



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

Lake Washington High School

School district: Lake Washington

School location: Kirkland

Began participating in the Green Schools Program:
September 2017

Level One of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in May 2018

Level Two of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in May 2019

Student Green Team recognition: Received June 2023



Environmental Club members conducted a Trash on a Tarp event in 2017 to assess volume and types of material generated in the cafeteria.

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Lake Washington High achieved a 47% recycling rate by spring 2018, thanks to waste reduction practices plus collection of recyclable and compostable materials.
- The school formed a Green Team of students who also were part of the school's Environmental Club. The Green Team used posters and intercom announcements to promote Green Team activities and participation in the Green Schools Program.
- In fall 2017, the Environmental Club ran a Trash on a Tarp assessment of types and quantities of garbage, recyclables, and compostables generated at lunch. They weighed separated materials and recorded data, then used what they learned to make announcements about how to sort correctly.
- On TV monitors in common areas, messages on how to reduce waste and what materials can be recycled and composted were displayed. The team created videos on why waste reduction and recycling matter, and created posters for the cafeteria and hallways about what can be composted.
- AP Government class drafted a bill requiring Washington schools to collect recyclables and compostables, and presented the bill to the Senate Education Committee.



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- The Green Team collected used markers to send to Crayola ColorCycle for recycling, and posted signs on school printers to encourage double-sided copying.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- While continuing its waste reduction and recycling practices, the school learned about energy conservation. At a staff meeting, the Green Team presented its energy conservation goals and ways to conserve energy. The team encouraged staff to comply with the school's "no personal appliances" policy.
- To learn about carbon emissions, Green Team members calculated their ecological footprints and discussed how different lifestyles contribute to greenhouse gas emissions.
- In March 2019, the Environmental Club conducted an energy walk-through after school to make sure all lights were off in unoccupied room and areas, and to note if heating and cooling vents were free of obstructions.
- As reminders to turn off lights in unoccupied spaces, the Green Team designed meme (humorous) posters for teachers to hang near classroom light switches, and wrote humorous energy conservation facts for their Kang News program.
- Vending machines in the school were turned off by the end of the school day.
- The school's Smart Academic Green Environment (SAGE) portables were designed according to green building and energy conservation standards.

Student Green Team recognition: June 2023

- With guidance from teacher and Green Team advisor Andrea Thody, the Green Team led a campaign to reduce waste by improving collection of recyclable and compostable materials.
- The Green Team conducted a lunchtime waste audit in March 2023 with support from PTSA Sustainability Chair Stephanie Lecovin, PTSA President Tanya Knudsen, and the Green Schools Program. Lunchtime





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garbage was sorted into what could have been shared or donated, what could have been recycled, what could have been composted, and what belonged in garbage. For results and conclusions, see [2023 Sustainability Recap and Update](#).

- In April, the kitchen started to collect food scraps, and the school re-launched lunchroom sorting stations to collect recyclables (empty glass, aluminum, and plastic containers), and organics (food scraps and food-soiled paper).
- Food donation collection bins were included in lunchroom sorting areas for unopened, packaged foods and whole fruits. Food donation was managed by students in the transition program. From late April through June, 450 pieces of whole fruit, 170 cartons of milk, 100 boxes of raisins, and 70 juices were donated to the nearby New Bethlehem Programs, Kirkland's only family shelter.
- In May, in a presentation to district Nutrition Services, the Green Team requested a reduction in plastics and a transition to durable, reusable dishes and utensils.
- The Green Team organized several campus clean-ups, and created multiple videos about reducing waste, recycling, and composting.
- Green Team students, with City of Kirkland volunteers Susan Vossler and Judy Beto, led an anti-idling demonstration during school dismissal to persuade drivers to turn off vehicles if parked for more than 10 seconds. Students distributed fliers about turning off engines to save money, improve air quality and health, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and improve auto performance.
- The Green Team organized a campaign to reduce garbage generated at Halloween. They collected Halloween plastic waste to be recycled through Ridwell, a company that finds recycling markets for materials not accepted in curbside recycling programs.

