

Cascade Ridge Elementary School

School district: Issaquah

School location: Sammamish

Began participating in the Green Schools Program:
2006–07

Level One of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in December 2009

Level Two of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in January 2014

Level Three of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in May 2016

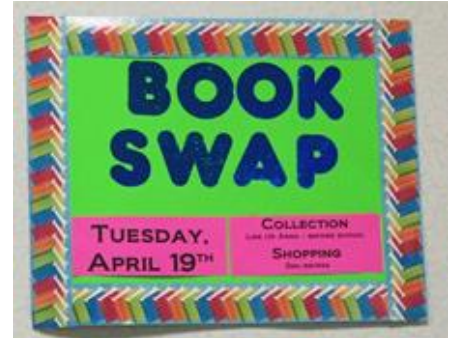
Sustaining Green School recognition:

Achieved for

- 2016-17
- 2017-18
- 2018-19
- 2021-22
- 2022-23

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Cascade Ridge Elementary School achieved a recycling rate of 52%.
- The school collected compostable materials in the lunchroom and classrooms.
- To encourage correct sorting, students decorated lids and made signs with recycling instructions.
- The school promoted recycling and composting at school-wide and PTA-sponsored events. Recycling and composting bins were placed at the annual Walk-A-Thon, Field Day, and other events.
- School staff promoted waste-free Wednesdays in the school cafeteria to encourage students to bring durable, reusable containers for lunches from home.



The school reduced waste through an annual book swap.



Green Team aprons for student leaders who help fellow students sort lunch waste.



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

- To reduce paper use, Cascade Ridge switched to e-newsletters and fliers instead of paper copies.
- “Good on one side” paper bins were placed in the staff workroom and the collected paper was used to make scratch pads.
- During Earth Week, parent volunteers held an annual waste reduction book swap event. The school partnered with a Girl Scout troop which made an Earth Week book swap poster for the school cafeteria.
- On recycling bins throughout the school, students placed stickers provided by the Green Schools Program showing what can be recycled.
- Along with all schools in the district, Cascade Ridge’s lunchroom eliminated straws and used compostable paper trays instead of single-use polystyrene trays.
- Issaquah School District provided a recycling bin next to garbage bins at school entrances to facilitate recycling by families and visitors.
- The school received the King County elementary school assembly and follow-up classroom workshops about waste reduction and recycling.
- In recognition of Earth Week, the school focused on a different conservation topic each day, including waste reduction and recycling.
- Lead custodian Shawna Carrigan replaced school paper towel and toilet paper rolls when completely empty rather than when they are low and saved the empty rolls in a box for first-grade classes to use in art projects. This action significantly cut down on paper product orders and partial rolls going unused.
- Through TerraCycle, a company that used a variety of materials to make new products, the school recycled materials such as juice pouches which were not accepted in its regular recycling collection program. The school recycled more than 18,000 drink pouches which were made of plastic with an aluminum lining.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- Cascade Ridge realized a steady decrease in overall energy use from 2010 to 2014.
- The school’s vending machine lights were permanently turned off.
- To reduce energy use, projectors were set on Eco Mode.



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

- Energy conservation tips were promoted in the school's electronic newsletter.
- Energy conservation signs from the Green Schools Program were posted on light switches and electronics as reminders to turn them off when not needed.
- Teachers included energy conservation information in fifth-grade curriculum.
- Staff and students were encouraged to dress appropriately for the weather rather than adjusting the thermostat settings.
- The school tracked energy use hours for classroom projector light bulbs. Staff members were contacted if their use was over the typical monthly amount.
- The Dean of Students promoted carpooling to reduce parking lot congestion, reduce use of fossil fuels, and improve air quality.

Water Conservation (Level Three)

- The school continued its waste reduction and recycling practices, and promoted Waste Free Wednesdays in the cafeteria.
- During Earth Week, family volunteers held a book swap event. The school partnered with a Girl Scout troop which made an Earth Week book swap poster for the cafeteria.
- Green Team students created water conservation and pollution prevention posters and asked students and staff to pledge to protect water.



