

7 STEPS  
TO GREEN YOUR SCHOOL



GATEWAY TO  
**green schools**



THE STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO GOING GREEN

**STEP 1 create a green team with the power to act!**

**Enter the names and titles** (for example, administrator, teacher, maintenance staff, student, or parent) of those participating in your Green Team. This roster should be updated annually as participants are likely to evolve with time. Be as inclusive as possible with your outreach, your school's family is made up of a great number of people that can help support this work.

**school information**

School District \_\_\_\_\_

School Name \_\_\_\_\_

School Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Website \_\_\_\_\_

Approximately how many students attend your school? \_\_\_\_\_

List the names of the people who are in charge of the following:

Waste: \_\_\_\_\_ Energy: \_\_\_\_\_

Cleaning Supplies: \_\_\_\_\_ Scheduling of Building Usages: \_\_\_\_\_

School Mission Statement \_\_\_\_\_

**green team members** including students (If you need more space attach an additional sheet). If a member is a student please note the grade level in the title section.

**green team members**

Primary Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

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**green team members, cont.**

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## STEP 2 adopt an environmental vision statement

*"If you don't know where you're going, you might end up someplace else." - Yogi Berra*

Your school's Environmental Vision Statement should set out what it is trying to achieve. The Environmental Vision Statement should be displayed in various places throughout the school (in the school, on the school web site, etc.) and be recognized by the students and other school community members as a statement of beliefs and intents. This statement is often in the words of students, and can be an inspiring classroom, art, or school-wide assembly project. Such statements can also be accompanied by a resolution from the school board, Parent Teacher Association, the Green Team, or other school bodies.



### developing a vision statement

**A vision statement is a declaration of a shared sense of purpose.** It expresses your ideas about what your school will be like in two years time, in ten years time, or any time in the future. There is no formula for what a vision statement should look like, how long it should be or what it should include. It can be a short statement or a more comprehensive explanation of a preferred future. A good tool for developing a vision statement is a visioning exercise — involving as many members of the school community and broader community as possible. Conducting a visioning exercise will help you build a sense of ownership and commitment to sustainability within the school. It can also help you to involve people and organizations from the broader community because it will give them a better understanding of your school's goals. Once developed, a vision is not static but is part of a regular cycle of reflection, planning and evaluation. The vision both informs and is informed by the goals that follow from it.

*As part of this process consider the following questions:*

- Where are we now? (Describe the school today)
- What's coming up? (What are the relevant emerging issues or impacts that are affecting our school, our community and the environment?)
- Where do we want to be? (What is our shared vision?)

### environmental vision statement

## STEP 3 conduct a comprehensive school environmental survey

*"You can't manage what you don't measure."*

Your School Environmental Survey looks at the consumption habits and health of your school's environment and use patterns. Though most people don't know it, school environments can be polluted. Fortunately, the causes of this pollution are often a pretty easy to fix. Completing this step will include a facility wide survey and classroom surveys that evaluate energy use, waste production, water use, as well as surveying items that influence indoor air quality. By completing your School Environmental Survey you are setting yourself up to create a successful Action Plan. This Survey will uncover facts about areas where your school does well and areas where your school can improve. The Green Team can work with local organizations, businesses and other experts to help. These surveys can be a fun activity for the students, and are a great teaching opportunity to provide hands-on learning to educate your school and community about the health and environmental impacts of your school. The environmental survey templates provided in these forms are just a suggestion! It is great if you are working with someone that is looking at these items in more detail!



We're open to ideas, please contact us: [gatewaytogreen@usgbcc4.org](mailto:gatewaytogreen@usgbcc4.org) and let us know what other approach you plan to use.

### facility energy survey

Building Name: \_\_\_\_\_

An energy survey defines how much energy your school uses, and can identify efficiency and cost-reduction opportunities. Many schools have buildings constructed in different eras and where the information requested varies. Feel free to make multiple copies of this survey.

