



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

Covington Elementary School

School district: Kent

School location: Covington

Began participating in the Green Schools Program: December 2011

Level One of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in May 2012

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

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

Sustaining Green School 2015-16: Achieved in May 2016

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Covington Elementary achieved and maintained a recycling rate of 43%.
- Students learned to empty leftover milk from milk cartons and to place them in classroom recycling bins after lunch.
- Covington regularly promoted the school's waste reduction and recycling practices in assemblies and morning announcements.
- Recycling bins were set out for special events such as community clean up days and school dances.
- To reduce paper towel waste, classroom tables and desks were cleaned with reusable rags after lunch. The rags were then washed and used again.
- Custodian Janice Jardine supported the school's recycling efforts by emptying hallway recycling bins and monitoring outdoor collection containers.
- The principal gave staff BPA-free reusable bottles and encouraged them to fill reusable water bottles instead of buying bottled water.
- To reduce paper use, the school switched to electronic distribution of staff bulletins, parent newsletters, calendars, and other announcements. Teachers were encouraged to use smart boards and document cameras, and students to take notes in their spiral notebooks.



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- In 2012-13, students created paper reuse boxes for all classroom teachers that requested a box for paper that's only been used on one side.
- The principal made announcements about recycling throughout the school year.
- In 2012, the school received the King County assembly to help educate students and staff about reducing waste and recycling.
- ASB students volunteered as lunch monitors to help inform students how to sort materials after lunch.
- Students created 3-D posters with actual recyclable items glued to them, and the posters were placed throughout the school in January 2013.
- In 2014, the student Green Team conducted classroom presentations about waste reduction and recycling, and helped younger students to sort lunch waste correctly.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- Students posted signs near light switches and electrical equipment to remind staff and students to turn them off when not in use.
- Student Green Team members provided energy conservation tips for the monthly school newsletter.
- Staff made morning announcements about conserving energy throughout 2012-13.
- Teachers posted an energy monitor checklist in classrooms as a reminder to turn off lights and electronic equipment at the end of each day. Teachers were encouraged to assign a student to serve as an energy monitor for each classroom.
- Computer lab computers were logged off and monitors turned off after every use. The computers were shut down at the end of every day.
- Instead of turning on all classroom lights, many teachers opened classroom blinds to use natural light. At the end of the day, the blinds were closed to conserve heat.
- Custodian Jardine regularly checked the building to ensure energy conservation measures were in place. Jardine sent emails to staff to remind them to turn off lights and equipment.
- The principal made announcements throughout the school year to remind students to dress appropriately for the weather.



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Water Conservation (Level Three)

- Water conservation tips were shared monthly at staff meetings, in the school newsletter, in the PTA newsletter, and on the PTA website.
- Students participated in the Kent Watershed Festival in March 2014.
- Fourth-grade students visited a King County wastewater treatment plant.
- Sixth-grade curriculum included a unit on watersheds and water conservation.
- Students read *A Long Walk to Water* to learn about water shortages around the world.
- School faucets were set to automatically shut off when not in use.
- To conserve water, the school installed 14 waterless urinals.

Sustaining Green School 2015-16

- In a school-wide effort to pick up litter on campus, students collected and sorted 4,866 pieces of litter into recycling or garbage bins in November 2015.
- Staff reminded students about the environmental importance of picking up litter and making sure waste is placed in a garbage or recycling bin, not on the ground. Students were rewarded for voluntarily picking up litter on campus.
- For Earth Day in April 2016, the school conducted its second school-wide clean-up and found 3,163 pieces of litter -- 1,703 pieces less than the November clean-up.
- The school posted signs from the Green Schools Program at all light switches about turning lights off in unoccupied rooms and at all water faucets to remind everyone to conserve water.