



Albert Einstein Elementary School

School district: Lake Washington School District

School location: Redmond

Began participating in the Green Schools Program: November 2021

Level One of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in June 2023

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- The school went from a recycling rate of 45% in January 2023 to a recycling rate of 61% in April 2023, thanks to staff leadership, family volunteers, school-wide education, and improved set up and monitoring of lunchroom sorting stations.
- With leadership from principal Robin Imai, teacher Margot Spaans, and instructional assistant Larissa Ruiz, Einstein Elementary reduced waste and improved collection of recyclable and compostable materials.
- At the start of the school year, students were asked to reduce waste by bringing reusable water bottles and packing lunches from home in reusable containers.
- To reduce food waste, students were asked to bring home leftovers from home-packed lunches, and to "Only get what you are going to eat. You can always come back for more veggies and fruit."
- With Green Schools Program guidance, the school planned to start a food share table for unopened packaged foods from the school lunch program for other students to take.
- Every Monday in morning announcements, messages about reducing waste and recycling were shared with the school community.
- The 15-member Green Team with students in grades three through five met weekly. Green Team members created 3-dimensional posters with actual items attached to post above cafeteria sorting stations to show students what materials



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

belong in recycling bins, organics bins (which collected food scraps, napkins, and other compostable materials), and garbage bins.

- Family volunteers helped monitor lunchroom sorting stations to help students sort correctly.
- To learn why reducing waste, recycling, and composting matter, King County's assembly program was performed for the entire school, and videos about composting and reducing waste were shown during lunch in April,
- Green Team students completed a science project about composting for the school's Expo Fair.
- Throughout the 2022-23 school year, staff and families were informed in assemblies, staff meetings, school and PTSA newsletters, and a school bulletin board about Green Team activities and the school's progress toward reducing waste and collecting recyclable and compostable materials.
- The Green Team planted vegetables and herbs in the school garden, called a pizza garden because the herbs can be used to make pizza.
- No idling signs at the school dismissal pick-up line reminded drivers to turn off their engines while waiting.
- Green cleaning products were used in the school.