How many classrooms are there? \_\_\_\_\_

How many floors are there? \_\_\_\_\_

What year was the building constructed (approximately)? \_\_\_\_\_

What are your operating hours during the academic year? \_\_\_\_\_

Weekdays \_\_\_\_\_ Weekends \_\_\_\_\_

What are your operating hours during the summer? \_\_\_\_\_

Weekdays \_\_\_\_\_ Weekends \_\_\_\_\_

**Energy Sources:** Please indicate with a letter if you use Gas (G) or Electric (E) for the following systems. If you don't use the system leave it blank.

heating

cooling

total area **heated?**  %

water heating

interior lighting

total area **cooled?**  %

cooking

## facility energy survey, cont.

**Heating:** Indicate the primary and secondary heating systems used in your school.

- packaged units, rooftop units
- central air furnace
- space heaters
- heat pumps
- water boiler
- steam boiler
- other

**Cooling:** Indicate the primary and secondary cooling system used in your school.

- none
- packaged units, rooftop units
- central air
- individual/window AC units
- heat pumps
- central chilled water (chiller)
- air drying/dehumidification

**Water Heating:** Indicate the primary and secondary type of water heater your school has.

- storage water heater
- on-demand water heater
- heat pump water heater
- tankless coil water heater
- indirect water heater

What is the approx. age of the primary water heating system?  yrs

Is the primary water heater a high-efficiency model?  yes  no

What temperature setting is used for your primary water heating system? \_\_\_\_\_

What best describes the cooking or baking that you do at your school? \_\_\_\_\_

## water information

**Identify your source.** Where does your school get its water? Is it from an offsite municipal supplier, an onsite community water supply, an onsite private water supply, a surface water body or a combination?

\_\_\_\_\_

## facility resource consumption data

Please enter amount used and cost by month for this year's operations.

resource	units	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	year total
electricity	KwH													
	\$													
gas	Therms													
	\$													
water	gallons													
	\$													
waste	yards													
	\$													

**total expense per year (\$):** \_\_\_\_\_

## facility waste stream survey

An important first step in waste reduction is understanding waste production patterns in, and out, of your school's buildings. By completing a waste stream survey, you will learn about consumption patterns and how waste is disposed at your school. In addition, it can highlight both effective and weak areas of any existing programs. This survey should evaluate existing waste reduction programs and identify additional source reduction, reuse, and recycling activities.

A waste stream survey is the process in which the contents of a building's waste stream are sorted and analyzed. The waste stream has two major substreams: waste directed to disposal by landfill, and waste diverted from disposal by reuse, recycling or composting.

In order to identify your school's successes and opportunities for improvement, it is essential to understand the volume and type of diverted materials that remain in the disposal waste stream.

### steps to conducting a waste stream survey:

1. Use your Green Team to organize a survey team, try to involve students as much as possible. Assign groups of students, teachers, parents etc. to various tasks.
2. Create a waste survey worksheet. This can be organized any way that best suits your school's needs. Start by categorizing the waste by materials, and whether they are being thrown away, reused or recycled.
3. Choose an area for sorting and measuring the waste. Once all the waste is sorted, record the quantity of waste by material category.
4. Use the findings to evaluate how each type of waste can be reduced, whether through source reduction, reuse, recycle, or other strategies.

How long was the survey time period?

---

What volume of waste was observed?

---

What volume could be diverted into recycling?

---

What volume could be diverted into compost?

---

### existing facility programs : reduce, reuse, recycle

What programs are already in place for reducing your school's waste? The waste stream survey you just completed may help identify some areas that programs need to be added or modified.

Does the school have any written policies related to recycling, reusing, and/or reducing?  yes

Does your school already have a recycling program?  yes  no

What products (for example, glass bottles, computer printer cartridges, paper) do you recycle and how is this accomplished?

Does your school have waste reduction programs already in place?  yes  no

Please describe any waste reduction activities your school has conducted during the past year: for example, composting, waste free lunches, art projects using objects normally discarded as trash:

Does your school have reuse programs already in place?  yes  no

Please describe any reuse activities at your school: for example, using the blank side of scrap paper, reusable tableware in the cafeteria, donating items from locker clean outs, etc.:

Did the Waste Stream Survey identify any materials being thrown away that could be recycled or composted? If so what were they?

