

Cedar River Elementary School

School district: Tahoma

School location: Maple Valley

Began participating in the Green Schools Program:
September 2017

Note: The former school on this school's property earned Level One (waste reduction and recycling), Level Two (energy conservation), and Level Three (water conservation and pollution prevention) recognition in previous years.

Sustaining Green School 2017-18: Achieved in May 2018

Sustaining Green School 2018-19: Achieved in May 2019

Sustaining Green School 2022-2023: Achieved in June 2023

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Cedar River Elementary achieved a 60% recycling rate.
- Student helpers assisted daily in the lunchroom by monitoring waste stations and teaching students how to sort correctly.
- The school gave Green Paws recognition to students who sorted recyclable and compostable materials correctly. Green Paws could be collected to earn a prize.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- The Green Team encouraged all classrooms to participate in the People Power Planet energy conservation pledge offered by McKinstry, the district's resource conservation management company.
- Green Team students helped turn off lights and electronics when not in use.



Green Team members create educational 3-dimensional signs to help students correctly sort garbage, recyclable materials, and compostable materials



Green Team students help distribute buckets to classrooms for collection of paper towels and other compostable materials



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

- Throughout the school year, the Green Team conducted classroom Power Patrols in which students recorded energy conservation practices and energy waste. Results and recommendation were shared with teachers and students.

Water Conservation (Level Three)

- To conserve water, classroom sinks have aerators and bathroom sinks have timers.
- The school maintained a rain garden with drought-tolerant native plants which collect and filter runoff. A rain barrel captured water to irrigate the school's garden.

Sustaining Green School recognition

Cedar River Elementary 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 is described below.

Sustaining Green School 2017-18

To improve lunchroom recycling, the Green Team created and posted visual displays to hang on a PVC sign holder to instruct students about correct waste sorting and about reducing contamination in each type of bin.

Sustaining Green School 2018-19

- The Green Schools Program conducted a presentation on waste reduction and recycling practices at an all-staff meeting and trained the student Green Team to monitor sorting practices in classrooms and the lunchroom.
- Green Team students monitored waste sorting during first-grade and kindergarten lunches. They handed out prizes to students who correctly sorted materials.
- Green Team students used plastic packaging and bottle caps to make key chains and ornaments.
- To reduce wasted, a food share table was set up in the lunchroom so students can place unopened, packaged foods from the school lunch program for other students to take.



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Success Story

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- Fourth-grade students took a field trip to Shadow Lake Nature Preserve to learn about waster ecosystems and the importance of conserving water and preventing water pollution.
- In April 2019, to celebrate Earth Month and prevent stormwater pollution, Green Team students participated in a school litter clean-up.
- Eight classrooms began collecting food scraps, napkins, and paper towels to be transported to a regional composting facility.
- Energy conservation signs were posted to inform and remind students and staff members to turn off lights and equipment when not in use.

Sustaining Green School 2022-23

- The Cedar River Green Team, comprised of 20 fourth- and fifth-grade students, helped re-start lunchroom recycling after it was paused during the pandemic.
- Team members created posters and videos to educate students and staff about what can be recycled.
- Green Team students volunteered every day for several weeks to help fellow students learn how to sort correctly.
- The team continued its 2022-23 focus on improving classroom recycling by making morning announcements about what can be recycled. The team also created morning announcements and posters about littering.
- To encourage school-wide participation in the People Power Planet pledge campaign (offered by McKinstry, the district's resource conservation manager), Green Team students compiled instructions for teachers to share with their students and visited each classroom to help students make pledges.
- Conservation facts and tips about waste reduction, energy conservation, and water conservation were compiled and distributed at the school's Celebration of Learning.
- The team also created a video about its sustainability achievements in 2022-23.