



Lea Hill Elementary School

School district: Auburn

School location: Auburn

Began participating in the Green Schools Program: September 2011

Level One of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in May 2012

Level Two of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in May 2013

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

Sustaining Green School recognition: Achieved for

- **2014-15**
- **2015-16**
- **2017-18**
- **2018-19**

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Lea Hill Elementary first achieved a 59% recycling rate, and then increased its recycling rate to 71% in 2018-19.
- The school decreased waste, resulting in a reduction of the outdoor garbage dumpster from 8 to 6 yards and a decrease in the cost of garbage disposal.
- The student Green Team worked with head custodian Eva LeMasters to oversee waste sorting throughout the day.
- Recycling tips and information were shared in morning announcements and online newsletters to the school community.
- The school started to collect unopened, packaged foods from the cafeteria in a food share cooler for the preschool center.
- Lea Hill eliminated polystyrene (also called Styrofoam) trays and used only durable, reusable trays.
- With help from the district resource conservation manger, the school started collection of food scraps and other compostable materials during breakfast and lunch. The compostable materials were composted at a local composting facility.



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

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- The school collected compostable materials at its Head Start morning program, and the student Green Team helped teach pre-school students how to sort.
- Fifth-grade student volunteers worked with the head custodian to monitor daily lunchtime food scrap collection, and trained fourth-grade leaders to prepare them for their role the following fall.
- The Green Team participated in an Earth Day school beautification project in which they planted flowers using local compost that was given to the school.
- To kick off the year with outreach to the entire school, Lea Hill hosted a King County assembly about waste reduction and recycling.
- The Green Team placed stickers from the Green Schools Program showing what can be recycled on all recycling bins throughout the school.
- In 2013-14 the principal's office went paperless, and the majority of family communication was sent via email instead of paper copies.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- In 2012-13, thanks to district reduced heating temperature requirements and energy conservation practices, Lea Hill reduced energy use by more than 6%.
- The school's custodians created the Golden Horseshoe program where classrooms were monitored daily for energy conservation practices and points were awarded to the classes that conserved the most energy.
- Teachers in every classroom assigned a student the job of shutting down computers and turning off lights at the end of each school day.
- The school shared energy conservation facts, tips, and reminders in its fall newsletter and morning announcements throughout the year.

Water Conservation (Level Three)

- Lea Hill reduced water use from 12 gallons per student to 5 gallons per student by installing low-flow faucet aerators and kitchen sprayers, replacing urinal flushometers and encouraging a culture of conservation in the school.
- Water use was monitored monthly by the district resource conservation manager.



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- Rain barrels were added to the school's garden.
- The school communicated water conservation tips through morning announcements and during staff meetings.
- Custodians routinely checked for leaky faucets and reported problems to maintenance staff members.
- Water conservation signs were posted above all sinks throughout the school.
- The school adjusted its watering schedule to align with district policy of "going golden" by allowing their fields to go brown during the summer.

Sustaining Green School recognition

Lea Hill 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 2014-15

- Lea Hill partnered with Ilalko Elementary School to conduct a holiday recycling event for Christmas lights and extension cords. Lea Hill helped raise \$600 and to recycle 1,865 pounds of lights during the winter of 2014-15.
- Three classes participated in Compost Days, a regional partnership between King County, Cedar Grove Composting, and Waste Management. Students learned about composting and received free compost for the school.
- The school installed an on-site compost bin maintained by an adult garden volunteer who used the bin to show students the composting process. The school used the compost in its school garden.

Sustaining Green School 2015-16

- The school held bi-monthly award assemblies in which classrooms were recognized for having the best recycling, energy, and water conservation practices.
- The Green Team focused on on-site composting. City of Auburn provided a worm bin and workshops on vermicomposting in which students learned how worms turn waste



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into compost and applied the lessons to the school's waste production. A portion of the food scraps from school lunches was composted in the student garden.

- The school shared Green School goals and successes with the community through its email bulletin.
- The district's Level UP Challenge provides a financial incentive to schools to achieve the next level of the King County Green Schools Program, and Lea Hill received \$300 for moving from Level Three to Sustaining Green School in 2015.

Sustaining Green School 2017-18

- Lea Hill Elementary continued to sustain its Level One waste reduction and recycling practices, Level Two energy conservation practices, and Level Three water conservation strategies.
- The Green Team initiated a rotation system to help monitor lunchroom waste stations and educate students about proper sorting and waste reduction.

Sustaining Green School 2018-19

- Green Team members continued to monitor waste stations during breakfast and lunch and encouraged others to sort correctly in the cafeteria.
- Three-dimensional posters with actual items attached were displayed next to cafeteria waste station to help students sort correctly.
- Green Team members gave other students raffle tickets for chances to receive prizes when students correctly sorted their waste or picked up litter on campus.
- Students were encouraged to pick-up litter to prevent stormwater pollution.
- The school set up a food share table where students can take or leave packaged, unopened foods from the school lunch program.
- The Green Team's bulletin board displayed conservation tips and updates about Green Team activities.
- To conserve energy, Auburn School District set and monitored heating systems.
- All lights had occupancy sensors and teachers reminded students to turn off lights and appliances when not in use.



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- School displayed water conservation signs next to all faucets and encouraged students to bring their own water bottles to school.
- In 2018-19, Lea Hill started participating in the Crayola ColorCycle program to collect used markers and crayons for recycling. This program was promoted in the school community through PA announcements, email, and letters.
- The school held an auction which raised money for the school's organic garden. The garden supports science learning and provides food for school community members.

Awards

- Former head custodian Angela Jeffries received a King County Earth Heroes at School award in April 2012 for her contributions to Lea Hill's sustainability practices.
- Lea Hill received a King County Earth Heroes at School award in May 2015 for its effective recycling program.
- Lea Hill was listed as one of King County's [2015 Best Workplaces for Waste Prevention and Recycling](#).