Was there anything being thrown away or recycled that could be reused instead?



## facility pest management activities

Does your school use chemical pesticides to keep insects, rodents, and weeds out of your school and school grounds? Or does it use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies, which focus on the prevention of pest problems, through routine housekeeping and maintenance that eliminates pest attractions and habitats and prevent pest access. Schools with IPM programs avoid using pesticides on a regular basis which means that kids and teachers are healthier.

These questions can help you determine if your school could benefit from implementing an IPM program.

Does your school or school district have a written policy that covers any areas of pest management?

yes  no  don't know

### Does the policy address:

Indoor pest management?  yes  no

Outdoor pest management?  yes  no

Outdoor grounds management?  yes  no

Does your school use any pesticides in school buildings?  yes  no  don't know

On school grounds?  yes  no  don't know

Are staff, students, or parents notified of pesticide use prior to its application?  yes  no

*If yes, please attach a list of pesticides used. Remember, pesticides can be insecticides, fungicides, herbicides and rodenticides.*

*If yes, who applies pesticides in your school or on schools grounds?*

teachers

custodial staff

trained and licensed professional applicators on school staff

contractors

other (list) \_\_\_\_\_

What pest problems does your school have? Please place an **I** for indoor and/or an **O** for outdoor.

cockroaches  spiders  stinging insects  ants  flies  moths

rodents  mold/fungus  head lice  aphids  weeds  moss

plant diseases  birds  wood-destroying insects (e.g. carpenter ants, termites)

other: \_\_\_\_\_

## cleaning products

Many cleaning products used by schools are called "green" products because they are less dangerous to human health and cause less damage to the natural environment. Green products are non-toxic, which means they are not poisonous and don't harm humans, animals or the environment. Third party certifications, such as Green Seal verify whether a product is truly "green."

You can learn about the ingredients in these products and how they should be used properly by reading the product labels and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) required by the Occupational Safety and Health Act. Finding out more information about these products helps protect us from the toxic chemicals they contain and their improper use.



Does your school have a policy prohibiting or limiting the use of products containing toxic ingredients, such as hazardous (dangerous) chemicals, pesticides, etc?

Does that policy include the purchasing of environmentally preferable or "green" products?  yes  no  
*If so, what products are included in the policy(ies)? Please attach.*

Does your school keep Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) on file for all products containing chemicals, for example cleaning products, paints and pesticides? See school building manager or custodian.  yes  no

Please list products for which there are MSDS sheets:

Are these safety precautions written down in the form of guidelines or a policy?  yes  no  
Are they available to teachers and parents for review?  yes  no

Who does your school's purchasing of cleaning and maintenance products?

## classroom survey

This section can be uniquely filled out for each classroom. Print separate forms for each classroom to complete. We recommend you provide those classrooms you've surveyed with the results so they know the amount of resources they are consuming and waste they are producing compared to others.

Room Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of survey:  am  pm

### energy

Defining how much energy your classroom uses can identify efficiency and cost-reduction opportunities.

#### Electronic Equipment (aka Plug Loads):

equipment	qty	hrs/day in use
computers		
printers		
photocopiers		
scanners		
fax machines		
radio/stereos		
televisions		
dvd players		
projector		
refrigerator		
oven		
microwave		
coffee pot		
snack machine		
other		
other		

### waste stream

An important first step in waste reduction is understanding waste production patterns both in and out of your classroom.

# of trash bins: \_\_\_\_\_

# of recycling bins: \_\_\_\_\_

Is there paper in the recycling bin that is printed on only one side?  yes  no

Is there anything in the trash that can be recycled or composted?  yes  no

Is there anything in the recycling that shouldn't be there?  yes  no

Is there a place to save and reuse paper that has only been printed on one side?  yes  no

Consider this as an investigative poll that you will conduct in classrooms. Get permission to investigate classrooms during school hours. Use the following questions to find out about how faculty and students feel about thermal comfort, lighting levels, acoustics, etc. in their classroom. Can you come up with any additional questions?

