

Grand Ridge Elementary School

School district: Issaquah

School location: Issaquah

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 2012

Level Three of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in May 2014

Sustaining Green School recognition:

Achieved for

- 2014-15
- 2015-16
- 2016-17
- 2017-18
- 2018-19



Fourth-grade students empty classroom recyclables into hallway recycling bin



First grade student recycles paper in classroom

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- As of May 2019, Grand Ridge had increased its recycling rate to 62% by reducing waste and collecting recyclable and compostable materials in classrooms, offices, and cafeteria.
- Students placed stickers from the Green Schools Program showing what can be recycled and composted on all recycling and composting bins.
- Student volunteer Waste Watchers monitored cafeteria sorting stations to help fellow students sort correctly, and created a video and signs demonstrating which materials should be recycled and composted.



Grand Ridge received the King County Earth Heroes award in April 2011



- In 2009-10, vegetable and fruit leftovers collected one week each month were used for onsite composting. The finished compost was used in the school garden, the Grizzly Patch.
- The cafeteria switched to durable trays that were washed and reused. Along with all schools in Issaquah School District, the cafeteria eliminated drinking straws.
- When it was not possible to use durable trays, the lunchroom used compostable paper trays instead of polystyrene trays.
- Recycling was promoted at school-wide and PTSA events. Recycling bins were placed at the annual Walk-A-Thon, Field Day, and other events.
- Grand Ridge significantly reduced paper use by converting to electronic newsletters and fliers instead of paper copies.
- Classrooms, offices, and workrooms have G.O.O.S. (Good on One Side) boxes to collect paper used on one side. G.O.O.S. paper was also made into scratch pads for the staff workroom.
- The school posted reminders in every restroom to use only one or two sheets of paper towels.
- In 2017, the school switched from compostable utensils in the lunchroom to durable metal utensils.
- In fall 2017, with district support and help from the Green Schools Program, the cafeteria and kitchen began a Food Share Program. Unopened, packaged items and whole uneaten fruits were picked up by Issaquah Food Bank each week instead of being disposed.



Student participated in cafeteria waste sorting game



Students improve sorting skills in the cafeteria after lunch



Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- Signs reminding staff and students to shut off lights and equipment when they leave a room was placed in classrooms and offices.
- The school created an Energy Conservation Checklist to be completed at the end of the day by each classroom.
- An energy pledge was written to be sung by students to remind them how they can help the Earth.
- To save energy, the school posted reminders outside all doors to keep doors closed.
- Third-grade students posted signs throughout the school with reminders of how energy conservation protects salmon habitat and the earth.
- District software automatically shut off computers each evening.

Water Conservation (Level Three)

- In addition to continuing its waste reduction and recycling practices and education, water conservation tips were shared in lunch announcements, monthly emails, and newsletters.
- A rain barrel was set up in the school's garden to collect rain water for irrigating the garden plants.
- Custodial staff routinely checked for leaky faucets and reported problems for maintenance. Water use was monitored monthly by district staff.
- Signs were placed near faucets to remind students to turn them off when done.
- Grand Ridge dedicated one day of Earth Week 2014 to promoting water conservation.
- Student restroom faucets were connected to a time-controlled water savings system that only allowed faucets to run for 60 seconds at a time.
- Fourth-grade students engineered a water filtration system, learned about problems related to contaminated water, and explored problem solving methods. Third-grade students studied watersheds and how pollution affects the water in our local watersheds.



Sustaining Green School recognition

Grand Ridge sustained and built on its Level One through Level Three conservation practices. How the school did this each year is described below.

Sustaining Green School 2014-15

- The school released 18,000 ladybugs as part of an education unit about alternatives to pesticides.
- Student Green Team leaders collected clean plastic bags at school and took them to a grocery store collection bin for recycling.
- The Green Team conducted regular litter clean-up projects.
- The school participated in the district-wide Waste-Free Lunch Challenge and reduced daily lunchroom waste from 23.6 pounds to 16.6 pounds.

Sustaining Green School 2015-16

- The school continued its waste reduction practices, and maintained collection of recyclable and compostable materials.
- A student litter brigade picked up litter around the school and reported results.

Sustaining Green School 2016-17

- The cafeteria switched from single-use disposable plastic utensils to durable, reusable metal utensils.
- The school frequently shared information about its conservation practices in Grizzly Growl, the school newsletter, and in teacher newsletters. Holiday waste reduction and recycling tips were sent to all staff in November 2016.
- The school piloted the City of Issaquah and King County Metro SchoolPool transportation reduction program.

Sustaining Green School 2017-18

With district and Green Schools Program support, kitchen staff set up a food share table for unopened, packaged foods and drinks as well as uneaten whole fruits with inedible peels from the school lunch program. Foods and drinks were donated to Issaquah Food and Clothing Bank.



Sustaining Green School 2018-19

- Custodians worked with students to sort cafeteria recyclable and compostable materials, and to place durable utensils in designated bins to be washed for the next day.
- Some classrooms participated in a pilot program to collect compostable materials in their classrooms.
- Kitchen staff and students continued the food share table which was started in the previous school year.
- In April during Earth Week, the assistant principal used lunch waste and recyclable items to play a sorting game with students.
- To reduce energy use, the school set thermostats between 68 to 70 degrees and displayed conservation signs next to light switches throughout the school.

Awards

- Grand Ridge received a King County Earth Heroes at School Award in 2011.
- Two members of the Grand Ridge staff and one third-grade class received King County Earth Heroes Awards in 2012.