

Horizon Elementary School

School district: Kent

School location: Kent

Began participating in the Green Schools Program: September 2013

Level One of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in February 2015

Level Two of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in May 2016

Level Three of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in May 2017

Sustaining Green School 2022-2023:
Achieved in June 2023

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Horizon maintained a recycling rate of 40% and reduced school garbage by 8.4 cubic yards per month.
- Daily announcements were made to launch the school's participation in the Green Schools Program, and goals for the program were shared in the school newsletter.
- The school received the King County Earth Challenge assembly to teach students and staff about waste reduction and recycling.
- As an alternative to disposable trays, kindergarten and first-grade students used durable baskets which are reused after each meal.
- Head custodian Ray Jenkins attached signs to recycling bin lids to remind students which materials belong in those bins.



Students at Horizon Elementary completed pledges to conserve water and posted them next to the bulletin board near the school's front entrance.



Bulletin board with reminders about what can be recycled and Green Schools Program achievements.



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

- Associated Student Body (ASB) representatives created three-dimensional posters for the lunchroom to show what items belong in each bin. The students also emptied recycling bins after each lunch, and monitored recycling bins to decrease contamination and educate the student body.
- Students and staff were encouraged to reduce food waste by placing unwanted packaged, unopened food on a food share table in the cafeteria and staff room.
- To reduce waste, only durable plates and utensils were used in the staff room.
- In the cafeteria, loose utensils from dispensers replaced plastic-wrapped utensils, and bulk condiment dispensers replaced individually wrapped condiments.
- To reduce the amount of paper sent home with students, the school switched to an electronic newsletter and each teacher used a website to post class and school information.
- Whenever possible, students used dry-erase boards instead of paper during classroom instruction.
- Principal Miles Erdly set a limit on how much printer paper could be used. Each grade level kept a count of how many paper copies they made. If paper use exceeded the limit, the grade level was asked to find ways to decrease copies.
- School materials teachers did not need were placed in an open area for others to take. Any leftover materials were donated to Goodwill.
- All holiday decorations were stored and reused the following year.
- The King County Going Green Together assembly was presented to the students, followed by Garbology and Rethink and Reuse workshops. Students were taught that a part of waste reduction includes using things as much as they can before either recycling or throwing it away.



Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- The school's Green Team placed energy conservation stickers from the Green Schools Program on all light switches and electrical equipment around the school building.
- Each classroom designated a student as the energy monitor responsible for turning off the lights whenever the class left the room.
- The school principal reminded staff and students about energy conservation practices during PA announcements and at assemblies.
- Of all Kent School District schools, Horizon Elementary staff received the most "caught you being green" notes that facility staff members give to teachers when they have turned off all equipment at the end of the school day.
- Dishwashers and refrigerators were replaced with more energy-efficient models.
- All thermostats were set at 68 – 70 degrees, and students were encouraged to dress appropriately for the weather. Daily during winter months, custodians checked that blinds were closed to keep the heat in overnight.
- When lightbulbs burned out, they were replaced with energy efficient light bulbs.
- The Green School Committee visited each classroom to make sure all computers and projectors had a "Turn off Equipment" reminder.
- The school made an effort to ensure smartboards and computers were turned off before leaving for long holiday weekends and breaks.

Water Conservation (Level Three)

- To conserve water, the school encouraged students and their families to sign a pledge noting how they would reduce water use. Incentives were offered to students and families who participated in the pledge which led to over 100 students and families pledging to use less water.



- A second-grade class participated in Rethink and Reuse workshops where they learned how important water is in everyday life and about the importance of using a reusable water bottle.
- Staff was encouraged to run the dishwasher in the staff room only when it was full, and a sign with facts about water use was posted on the dishwasher.
- To reduce water use, all bathroom sinks used motion sensors, aerators were installed on classroom faucets, and dishwashers were replaced with more water-efficient models.

Sustaining Green School – 2022-2023

- With help from the Green Schools Program, Horizon began to collect food scraps and other compostable materials in its lunchroom for transport to a regional composting facility. Indoor collection bins and signs provided by the Green Schools Program were set up in the lunchroom, and students and staff were educated about why this practice helps the environment and what materials can be collected for composting.
- To reduce wasted food, the school re-started a food share basket in the lunchroom for unopened, packaged foods from the school lunch program.
- The school continued to collect recyclable materials in the lunchroom, thanks to picture-based signs posted above each bin, communication with lunchroom staff, and periodic announcements to remind the school community what materials can be recycled.
- To conserve energy use, students and teachers were encouraged to turn off lights when they leave classrooms.