



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

Apollo Elementary School

School district: Issaquah

School location: Renton

Began participating in the Green Schools Program:
September 2010

Level One of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in May 2011

Level Two of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in May 2013

Level Three of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in May 2015

Sustaining Green School recognition:
Achieved for

- 2015-16
- 2016-17
- 2017-18
- 2018-19
- 2019-20
- 2022-23



Composting education: Students create posters about composting.



Lunchroom waste and recycling station posters created by the Green Team to help students sort materials.

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Apollo Elementary maintained a recycling rate of 45%, thanks to school-wide collection of recyclable and compostable materials in classrooms, cafeteria, offices, and staff room.
- Fourth-grade Green Team students were trained by the Green Schools Program to sort food scraps and to monitor lunchroom food scrap, recycling, and garbage stations. Compostable materials collected from the lunchroom, staff room, and classrooms were delivered to Cedar Grove's composting facility.
- Fourth-grade Green Team members promoted recycling and food scrap collection through presentations and quizzes in every classroom and worked with first-grade Green Team students to make posters and signs. On all



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

recycling and composting bins in the school, students placed stickers from the Green Schools Program showing what can be recycled and composted.

- The student Green Team met once per month and monitored cafeteria recycling stations twice each week to help fellow students sort correctly. The team promoted waste-free lunches through a video, announcements, and a district STEMposium activity.
- Apollo's staff Green Team made a recycling and composting presentation at a staff meeting. Waste reduction and recycling information was posted on the school website.
- One class held a week-long aluminum can drive and donated proceeds to earthquake relief efforts in Japan.
- School administration encouraged staff to reduce paper use by making double-sided copies, using email for communication, and sending newsletters and parent information electronically.
- A reuse box for "Good on One Side" paper was placed in the staff workroom, and construction paper leftovers were used for notes and art projects.
- To encourage reuse, Apollo held a book swap in during its annual Spring Fling.
- Along with all schools in Issaquah, Apollo replaced plastic wrapped utensils with unwrapped utensils and eliminated the use of straws.
- In 2012-13 Apollo participated in the district's Zero Waste Challenge. The school placed within the top three finalists.
- The Green Team conducted a sustainability pledge, and displayed pledges in the cafeteria. Classrooms that conserved resources received rewards.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- The student Green Team posted signs near light and electrical equipment to remind students and employees to turn them off when not in use.
- Information was sent to employees and parents about the school's energy use via the Apollo Orbiter, a monthly e-newsletter.



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

- A local environmental engineer visited the fourth-grade classroom to share energy practices and how energy conservation is connected to their science curriculum.
- To conserve energy, teachers shut off some overhead lights when natural light was sufficient.
- The Issaquah School District's contract with its drink machine vendor included a requirement that lights on the machine's display would be permanently turned off.
- The school technician sent periodic reminders to staff to use energy efficient modes for smart boards and projectors.
- Staff were reminded via email to keep windows and doors closed when heating and cooling was on. Classrooms and multipurpose room used auto-shut off lighting. Computers were shut down automatically each evening to conserve energy.

Water Conservation (Level Three)

- The school continued its waste reduction and recycling practices.
- The Green Team watched the "Story of Bottled Water" video. Teachers sent home requests for students to only bring reusable water bottles to school.
- Green Team students regularly shared water conservation facts and tips in school announcements, and water conservation signs from the Green Schools Program were laminated and posted by each school sink.
- During Green Week, teachers shared conservation information with their classes, and students were asked to sign conservation pledges.
- The school shared its water use rates in school announcements, teacher newsletters, and emails to parents.
- Kitchen staff refrained from pouring fats, oils, or grease down school drains. A sign with the same reminder was posted in the staff room.
- To conserve water, the school installed low-flow toilets, dual flush toilets, and low-flow faucet aerators, and most school faucets were set to turn off automatically.
- Apollo eliminated irrigation lines to reduce summer water use.
- Water and energy conservation practices were listed on the school's Green Team webpage, which was linked on the school's homepage.



