



Montessori Children's House

School Location: Redmond

Began to participate in the Green Schools Program:
September 2008

Level One of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in April 2009

Level Two of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in April 2017

Level Three of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in January 2019



This student's waste free lunch is packed in durable containers.

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Montessori Children's House achieved and maintained a recycling rate of 55%.
- The school converted to an electronic parent newsletter, after 92% of parents, in response to a survey, indicated a preference for a paperless newsletter.
- In several classrooms, yogurt and applesauce cups were reused for seed containers and art projects.
- Each classroom and office was provided with a paper reuse box so staff and students could use both sides of a piece of paper before recycling.
- The school began serving afternoon snacks in durable containers so leftovers could be stored and served the next day.
- In classrooms, at parent events, and staff meetings, pitchers of water and durable cups were provided instead of single-use water bottles or paper cups.



Student artist and her art work about the environment.



Student works with the compost in the school garden.



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

- During National Green Week, the school held waste-free Wednesday to promote the practice of packing reusable containers for lunches.
- Students and staff used metal silverware and plates for lunch and snack time.
- Most school food scraps were fed to three goats and eleven chickens living on school property and the remainder was placed in on-site composters.
- An organics collection service was begun for pizza boxes and food scraps not handled by the methods listed above.
- A battery disposal and printer cartridge exchange box was set up in the office.
- In fall 2008, at the Nature Trail Grand Opening, a recycling relay race engaged families in sorting garbage from recyclable materials.
- The teacher in-service day included information about waste reduction, recycling, and environmental curriculum.
- Students improved classroom composting by collecting food and liquid waste separately then measuring and recording their findings.
- In 2018-19, the school built worm bins to be used in the school's onsite garden.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- Energy conservation signs were posted on light switches and electronics to remind staff and students to turn them off when not in use.
- The school installed cascading roofs to connect classrooms. The roofs collected rainwater which cascaded from one canopy to the next, traversing a green roof of plants, then fell into an aqueduct and rain barrels to store the water for irrigation.
- To improve energy efficiency, the school replaced overhead fluorescent lights with LED bulbs and added motion sensor switches in each classroom.
- Students learned in science lessons about how people all over the world use energy and handle limited resources.
- Green Team advisors conducted an all-staff presentation in fall 2016 about energy use and conservation.
- The school established a no-idle policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and information about the policy was shared in a school newsletter and conversations by staff parking/traffic monitors.



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Water Conservation (Level Three)

- Students regularly spent time in the school's on-site wetland to observe, test water supply, and record any changes.
- Students visited the school's Nature Trail where they learned how natural groundcover helped with stormwater management. Students participated in a field trip to Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center which included a wetland nature park. Elementary classrooms learned about connections between food and water supply.
- Throughout its campus, the school planted drought-tolerant plants that require minimal watering. To conserve water, the school's vegetable garden was watered when needed in the early morning.
- To reduce water use, low-flow toilets were installed when replacements were needed and plastic bottles were placed in older toilet tanks.

Other environmental education

- The school held a community Earth Day event where students and their parents learned about composting by helping to prepare gardening spaces for planting.
- To expand the school's gardening program, grant proposals were submitted for rain barrels, downspout diverters, and worm bins to help produce a year-round supply of fruits and vegetables for the children's snack times.
- A Humans as Consumers unit was developed and taught in elementary classrooms to help students understand the interconnectedness of all living things and to see how their daily choices affect the environment.
- Upper elementary grades spent four days at IslandWood on Bainbridge Island, a 280-acre park and environmental education center.
- To nurture children through connections with the outdoor environment, the school offered access to an enclosed nature trail, a meadow, a mixed conifer and deciduous forest, several wetland areas, and children's gardens.
- Elementary students were introduced to an in-depth study of life sciences including taxonomy, the periodic table, the function and parts of living organisms, and how all parts of the natural world are interconnected.



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Award

Montessori Children's House received a U.S. Green Ribbon School award in 2020 for its waste reduction, recycling, energy, and water conservation practices, as well as its environmental education opportunities, including its wetland, on-site composting, organic-based garden, and Nature Club.