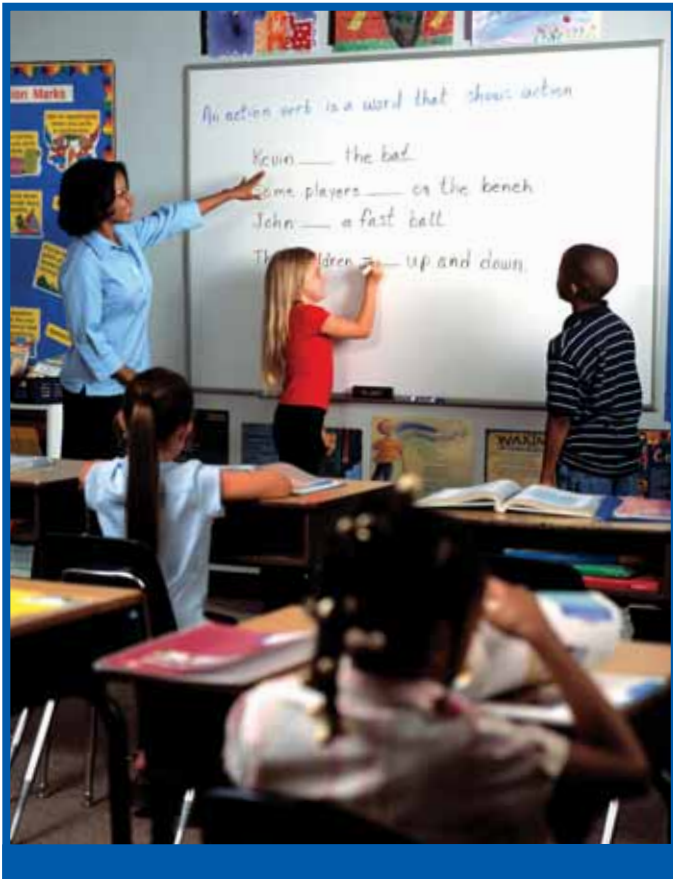


What Color is Your Whiteboard?

ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE COMMUNICATION PRODUCTS BRING SUSTAINABILITY
TO EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS



ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS HAVE NEVER PLAYED a more important role in new school construction and refurbishing than today. Every year, more and more green schools are built, saving energy, reducing environmental contaminants, and keeping our children healthy. The Council of Educational Facility Planners International estimates that schools will spend \$5.3 billion on green building by 2010, a rapid growth from almost nonexistence a few years ago.¹

There is incredible momentum to this important work, as evidenced at Greenbuild International Conference and Expo held in November 2007. Greenbuild experienced record

attendance, with the keynote speech given by former President Bill Clinton, urging conference attendees to spread the word about the economic benefits of sustainable design. The green movement is further supported by an increasing number of green school initiatives, such as the Collaborative for High Performance Schools (CHPS), which works to design, build and operate a new generation of schools that are efficient, green, healthy learning environments for children and helps facilitate and inspire change towards more environmentally responsible planning, design, maintenance and operation of our educational system.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 20% of the U.S. population, approximately 55 million people, spend a majority of their time in more than 120,000 schools. Roughly half of these schools have indoor air quality problems, which pose a health risk to children and educators. Indoors, products and materials release volatile chemicals and particles into the air that may negatively affect human health. The EPA, the American Lung Association, and the World Health Organization view indoor air pollution as one of the greatest risks to human health.²

Children are at greater risk of developing health problems due to poor indoor air quality because they are still growing and are more vulnerable to hazardous environmental exposures. Indoor pollutants such as certain Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), pesticides, and allergens are more harmful to younger generations;³ asthma, for example, is the leading cause of school absences and results in 14 million missed school days each year.⁴

Whether it's reducing the ecological footprint by using greener materials, or ensuring a healthy classroom for our children, the environment is a key consideration for architects, designers, and specifiers involved in the construction of today's schools.

Supporting sustainability in the classroom, PolyVision®, A Steelcase Company and the world leader in visual communication

products, has stepped up to take the role of leader in the industry with regard to environmental stewardship. With a key focus on the K-12 market, PolyVision recognizes that architects, specifiers, school administrators and parents alike are all concerned about the quality of indoor air as well as reducing the ecological footprint wherever possible. As schools are being built or refurbished, each party needs to explore and understand the impact that each product selection will have on the air, environment and most importantly, the health of our children. Studies show that as schools are better lit and better ventilated, attendance improves—which means better students, and smarter kids!⁵ “PolyVision believes everyone has a duty to be environmentally responsible,” says Mike Dunn, President and CEO of PolyVision Corporation. “We are dedicated to taking the lead in the development and distribution of products that comply with both the spirit of the world’s evolving ecological interests and the requirements of today’s classrooms and work spaces.”

