



Cherry Crest Elementary School

School district: Bellevue

School location: Bellevue

Began participating in the Green Schools Program: September 2008

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

Level Two of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in May 2010

Level Three of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in April 2011

General

In 2008, Cherry Crest Elementary kicked off its first student Green Team, affectionately known as the "Greenies." Since then, the Greenies have accomplished a number of environmental goals.

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- The school increased its recycling rate from 42% to 67%.
- City of Bellevue partnered with the Green Schools Program to assist Bellevue schools with recycling improvements.
- Cherry Crest began to compost all food scraps during the winter trimester of 2009-10, with assistance from the City of Bellevue. The school's food scraps are being turned into usable compost for gardens.
- The school reduced the size of its outdoor garbage container as a result of improved waste reduction and recycling practices, and thus reduced the cost of garbage collection.
- During the 2008-09 school year, Cherry Crest began to recycle milk cartons and to place a school-wide emphasis on recycling and reuse practices.
- Outreach included the following:
 - Greenies team members were trained to help in the lunchroom during the two lunches to support custodial staff and to assist students with recycling.



The Green Schools team at Cherry Crest proudly holds up its Green Schools banner after receiving recognition at a school board meeting.



Cherry Crest's lunchroom recycling program in action



- Reminder stickers that read “This uses paper from trees” were placed near all printers, photocopy machines and paper towel dispensers.
- A new recycling bulletin board with pictures, updates and reminders about the school’s conservation practices.
- An “Earth Day Challenge” in which a video was created of students demonstrating different ways that students and staff could “change one thing” to conserve resources and help the environment. Each class made a pledge poster with their commitments.
- The school collected bottle caps to send to Aveda for the company’s bottle cap recycling program.
- Pesticide spraying was eliminated on school grounds. Students school-wide took part in several “weeding days” to offset the elimination of pesticide spraying at the school.
- Greenies team members made reuse paper bins for each classroom to use for paper that had only been used on one side.
- Staff was educated on and encouraged to use a paper-free method of sending grade reports home to parents each trimester.
- To educate students and staff the school signed up for an assembly program about waste reduction and recycling.
- Three classes participated in healthy habitat workshops.
- Through a pilot program to use compostable trays, the school was able to divert an estimated 2,500 trays from the landfill each month.

Environmental education

- Grade level teams invited outside speakers to present to their students regarding conservation practices.
- The school grounds were used as an environmental learning tool as students weeded, cleared debris and planted new seedlings in the fall and spring.
- International High School student Monet Springmeyer presented and taught Cherry Crest students about conservation practices. To encourage students to pack their



lunches in reusable containers, Monet helped to kick off a new program called “Waste Free Wednesdays.”

- Cherry Crest principal Michelle Carroll encouraged teachers, staff and community members to be role models for students in conserving natural resources. This was fostered through discussions in assemblies, during morning announcements and staff meetings, and in written communications with families.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- To raise awareness about conserving energy at school and at home, Green Team members shared “energy facts” each Monday during morning announcements and placed energy conservation labels near all light switches in the school.
- The Green Team formed an “Energy Patrol” which monitored lights, laptop carts and other energy outputs in the school with the goal of reducing energy use on a daily basis. In unoccupied rooms, team members turned off lights in classrooms rather than waiting for the auto-shutoff feature to turn them off.
- With the help of district leaders, school staff monitored the school’s energy use and costs, and made changes to reduce energy use in the school based on this data.
- Cherry Crest encouraged a restriction in the use of personal electrical equipment such as space heaters, refrigerators and other appliances in classrooms and teacher offices.
- During the 2010-2011 school year, from September through December 2010, Cherry Crest reduced energy use by almost four percent due to energy conservation practices and due to the Bellevue School District’s heating temperature requirement.

Water Conservation (Level Three)

- To raise awareness about conserving water at school and at home, morning announcements were submitted to the front office and read to the school.
- Guest speakers spoke with classrooms about the “salmon cycle,” and the importance of water quality and water conservation.



King County



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

- Fourth graders used the City of Bellevue's water conservation curriculum materials.
- The green team used the water conservation resource tub from the City of Bellevue.
- Three classes participated in a healthy habitat workshop.
- Students placed "turn water off" stickers by sinks throughout the school.
- Students put up posters throughout the school to promote water conservation.