

February 8, 2022

### **Green Schools Initiative Phase 2 Leveraged Funds Requirement**

The following leveraged funds requirement for public schools for Phase 2 (construction) gives opportunities to achieve additional co-benefits, allows for flexibility, and aims to support timely implementation.

#### Proposal:

- a) The State of Vermont pays 90% of Phase 2 construction costs for stormwater implementation, and public schools pay 10% of Phase 2 construction costs to be in compliance with the 3-acre general permit.

*or:*

- b) Schools can choose to meet the leveraged funds requirement by contributing 10% of the Phase 2 construction costs towards securing additional co-benefits and educational opportunities supported through the Green Schools Initiative that enhance environmental stewardship including stormwater management.

Examples could be: outdoor classrooms, monitoring equipment, experiential learning sites, habitat restoration, informational resources, structures to engage students in environmental stewardship, in-kind contribution for teachers to attend trainings to integrate Lake Champlain Sea Grant Stormwater Curriculum into their classrooms, etc. \*When stormwater practices contain additional co-benefits (i.e., pollinator habitat with natives in a bioretention) that do not substantially add to the Phase 2 costs, schools would pay 10% towards construction to meet option a.

For example: Assume Phase 2 stormwater construction costs = \$100,000

- Option a: State pays \$90,000, school provides \$10,000 = \$100,000 total
- Option b: State pays \$100,000 to cover construction, school pays \$10,000 for co-benefits = \$110,000 total

#### Rationale for making co-benefits an eligible source of leveraging:

The Green Schools Initiative embodies an exciting opportunity to realize additional co-benefits with the unprecedented investment of dollars in stormwater infrastructure on school campuses. The Initiative's partnership with Greenprint Partners and Lake Champlain Sea Grant, in Phase 1 of the initiative, positions it to attain additional co-benefits in tandem with the stormwater infrastructure projects. Greenprint Phase 1 activities (such as: webinars for school and engineering audiences, development of educational materials, spatial analysis by Trust for Public Land, and a guided design process to maximize community benefits) allow for the identification and planning for co-benefits. In parallel with Phase 1, Lake Champlain Sea Grant is providing stormwater education and outreach to school stakeholders. Throughout the course of Phase 1 and Phase 2, Lake Champlain Sea Grant will link schools to complementary educational resources, professional training, and assist schools in identifying opportunities for additional co-benefits associated with the stormwater projects to enhance the impact of the Initiative's stormwater projects.

Adapted from [the CWIP Funding Policy](#): "Leveraged funds" or "leveraging" are defined as a financial commitment toward the project costs from a source other than State of Vermont clean water funding sources. In the context of the Green Schools Initiative, under this Policy, municipality and school district COVID recovery funds may be an eligible source of leveraged funds. Leveraging can be achieved by a commitment from the school or through other funding programs, including in the form of cash or in-kind services directly related to the project. Leveraged funds may only be committed to the Phase 2 project and cannot be used as leveraged/match funds for other projects. All expenses covered through leveraging must be incurred within the duration of the grant/contract agreement (future costs incurred for operations and maintenance are not eligible). If the project comes in under budget, leveraged funds may also decrease, but must remain at least the same percentage of the total project cost as written into the original agreement.