



## Creekside Elementary School

**School district:** Issaquah

**School location:** Sammamish

**Began Participating in the Green Schools Program:**  
September 2010

**Level One of the Green Schools Program:**  
Achieved in November 2010

**Level Two of the Green Schools Program:**  
Achieved in May 2011

**Level Three of the Green Schools Program:**  
Achieved in May 2012

**Sustaining Green School recognition:**  
Achieved for ...

- 2014-15
- 2015-16
- 2016-17
- 2017-18
- 2018-19
- 2019-20
- 2021-22
- 2022-23



**Earth Hero at School Award**  
David Holbrook receives the King County award in April 2011



Student Waste Watchers club

### Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

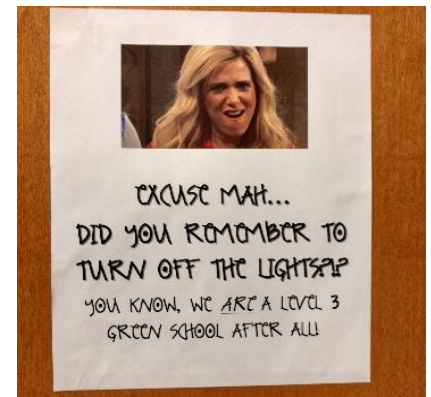
- Creekside increased its recycling rate to 63%.
- In addition to classroom recycling, custodian Dave Holbrook began a lunchroom recycling program for cans, bottles, cartons, food scraps, and other compostable materials.
- Holbrook and teacher volunteers oversaw the Waste Watchers program in which students are trained to monitor lunchroom waste recycling bins daily.
- The school librarian read recycling-focused books to all classes.
- In 2011, student leadership created a video about recycling to show school-wide.



- The staff workroom and classrooms started “good on one side” boxes for reusing paper, as well as reuse boxes for construction paper in work rooms.
- School and PTSA communication were sent electronically to reduce paper use.
- Weekly waste-free Wednesdays in the cafeteria encouraged students to reduce wasted food and to pack lunches from home in reusable containers.
- In spring 2011, a first-grade classroom made a class book of how they reduce, reuse and recycle. One of the students made a video recording to demonstrate how she reduces, reuses and recycles at home.
- In 2012, as part of a Girl Scout Gold Award project, a high school student created lunchroom signs showing what items should be placed in recycling, composting, and garbage bins. Student Council helped with poster-making and announcements.
- The PTSA coordinated participation in TerraCycle’s CapriSun Juice Pouch Brigade, which turned juice pouches into bags, clipboards, pencil cases, and fences.
- In fall 2016, PTSA held a school-wide book swap. Students and families donated books which were offered to teachers. Leftover books were donated.

## Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- Creekside opened its doors in September 2010. The new building was certified as a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) building.
- Automatic light sensors were installed in all regularly occupied rooms. Classrooms discussed the auto light system so students would understand the technology.
- Shields were placed in classrooms to reflect light into rooms so lights would automatically turn off when adequate daylight was present.
- To conserve energy, thermostats were set between 68-70 degrees, and heat was turned completely off at 4 p.m. and on weekends. The district set up software to automatically shut down school computers in the evenings.
- In 2011, fifth-grade students read an issue of *Time for Kids* on energy conservation and wrote summaries about what they learned.



Humorous energy conservation sign at Creekside



- First-grade students engaged in lessons about water and energy consumption at home and explored how to sustainably use materials in classrooms such as using pencils, crayons, glue, etc. until they are completely used up.
- Signs were posted to remind students and staff to turn off lights and electronics when they were not needed.
- Creekside instituted and promoted a no-idling policy applicable to all vehicles, including school buses.
- Eighty-two percent of Creekside students rode the bus to school instead of being driven to school in individual cars.

## **Water Conservation (Level Three)**

- While continuing its waste reduction and recycling practices, water conservation education and actions became part of Creekside's culture of sustainability. Students read "green tips" in morning announcements to raise awareness about topics such as reducing waste and conserving water.
- Students maintained vegetable, flower, and rain gardens on the school campus.
- The school ordered rain barrels to conserve water in their school garden.
- In 2012, as part of her Girl Scout Gold Award project, a high school student worked with fifth-grade students to create a walking educational field trip on school grounds to explore the school's rain gardens and natural growth areas.
- Custodian Dave Holbrook and the after-school student Otter Club measured the flow of all school faucets and confirmed that faucets are low-flow, allowing only a half-gallon of water to flow per minute.
- Low-flow aerators were installed on all sinks; toilets and urinals were water-efficient.
- A fifth-grade student calculated pervious versus impervious surfaces on school grounds and presented the results to the fifth-grade classroom.
- Twenty-nine percent of the asphalt on school grounds was water permeable, which allowed rainwater to absorb into the ground rather than run into a storm drain.
- The irrigation system adjusted watering time based on weather conditions.
- Third-grade classrooms received the City of Sammamish Healthy Watershed, Healthy World classroom workshops on storm water pollution prevention.