## classroom survey, cont.

### thermal comfort

What percentage of your day do you spend in this room?

80-100%  50-79%  20-49%  10-19%  0-9%

How does the room's temperature feel on average?

too hot  slightly too warm  neutral  slightly too cold  too cold

Is there an adjustable thermostat?  yes  no

If yes, what is the thermostat setting?  degrees

Do any of the windows have cracks or not able to completely close?  yes  no

Do any outside doors have cracks or leaks?  yes  no

Is the seal around the door and frame tight?  yes  no

Do you see any light around the door frame?  yes  no

Are there any lights left on unnecessarily?  yes  no

Is there any equipment left on unnecessarily?  yes  no

Are there any cracks in the walls?  yes  no

When, if ever, is this room most **uncomfortable**?  morning  noon  afternoon  never

winter  spring  summer  fall

comments:

When is this room most **comfortable**?  morning  noon  afternoon  never

winter  spring  summer  fall

comments:

Is the heating or cooling system audible?  yes  no

Can you sense/feel when the heater turns on?  yes  no

Can you sense/feel when the air conditioning turns on?  yes  no

How would you describe your typical activity level in this room?

seated inactive  seated active  standing relaxed / slight activity  standing active

## classroom survey, cont.

### indoor air quality (IAQ)

The air quality inside the school building can have a significant impact on the performance and comfort level of the students, teachers and staff who work there.

### water damage

Does your classroom have any unusual, stale, or unpleasant odors?  yes  no

Are there any places where you hear the sound of dripping water?  yes  no

Do any of the following areas show signs of water damage/moisture problems or mold growth?  
(Are they wet to the touch or brownish in color?)

floor tiles  ceiling tiles  walls  carpets  outside exits  around windows

other: \_\_\_\_\_

### fresh air

How does your classroom get fresh air? List possible sources, including operable windows and air vents:

### particulates

Do all vents (ceiling, wall, mounted units) appear clean and unblocked?  yes  no

List places where air vents are blocked, what is blocking them, and why they are blocked.

Does your school utilize walk off mats outside all entries?  yes  no

## STEP 4 create a green school action plan

Now that your school has conducted the environmental survey, you may have identified some areas that need attention. Setting priorities and goals is the next step towards greening your school. Your plan should address short term, manageable goals that your students can take pride in accomplishing over the course of the school year. It is also important to set more challenging and long term goals that your school can aspire to, moving towards greater environmental improvements.

### developing an action plan

One essential thing to remember is to create a plan that is grounded in the interests and passions of your students and teachers, so everyone is excited to begin. The green school action plan could promote, for example, a reduce-and-recycle program; car-pooling; a school garden; non-toxic cleaning supplies; an energy conservation program; etc. This plan can be many things, but it is most important to involve everyone at your school.

A starting point for your action plan is to look at the survey results. Make a list of the areas that the survey showed need attention. Prioritize that list based on what needs immediate attention, which areas the school is most interested in addressing, most cost effective measures, easiest fix, etc. Make sure that you know what the school's budget is for any improvements. It is a good idea to create a list of improvements that can be implemented at little or no cost, along with a list of more costly needed improvements.

Choose a few things that can be implemented right away or very soon, along with a few long term goals. Remember to involve the students as much as possible!

While writing the Green School Action Plan, consider the following for each new improvement or program:

- What is the **end result** that you hope to achieve with this improvement?
- What is the **status quo**, and why is it unacceptable?
- What is the **timeline** to reach the goal?
- Are there any **checkpoints** along the way to strive for?
- What **steps** are you taking to achieve the goal?
- **Who** is involved in the process?

Here are a few suggestions that can help you get started:

- Prioritize
- Pick a focus
- Promise to post it
- Include measurable goals



**our green school action plan**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying most of the page. It is intended for the user to write their green school action plan.

