



Lake Youngs Elementary School

School district: Kent

School location: Kent

Began participating in the Green Schools Program:
September 2009

Level One of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in April 2010

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

Level Three of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in May 2011

Sustaining Green School:

- 2016-17
- 2017-18
- 2018-19
- 2022-23



Student Green Team
Green team students gather below their Green Schools banner.

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Lake Youngs Elementary School achieved and maintained a 54% recycling rate.
- Stickers from the Green Schools Program showing what can be recycled were placed on all indoor recycling bins.
- The school held a King County recycling assembly in fall 2009 to kick-start their recycling efforts and learn what materials can be recycled.
- By reducing paper use and lunchtime waste, the school decreased its total solid waste by approximately 25 cubic yards per month which resulted in garbage dumpster pickups being reduced by 50%.
- Students recycled chip bags, Capri Suns, and cookie wrappers through TerraCycle, a company that uses those materials to make new products. In 2010, the school earned about \$200 that was used for environmental activities.
- In 2010, with help from its PTA, the school raised over \$2,000 by hosting an electronic waste recycling event for the community.



Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- Head custodian Ruth Nowak created a student energy conservation team that helped turn off lights in empty classrooms throughout the day.
- "Turn off Lights" stickers from the Green Schools Program were posted near light switches in classrooms and offices to remind students and staff to turn them off when rooms were unoccupied.
- The Green Team included energy conservation facts and tips in announcements and on the school bulletin board.
- Each classroom assigned students to turn off computers and lights in unoccupied rooms. Most classrooms turned off the lights during lunchtime to help conserve energy.
- The school included energy conservation topics in classroom curriculum.

Water Conservation (Level Three)

- "Turn off Faucet" signs were posted near all sinks to remind students and staff to turn off the water when not in use.
- Third-grade students planted trees and shared a presentation with other classrooms about the importance of clean water and a healthy environment.
- Fourth-grade students hatched and released salmon and discussed the importance of water conservation and keeping water clean.
- Classrooms participated in a water challenge to turn off faucets while soaping hands. Signs were posted in bathrooms to remind students about this practice.
- Students were taught to report leaky faucets to custodians.
- The school installed low-flow toilets and faucets.

Sustaining Green School recognition

Lake Youngs Elementary sustained and built on its Level One waste reduction and recycling practices, Level Two energy conservation practices, and Level Three water conservation strategies. How the school did this each year is described below.

Sustaining Green School 2016-17

The school used two compost digesters in the courtyard to compost garden and yard waste. The compost was used to replenish soil in the school garden.



Sustaining Green School 2017-18

The school started a felt tip pen recycling program. Music choice classes performed a recycling skit for the school during the beginning of the year kickoff event.

Sustaining Green School 2018-19

- The school expanded recycling practices by collecting plastic food containers from school lunches in addition to milk cartons.
- Green Team captains created posters to educate students on what can be recycled, presented to all classrooms about recycling, and led an all-school assembly to share information and tips about reducing waste and recycling.

Sustaining Green School 2022-23

- The school maintained many conservation practices, including collecting recyclable materials and placing garden waste in outdoor compost digesters. The resulting compost was used for school gardens.
- The student Green Team, comprised of 25 fifth- and sixth-grade students, visited classrooms to share information about recycling and to distribute stickers from the Green Schools Program for recycling and garbage bins.
- Throughout the school year, Green Team members observed classroom bins to make sure only recyclable materials were placed in recycling bins and only garbage in garbage bins. When needed, they reminded students how to sort.
- The school re-started its salmon release program and released more than 100 salmon in a local stream.
- To help conserve water, staff and students were encouraged to report plumbing problems such as leaks.