Architects face many challenges when building green schools and sustainable buildings. The best remedy is accurate information and viable options. There are many choices today in the category of visual communication products, however, PolyVision offers a unique combination of leading-edge and environmentally responsible solutions from the simplest traditional whiteboard to sophisticated collaboration tools.



PolyVision believes that sustainability is an important business practice in today’s global economy. In late 2004, the company set out to develop an environmentally responsible version of their *P³ ceramicsteel*[®], the world’s best-selling writing surface for whiteboards and chalkboards.

During the development of this new technology, they were determined to create products that complied with both the spirit of the world’s evolving ecological interests and the requirements of today’s workplace. It was critical that there be no difference in the look, feel, or use to the end user, which included the following characteristics:

- › Virtually indestructible surface
- › Product protected for life (PolyVision’s Forever Warranty)
- › Non-porous surface that erases easily without “ghosting”
- › Allows for smoother writing and superior visibility
- › Magnetic
- › Resistant to stains, scratches, bacteria, fire, chemicals, and graffiti



The result of this development process was *e³ environmental ceramicsteel*[™] writing surface, which offers the same features as the *P³ ceramicsteel* surface, but with a more environmentally responsible composition: the total amount of heavy metals (cadmium, mercury, hexavalent chromium, and lead) contained in *e³*[™] is less than 0.1%; the surface is free of arsenic and antimony and contains no VOCs. In addition, the steel core is made from a minimum of 30% post-consumer and post-industrial waste and the surface is 99% recyclable.

The company began to scrutinize the entire supply chain and, from their key learnings, developed *eVision*[™], their corporate environmental policy. Following the *eVision* principles, their Production, Supply Chain, and Research and Development teams continually evaluate alternate resources and process improvements for new and existing products. This cycle of continual

improvement has enabled PolyVision to capitalize on technology and material efficiency to reduce their environmental footprint while developing products that advance human health, social responsibility, and economic success.

To validate PolyVision's product development and to help customers assess environmental merits, the company researched available environmental standards worldwide and selected two third-party certification programs that were most applicable to their goals and product offering.

e³ environmental ceramicsteel surface is the first and only writing surface to receive International Cradle to CradleSM Silver certification, awarded by McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry (MBDC). Cradle to Cradle certification focuses on the characteristics of sustainable materials, products, and systems and places a major emphasis on the human and ecological health impacts of a product's ingredients, as well as on the ability of that product to be truly recycled or safely composted. "PolyVision continues to demonstrate a true commitment to the Cradle to Cradle design concept through its material choices, product designs and advanced manufacturing processes," said William McDonough, architect, designer and co-founder of McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry.

In addition, the company's marker and tack board range has earned GREENGUARD Indoor Air Quality[®] and the more rigorous GREENGUARD for Children and SchoolsSM certifications, assuring specifiers and consumers that the products they select support healthy indoor air quality and do not emit harmful chemicals. Products that have Cradle to Cradle and GREENGUARD certification may also contribute to LEED[®] Innovation in Design credit.



PolyVision's environmental commitment extends to its technology portfolio of products, which also meets the strict standards for content pursuant to Reduction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS). Compliance with RoHS assures customers that heavy metals and other substances of concern have been eliminated from RoHS-certified products.

"PolyVision is dedicated to setting an example with the development and distribution of products that meet evolving ecological needs," says Mike Dunn. "We are proud to be at the forefront of environmental stewardship and are committed to developing products that enable more ecologically responsible work practices and healthier work and learning environments."

This commitment to environmental responsibility and stewardship has positioned the company as the industry leader, proving that innovation and sustainability not only go hand-in-hand, but are a vital part of responsible business practice in the modern marketplace. ■

¹ Bonda, Penny. "The Proliferation of Green Schools: A Very Good Thing." *Interior Design*, August 2006. <http://www.interiordesign.net/GreenZoneNews/CA6471311.html?subhead=Features>

^{2,3} GREENGUARD Environmental Institute, 2007. <http://www.greenguard.org>

⁴ *National Geographic*. "Green Guide – Top 10 Healthiest Schools." July-August 2006.

⁵ Kats, Gregory. "Greening America's Schools, Costs and Benefits." October 2006. p. 10

PolyVision Corporation

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1-800-620-POLY, or
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