## STEP 5 monitor and evaluate progress

Continual measurement is key to keep on track with goals. Consider use of the Energy Star Portfolio Manager Program and report results monthly in tabular and graphic format to your Green Team. Portfolio Manager is an interactive energy management tool that allows you to track and assess energy and water consumption across your entire portfolio of buildings in a secure online environment. Use their Quick Reference Guide to identify opportunities for energy efficiency improvements, track your progress over time, and verify results!



**Step 1. Access Portfolio Manager:** Visit [www.energystar.gov/benchmark](http://www.energystar.gov/benchmark). Scroll down to the Login section on the right-hand side in the middle of the page.

**Step 2. Access your account:** Create a new account or log into your existing account.

**Step 3. Review system updates and enter account.** Click ACCESS MY PORTFOLIO, located below Welcome to Portfolio Manager.

**Step 4. Add a new facility:** Click ADD a Property, located in the upper right portion of the screen.

**Step 5. Select property type and enter general facility information.** Select the option that most closely resembles your facility and click CONTINUE. Enter general data and click SAVE.

**Step 6. Enter space use data.** From the Facility Summary page, shown above, go to the Space Use section, located half way down the page, and click ADD SPACE.

- Enter a facility name and space type(s) for your building. Click CONTINUE.
- Enter building characteristics. Click SAVE. Use bulk import service to minimize manual data entry of large sets of facility data (10 or more facilities or campuses are required).
- Go back to My Portfolio by clicking on the link in the upper left portion of the page.
- Click IMPORT Facility Data Using Templates, located below Add a Property.

**Step 7. Enter energy use data.** From the Facility Summary page, go to the Energy Meters section, located below the Space Use section, and click ADD METER.

- Enter meter name, type, and units. Click SAVE.
- Enter number of months and start date. Click CONTINUE.
- Enter energy use and cost for each month. Click SAVE.
- Repeat for all energy meters and fuel types.

**Step 8. Create custom groups.**

- From the My Portfolio page, click CREATE GROUP, directly to the right of the Group drop-down.
- Follow instructions to select buildings and name your group.
- Once they have been saved, custom groups will be available in the Group dropdown menu.

**Step 9. View and interpret results.**

- Option 1: Go to My Portfolio and view all buildings to compare performance metrics.
- Option 2: Export data to Microsoft® Excel.

### monthly facility resource consumption data

If you decide not to use the Energy Star Portfolio Manager program, it would also be acceptable for you track and report your electricity, gas, water, and waste monthly in both tabular and graphic form to your Green Team and send us a sample to show us the means by which you are accomplishing this step.



## STEP 6 integrate green into the curriculum

*"Tug on anything at all and you'll find it connected to everything else in the universe." John Muir*

Imagine the possibilities if that understanding began, for students, as early as Kindergarten and continued through High School. Green activities can be integrated into existing curricula in science, art, humanities, math, language arts, or electives. Opportunities exist all around us, including using the school as a hands-on laboratory, studying such themes as energy, water, forests, air quality, waste, or in outdoor education—whether in the schoolyard, a park, or field trip offering hands-on, place-based, experiential education.



Many resources are available to you, but here are some of the best:

### Creec Network

[www.creec.org/region8](http://www.creec.org/region8)

Your Region 8 CREEC Coordinator is Teresa Lees at the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education. Search online for EE curriculum by topic on the Resource Directory and sign up for the free monthly newsletter.

### California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA)

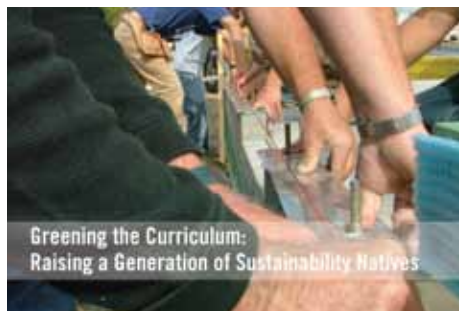
[www.calepa.ca.gov/Education/EEI](http://www.calepa.ca.gov/Education/EEI)

The new curriculum (K-12) teaches and history/social science standards as students learn about their relationship to the environment. Each unit features a California specific topic and in-depth lessons that engage students in a way that makes learning both relevant and fun.

