been developed for this purpose.

Effects on:

Health and Wellbeing	Attention is being paid of having a healthy school environment for students, and a healthy school environment for teachers. An intersectoral approach is used for this, by making sure schools become more sustainable in a healthy way.
Vulnerable populations	If the included schools are also schools that contain students from different socioeconomic statuses, including lower socioeconomic status students, there is more to gain, increasing health for this subgroup the most.
Environment	By making the school building more sustainable, using insulation, ventilation, sustainable lighting and heating, energy efficiency measures and potentially local production of energy, this would reduce the environmental impact of school buildings significantly.

Initiated and/or implemented by

The initiators are the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Ministry of home affairs, and Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment. They made the implementation of the Green Deal Schools financially possible.

Stakeholders and sectors involved

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the Ministry of home affairs, and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment. The Association for Dutch Municipalities (VNG), the Council for Primary School (PO-raad), the Council for Secondary School (VO-raad), the Association Climate Coalition Netherlands (Klimaatverbond Nederland), the Foundation Knowledge Centre and Guarantee Fund Ruimte-OK.

Financial support

The government will provide a financial contribution, and Ruimte-OK and Klimaatverbond will -in cooperation with PO-Raad, VO-Raad and VNG- apply for subsidy at one of the governmental parties involved in this Green Deal. One of the parties is the RVO (Netherlands Enterprise Agency). From October 3, schools can apply there for a subsidy to hire external advice about making schools more sustainable and 'refresh' schools. This subsidy is 50% of advice costs up to 3500 Euros. This project also aims to increase knowledge among school boards about how they can finance measures for their school themselves. On their website, they provide extensive information about all the subsidies that can be applied for and other financial measures and options for schools.

Evidence-base

Research by Klimaatverbond Nederland (Dutch Climate Covenant) showed that the cause of the absence of acceleration of more sustainable school buildings partly resides by the lack of knowledge, insights and fitting finances. In addition, demand and supply do not often match. Therefore, increasing these factors seems a promising way of increasing sustainability school buildings in a healthy, affordable way.

Main activities

Discussions with municipalities and schoolboards (2015), mapping the current situation, formulating a common ambition (2016), conquer financials barriers, find parties that help to realize ambitions, using possible finance options. Ten schools will be renovated to become energy neutral. Using a helpdesk, an online knowledge portal, regional meetings, existing measures, use financial aid options, proper installation methods. In 2017, about 2000 school buildings started becoming more sustainable.

Reaching the goal of this Green Deal will be done by developing imitable sustainability concepts and cooperation bonds that fit with cost-effective improvement and sustainable renovation and exploiting school buildings, fitting needs and wishes of students, employees and schoolboards as users and owners.

Evaluation

The program runs for three years, and during implementation, the program team will monitors results and progression. The final evaluation will be in 2018, according to a yet to be determined method by an external party to ensure independency. They will use both quantitative (e.g. number of participating schoolboards and municipalities) and qualitative (e.g. reviews of users of instruments, effectiveness of used approach). In addition, on their website, success stories can be found with results of changes to the building, such as reductions in CO₂ and temperature in classrooms.

Main results

Not yet known, evaluation will be in 2019.

Key success factors and barriers

They have an online helpdesk and an online portal with information and success stories from other schools to inspire and support them.

Potential barriers may be that the schools have to organize their own budget to do this; however, they are supported by the Green Deal on how to do this.

INHERIT Perspective

This program is a promising INHERIT practice, because it strives towards making school buildings more sustainable in a healthy, affordable way. This program aims to involve 2000 school buildings in 2017 and in case schools are involved that are located in disadvantaged neighborhoods, health of vulnerable students could be improved as well. In this sense, the program has a potential triple win impact. Opportunity is improved by improving school buildings. By involving students, teachers, and parents and adding educational packages, Capability is improved.

More information

https://www.greendealscholen.nl/sites/default/files/bestanden/overons/20102015_Uitvoeringsprogramma_GDS.pdf

<https://www.greendealscholen.nl/sites/default/files/afbeeldingen/overons/Infographic%20definitief%20WAA001-infov-web.jpg>

Contact

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