## Sustaining Green School Recognition

Creekside Elementary School sustained its Level One waste reduction and recycling practices, Level Two energy conservation practices, and Level Three water conservation strategies. How the school achieved this each year is detailed below.

### Sustaining Green School 2014-15

- The school started a regular campus litter patrol. Primary students and teacher assistants tracked the amount of litter collected each week and used PA announcements to broadcast results, including how much litter was collected.
- In 2015 the school participated in the district-wide waste free Lunch Challenge.
- The school maintained a garden structure of products made from recyclable materials to grow edible plants and flowers.

### Sustaining Green School 2015-16

- Student Council members created posters to share the results of a January 2016 cafeteria waste audit completed by the district. The audit found little to no contamination in recycling bins and learned that almost every recyclable item in the school cafeteria was correctly placed in recycling bins.
- Announcements, emails to staff, and teacher web pages promoted weekly Waste-Free Wednesdays in the cafeteria.
- The Green Team created Good on One Side paper reuse boxes for classrooms.

### Sustaining Green School 2016-17

- Creekside replaced disposable utensils with durable utensils in the school cafeteria.
- The school began collecting restroom paper towels for transported to a regional composting facility



Restroom paper towel collection

### Sustaining Green School 2017-18

- In classrooms and restrooms, the school continued collecting paper towels for composting. Yellow bins were placed next to garbage and recycling bins with signs to inform students what materials to place in the yellow composting bins.



## Sustaining Green School 2018-19

- In April 2019, to celebrate Earth Week, the school created a pledge wall for students to display their pledges on how they will go green at school.
- The school continued to encourage a culture of sustainability, and to share with students and staff its expectations about Green School conservation practices



Student conservation pledge wall

## Sustaining Green School 2019-20

- In fall 2019, the Student Council and student Green Team started a monthly newsletter teachers used in classrooms to share ways to reduce waste, recycle, and conserve energy and water at school and home.
- First-grade students learned about water and energy use at home and learned how to use pencils, crayons, and glues until they were completely used up.
- The school promoted its no-idling policy for all vehicles including school buses.

## Sustaining Green School 2021-22

- The Creekside Green Team of 75 third- to fifth-grade students filled out applications to join the team, and met monthly before school on Zoom.
- Green Team advisor Rylie Motley and principal Amy Allison created and shared with the entire school a video about conservation practices, including reducing waste, recycling, and conserving water and energy. Daily morning announcements included an update about Green Team activities and progress.
- During Earth Month, the Green Team prepared posters and lessons about reducing waste and conserving water, and shared them with all classes.
- The Waste Watchers club monitored sorting stations at all three lunch periods to help students sort recyclable and compostable materials. The students cleaned up playground litter using long grabbers.
- The team started a campaign to educate the school community about impacts of transportation on climate change and air pollution, and to encourage walking, biking, bus use, and carpooling. They planned a competition between grade levels.
- Green Team members planned a presentation to the Creekside PTSA to share its 2021-22 activities and achievements.



## Sustaining Green School 2022-23

- The 65-member student Green Team led by advisors Rylie Motley and Nicole Min conducted presentations in many classrooms about why reducing waste and recycling matters, and about other actions to create a more sustainable planet.
- The team shared waste reduction, recycling, energy conservation, and water conservation tips in morning announcements.
- The King County assembly was presented to the entire school to educate students and staff about reducing waste and recycling.
- The school used compostable trays at lunch. Each recycling bin throughout the school had a sticker showing what items can be recycled.
- The Green Team reminded students and staff to turn off lights in unoccupied spaces and keep doors and windows closed to conserve energy.
- The team conducted a campaign to encourage walking, biking, carpooling, school bus service, and public transit for Earth Day. The team learned about impacts of transportation on climate change and air pollution.

## Awards

- In 2012, Creekside won the state Green Leader School award for Pillar 1 (environmental impact, including waste reduction, recycling, water conservation and energy efficiency) of the U.S. Green Ribbon School award.
- Creekside received the Terry Husseman 2011 Sustainable School Award which the school used to sustain its Waste Watchers program.
- Custodian Dave Holbrook received a King County Earth Heroes at School award in April 2011.