### California Environmental Education Interagency Network (CEEIN)

[www.cde.ca.gov/pd/sc/oeeccein.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/sc/oeeccein.asp)

CEEIN is a state government consortium of environmental educators representing departments, boards, and commissions of the California Department of Education (CDE), Cal/EPA, The Resources Agency of California (RA), and the Department of Food and Agriculture (DFA). The CEEIN partnership provides a forum for its members to share resources, programs, and materials with California's public schools and students in kindergarten through university.



## green curriculum description

Each school should implement at least one (1) piece of Green Curriculum. Feel free to submit more! Here is an opportunity to really show your stuff! Submitting copies of student work is highly encouraged!

Unit Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Standard: \_\_\_\_\_

Description:

Learning Outcomes:

Attach all relevant material in support of the implemented curriculum.

## STEP 7 inform, involve and celebrate!

Congratulations! Now that your school has implemented all of the steps to start greening your school, it's time to celebrate your accomplishments. This party should be a community wide event honoring your school for its efforts. Recognizing your students, parents, teachers and staff will help keep everyone involved excited about the process and eager to continue their efforts.



### press release

Let's spread the word! Who should we tell first? This could include print sources such as newspapers and local magazines, or other sources such as web sites, radio stations and social networking sites. Sharing your accomplishments with the community is a great way to raise awareness about sustainability, your school's efforts and to help find community partners to support future school initiatives.

### celebration

Is there anyone specific from C4 that you want to attend your celebration and to present your mini-grant?

yes  no

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like the BuildSMART trailer to be there?  yes  no

### recognition

List the names of those that deserve special recognition at the event. We would like to honor the students, teachers, parents, staff and community members that played a large role in the greening of your school.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_



## resources

Center for Green Schools, U.S. Green Building Council: [www.centerforgreenschools.org](http://www.centerforgreenschools.org)  
California Energy Commission's Bright Schools Program: [www.energy.ca.gov/efficiency/brightschools/](http://www.energy.ca.gov/efficiency/brightschools/)  
Cool California Schools: [www.coolcalifornia.or/schools](http://www.coolcalifornia.or/schools)  
The Green Flag Program: [www.greenflagschools.org](http://www.greenflagschools.org)  
Green Schools Initiative: [www.greenschools.net](http://www.greenschools.net)  
Eco Schools: [www.eco-schoolsusa.org](http://www.eco-schoolsusa.org)  
US Environmental Protection Agency: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)  
Rideshare: [www.rideshare.org/cm/Home.html](http://www.rideshare.org/cm/Home.html)  
SLO Green Build: [www.slogreenbuild.org](http://www.slogreenbuild.org)  
SLO Grown Kids: [www.slogrownkids.org](http://www.slogrownkids.org)  
Stride Network: [www.stride.calpoly.edu](http://www.stride.calpoly.edu)  
California Central Coast Chapter U.S. Green Building Council: [www.usgbcc4.org](http://www.usgbcc4.org)  
Energy Star Portfolio Manager: <https://www.energystar.gov/istar/pmpam/>

## who can help?

Air Pollution Control District: [www.slocleanair.org](http://www.slocleanair.org)  
CREEC Network: [www.creec.org/region8](http://www.creec.org/region8)  
Integrated Waste Management: [www.iwma.com](http://www.iwma.com)  
Master Gardeners: [groups.ucanr.org/slomg/](http://groups.ucanr.org/slomg/)  
Pacific Gas and Electric: [www.pge.com/mybusiness/energysavingsrebates/tips/schools/](http://www.pge.com/mybusiness/energysavingsrebates/tips/schools/)

Thank you to all the Green Schools supporters!



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COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

