



King County Green Schools Program

# Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

## Meridian Middle School

**School district:** Kent

**School location:** Kent

**Began participating in the Green Schools Program:** October 2011

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

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

### Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- In 2011-12 Meridian Middle School increased its recycling rate from 17% to 32%.
- By promoting waste reduction and recycling to the entire school community, the school reduced its total solid waste by 46 yards, and the frequency of garbage collection service was decreased.
- The school provided a laptop to each school, which reduced the use of paper. Students completed most daily work on their laptops rather than printing copies.
- School offices, classrooms, and copy rooms were provided with a paper box for paper used on one side only, so the other side could be used for notes.
- In 2012-13, paper copies decreased by 5%.
- Head custodian Gino Stratton monitored the school's solid waste and worked with students to regularly empty classroom recycling bins.
- To reduce waste, the district eliminated plastic-wrapped utensils and straws, and instead set up bulk dispensers which offer an individual selection of unwrapped utensils and napkins.
- Under the direction of teacher Liz Jones, eighth-grade leadership students
  - Promoted a "No Waste Lunch" by asking students to only take food they will eat and to eat the food they take in order to reduce the amount of wasted food.
  - Created a recycling video and played it during lunch to promote recycling.
  - Created signs for the lunchroom to remind students what can and can't be recycled.



Green Day poster



Recycling kick-off in cafeteria



Cafeteria recycling station for garbage, recyclable materials, and trays



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- Provided morning announcements with recycling and waste reduction information as well as updates on how the school's system is working.
- Presented recycling information to individual classes.
- Completed school-wide audits to determine garbage and recycling quantities. Students used this data to motivate students and staff to reduce waste and recycle more.

## Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- To promote energy conservation, the student Green Team
  - Placed “Turn off the Lights” stickers from the Green Schools Program next to all light switches, and laminated and placed “Turn off Electronic Equipment” signs from the program in all classrooms.
  - Shared energy conservation tips in announcements and posted energy saving tips in the lunchroom.
- To conserve energy, Kent School District’s software shut down non-administrator computers automatically in the evenings.
- The school set its thermostats between 68 and 70 degrees.

## Award

- The eighth-grade leadership class received a King County Earth Hero at School award in April 2012.