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

Sustaining Green School recognition

Apollo was recognized as a Sustaining Green School for sustaining and building on its Level One waste reduction and recycling practices, Level Two energy conservation practices, and Level Three water conservation strategies. How the school did this each year is described below.

Sustaining Green School 2015-16

- The school increased waste-free Wednesday lunches from a one-time event in the spring 2015 to once each month. Waste-free Wednesday reminders to pack lunches from home in reusable containers and to reduce wasted food were shared at lunches, in announcements and e-newsletters, and in-person at the school's science night.
- The Green Team hosted a booth at the school's Earth Day science night and facilitated a trash, recycling, and compostable materials sorting game. Participants earned a Rocket Slip Apollo award or Earth globe key chain as prizes.

Sustaining Green School 2016-17

- Apollo increased the frequency of waste-Free Wednesdays from monthly to weekly.
- During fifth-grade lunch period, the cafeteria piloted a change from single-use disposable plastic utensils to reusable metal utensils.
- The school celebrated Earth Week in April 2017. Students created posters, helped prepare rewards for waste free lunches, and made school-wide announcements.

Sustaining Green School 2017-18

- The cafeteria expanded reusable metal utensils from only the fifth-grade lunch to all school lunches.
- The student Green Team participated in the district-wide STEMposium in February and led data-driven waste-free lunch activities.
- New cafeteria waste and recycling signs and sign-holders were installed.



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

Sustaining Green School 2018-2019

- At the September 2018 all-staff meeting, the Green Team advisor presented about Green Schools Program participation and goals for the 2018-19 school year.
- Students and staff continued to sort garbage, recyclable materials, and compostable materials in classrooms.
- The Green Schools Program assisted the district to set up a food donation program. Apollo's kitchen manager monitored a cafeteria food share bin where students placed unopened, packaged items and whole fruits with inedible skins from the school lunch program for other students to take. Once each week, the Issaquah Food and Clothing Bank picked up leftover Share Bin items.
- The Green Team worked with a King County representative to create a video on how to sort cafeteria recyclable and compostable materials. The video was shared with students and teachers in November 2018.

Sustaining Green School 2019-2020

- Apollo Elementary continued to use durable utensils and eliminated straw use.
- The student Green Team provided school-wide education and promotion about recycling and food scrap collection.
- The school initiated a one-paper towel challenge which encouraged use of one paper towel to dry one's hands. In Fall 2019, the first phase of outreach included an all-school announcement, a demonstration to staff members, and posters given to teachers for each classroom. In phase two, a video was created and shared. Students received reminders about the challenge throughout the year.
- Students promoted a Zero Waste Challenge and correct sorting of materials by creating posters.
- In April 2020, Green Team leader Miryam Christensen created a virtual Earth Day event. Students learned about the history of Earth Day, water conservation, how they can protect the Puget Sound, and what items belong in garbage, recycling, and composting bins.



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

Sustaining Green School 2022-23

- With leadership from teacher and Green Team advisor Sharon Wall, the 23-member team of fourth- and fifth-grade students helped to re-start the school's pre-Covid conservation practices, including Waste Free Wednesdays, GOOS boxes in classrooms for paper used only on one side, lunchroom recycling and composting station monitoring, classroom energy conservation checks, and classroom paper towel collection.
- The Green Team created posters, PowerPoint presentations, and activities for classrooms and families with information and tips about waste reduction, recycling, composting, and energy conservation.
- After hearing from custodial staff about the quantity of usable pencils thrown away, the Green Team created a video and posters to encourage students to use their pencils until they were not usable.
- The team organized Green Week activities in April, including a conservation pledge, and promoted the annual Walk/Ride/Bus/Carpool to School day on May 3.

Award

Apollo Elementary School won the Waste Free Lunch Challenge sponsored by City of Issaquah and Issaquah School District. Apollo's 601 students generated two pounds of waste - only 0.054 ounces per student - during one lunch period.