Student Girl Scout troop members made a storm water pollution prevention poster

- Third-grade classes participated in City of Sammamish Healthy Watershed, Healthy World workshops about storm water pollution prevention and protecting local Kokanee Salmon. The classes won the City of Sammamish 2015 Kokanee Classroom Challenge. Students took home action sheets, noted

each time they took a specific action to protect storm water within a two week period, and parents signed the completed action sheets.



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

- Water conservation signs were posted next to school faucets to remind students to turn off the water when not in use.
- Students tested water faucet flows and shared the results along with water conservation tips on the school's Green Team web page.
- Staff submitted work orders to district maintenance personnel when they observed water fixture leaks.
- The school switched to new foaming soap dispensers that limit the amount of soap released with each pump and water needed to rinse off hands.
- To prevent water pollution, the Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) sold Brown Bear commercial car wash tickets rather than hold a charity car wash.

Sustaining Green School recognition

Cascade Ridge sustained and built 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 2016-17

- The school partnered with the after-school Coyote Club to reduce waste and to sort recyclable and compostable materials during after-school care.
- The Coyote Club began using compostable serving-ware for snacks.
- In 2016 and 2017, after receiving training from the King County Green Schools Program, student waste watchers assisted other students to sort in the cafeteria.
- Staff received regular reminders and a presentation by the Green Schools Program about waste reduction and recycling practices.

Sustaining Green School 2017-18

Cascade Ridge replaced all disposable utensils in its cafeteria with durable utensils, and continued its waste reduction, recycling, energy conservation, and water conservation practices and education.



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

Sustaining Green School 2018-19

- Student Waste Watchers continued to monitor cafeteria recycling stations and to help students sort waste correctly.
- To reduce wasted food, a cafeteria food share bin was set up for students to place unopened packaged foods and uneaten whole fruits from the school lunch program for other students to take. In a partnership facilitated by the Green Schools Program, items not taken by students were picked up weekly by the Issaquah Food and Clothing Bank.
- Younger students worked on conservation projects throughout the school year and made waste audit signs on Earth Day.
- The school participated in the district's waste-free lunch competition.

Sustaining Green School 2021-22

- Green Team members encouraged waste prevention practices and explained to fellow students how to sort waste correctly at lunch. Team members also visited classrooms to talk about energy and water conservation.
- Staff helped monitor garbage, compost, and recycling bins at lunch to encourage students to sort correctly.
- Due to the increase in paper towel use during the pandemic, Green Team students and advisors started to collect paper towels in classrooms, and Green Team students emptied paper towel bins in participating classrooms.
- Signs were posted to remind students and staff to make sure faucets and lights were turned off when not needed.
- A student volunteered to be an "electrician" in each classroom and ensure lights were turned off when exiting the classroom.

Sustaining Green School 2022-23

- The cafeteria switched from single-use plastic utensils to reusable metal utensils.
- Every classroom and office recycling bin was emptied daily along with trash. On the bins are signs showing what can be recycled.



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

- In September, with leadership from teacher Elizabeth Anderson, an introductory Green Team meeting was held to talk about Green Team jobs and projects, and to share why waste reduction, recycling, composting, and other conservation practices matter.
- After a fall training, Green Team members became part of a weekly rotating schedule of lunch Waste Watchers to help fellow student sort lunchroom recyclable and compostable materials.
- Additional classrooms started to collect used paper towels to be composted, with all but two classrooms participating. After receiving training on what materials can be accepted in compost bins and how to empty them, fifth-grade students emptied classroom paper towel bins twice each week. The students educated their classmates about why composting paper towels was important, and shared that the paper towels were combined with lunchroom food scraps and other compostable materials for transport to the regional Cedar Grove Composting facility.
- The school website included a page dedicated to the student Green Team and its activities, and a Green Team bulletin board near the cafeteria also showcased team projects.
- As a walkable school, Cascade Ridge students did not use district transportation.
- The student leadership team organized a Green Week in April where all students were challenged to recycle and to conserve energy and water conservation in their homes by unplugging unused electronics, turning off lights, and shutting windows when heat or air conditioning was on.