



## McKnight Middle School

**School district:** Renton

**School location:** Renton

**Began participating in the Green Schools Program:** Sept. 2010

**Level One of the Green Schools Program:** Achieved in May 2011

**Level Two of the Green Schools Program:** Achieved in May 2015

**Level Three of the Green Schools Program:** Achieved in June 2022

**Sustaining Green School 2022-2023:** Achieved in June 2023



Students help with recycling in their classrooms.

### Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- McKnight Middle School increased its recycling rate from 15% to 30%.
- The school improved its classroom recycling collection process, and began to collect empty bottles, cans, and milk cartons in its lunchroom.
- Student leaders organized a zero waste lunch challenge, and presented in every class about the new recycling system and what materials can be recycled.
- Students wrote letters to the district about starting to collect compostable materials.
- For the school's culture night, students made art out of recyclable materials.

### Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- McKnight continued its waste reduction and recycling practices.
- To promote energy conservation, the student Green Team shared energy conservation tips during morning announcements and at staff meetings.
- To conserve energy, Renton School District's software shut down non-administrator computers automatically in the evening.
- The school set thermostats between 68 and 70 degrees and encouraged staff to leave the settings alone.



## Water Conservation (Level Three)

- McKnight continued its waste reduction and recycling practices.
- Students were encouraged to use reusable water bottles instead of single-use plastic water bottles. With no-touch bottle fill stations around the school and reusable water bottles given out to a significant percentage of students, this practice was convenient.
- Two English Language Learning classes participated in the Green Team in 2021-2022. The Green Team:
  - Researched and made videos and posters about recycling, plastic pollution, and water quality. The posters were hung near recycling bins in the lunchroom and next to water fountains, and the videos were shared during homeroom lessons.
  - Volunteered to monitor lunchroom recycling and garbage bins to encourage students to recycle and to sort correctly.
  - Checked for leaks in classroom faucets and restrooms.
- Students calculated their personal water footprints in class and mapped their local watershed to identify clean water sources as well as sources of pollution.
- Conducting field work on campus, students identified storm drains, the slopes of fields and parking lots, areas of flooding, and areas of trash build-up. They also calculated surface areas to estimate how much water would pass through storm drains.
- Students created posters and slide shows to raise awareness about how toxins enter storm drains and then pollute waterways.
- The Green Team presented about how to check for toilet leaks at home.
- News of Green Team activities was shared through the staff newsletter, posters, and videos during homeroom.



## Sustaining Green School – 2022-2023

- 30 students from two Multilingual Learning classes participated in the Green Team. In the spring, the team was integrated with a project-based learning unit focused on sustainability.
- Students created recycling, compost, and garbage posters to hang over collection bins in the lunchroom. A recycling sticker from the Green Schools Program was placed on each indoor recycling bin to show what materials can be recycled.
- To encourage reusable water bottles and water conservation, students placed informational posters above water fountains.
- The Green Team participated in King County Eco-Connections workshops.
- As they did in 2021-2022, Green Team students conducted field work on campus by identifying storm drains, the slopes of fields and parking lots, areas of flooding, and areas of trash build-up. They also calculated surface areas to estimate how much water would pass through storm drains.
- To educate the school community and raise awareness about water quality, plastic pollution, and storm drain pollution, students created posters and slide shows.
- Information about the Green Team activities were posted on the school website.

## Other conservation actions

- Students wrote letters to district officials to advocate for healthier lunches and for roof-top hydro-electric systems.
- Students made signs to educate the student body and visitors about McKnight's mini-wetland.
- Students constructed a community garden, identified native plants, and created interpretive signs for the native plant sanctuary.

## Comments

“The King County Green Schools Program provided organization and tools that empowered McKnight’s students to step up and take responsibility for increasing McKnight’s recycling rate.” – **Carlie Jonas**, teacher