



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

Pine Lake Middle School

School district: Issaquah

School location: Sammamish

Began participating in the Green Schools Program:
January 2007

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

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

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

Sustaining Green School recognition:
Achieved for

- 2014-15
- 2015-16
- 2016-17
- 2017-18
- 2018-19
- 2019-20

A leader in the district

- Pine Lake was the first school in Issaquah School District to complete Level One of the Green Schools Program. Thanks to Pine Lake's achievements, other Issaquah schools improved their conservation practices.
- The school's core values posters were updated to include its Green School values.

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- The school achieved a recycling rate of 40%.
- Three times each year, the school conducted a zero waste locker clean out in which students recycled or donated their unwanted school supplies.



Pine Lake's Ecology Youth Service Corps conducted a campus-wide clean up



Students participated in a spring bulb planting day



Students planted donated daffodil and tulip bulbs



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- In 2007, the school started to collect recyclable and compostable materials in its lunchroom in addition to recycling collection in classrooms and offices.
- Recycling bins provided by the Green Schools Program were placed in the lunchroom to collect food scraps and other compostable materials, and to collect recyclable materials such as milk cartons, plastic bottles and aluminum cans.
- Twelve Pine Lake staff formed a Green Team to help lead school conservation efforts. On each garbage, recycling, and composting bin, they placed stickers from the Green Schools Program showing what should be placed in each bin.
- Students created 3-dimensional posters with actual items attached to hang at lunchroom sorting stations to show which items belong in each bin.
- More than 40 students volunteered to monitor lunchroom sorting stations and help educate fellow students about how to sort recyclable and compostable materials. Several students created a video about food scrap recycling to show to all students.
- Staff collected compostable materials in the staff breakroom.
- The district provided a recycling bin at the school entrance next to the garbage bin to offer families and visitors a way to recycle as they enter the building.
- Sixth-grade students maintained worm bins in each of their classrooms.
- All Pine Lake classes received King County waste reduction and recycling workshops. A group of Pine Lake students participated in the district's Student to Student Sustainability Summit in 2016.
- Student broadcasts promoted Waste-Free Wednesdays to encourage reusable containers for lunches from home and mindfulness about reducing wasted food.
- Student Earth Service Corps recruited members in fall 2016 with posters, a PowerPoint presentation, and eco-themed trivia games during lunches.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- The Ecology Youth Service Corps after-school club created an energy patrol checklist to monitor classroom energy conservation practices, offer feedback, and make suggestions for improvement.
- Energy conservation signs from the Green Schools Program were placed next to light switches to remind students and staff to turn them off when leaving the room.



- The school's e-newsletter and daily bulletins included energy conservation information and tips.
- During winter months, students and staff were encouraged to dress appropriately for the season and to keep thermostats set at 68 to 72 degrees.
- School computers were automatically shut down every night by district software. A solar panel was placed in the school garden to provide power for the cistern water pump which irrigates the garden with rainwater collected in the cistern.
- Lights in the school's vending machines were permanently turned off.
- Motion sensors were installed in frequently used rooms, ensuring lights were turned off when rooms were not occupied.



Solar panel powers the cistern water pump in the school garden

Water Conservation (Level Three)

- Pine Lake continued its waste reduction and recycling practices, while educating the school community about water conservation throughout the school year.
- Staff meetings included updates about the school's conservation goals and progress, along with reminders about recycling, waste reduction, energy conservation, and water conservation.
- Water conservation signs from the Green Schools Program were posted near sinks and faucets to remind staff and students to turn off faucets when not needed and to report leaks to maintenance staff.
- Earth Service Core students tested the flow of each school faucet and recommended faucet aerators where needed.
- Cascade Water Alliance provided Pine Lake with received a cistern to collect rainwater and a drip irrigation system for its interior courtyard.
- In 2013, Pine Lake held a spring bulb community planting day. More than 1,000 drought-tolerant daffodil and tulip bulbs, which do not require extra watering beyond



rainfall, were donated and planted. Over 50 students volunteered at the event and were educated on why the bulbs conserve water.

- The student Earth Service Corps removed non-native plants in the school's gardens and conducted litter pickups around the school to protect storm drains and prevent pollution. In homeroom classes and during lunches, the school showed a video about how littering and water pollution are connected.

Sustaining Green School recognition

Pine Lake Middle School sustained 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

- Over 20 students promoted, led and monitored a locker clean out, resulting in increased recycling and salvage of reusable items along with reduced garbage going to the landfill.
- Several students participated in the Issaquah Sustainability Ambassadors Summit and shared what they learned with the rest of the school.
- The Green Team created a permanent donation station in the school hallway for school supplies, including pencil containers in which students may place extra unwanted pencils found on the floor or take pencils if they need them.
- The school placed two outdoor recycling bins by the school track field to increase recycling during sporting events.
- Pine Lake participated in a waste-free Wednesday campaign in the lunch room in April 2015. Students weighed the garbage for the Issaquah School District Earth Day competition.

Sustaining Green School 2015-16

The school increased frequency of waste-free lunches from once each year to weekly. Waste-free Wednesdays were promoted in the student bulletin, school e-



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newsletter and a student-made video. Students held a lunchtime Trashion Show by showcasing outfits they made from reused materials.

Sustaining Green School 2016-17

The school switched to using uncoated, compostable paper plates. The Student Earth Service Corps hosted a guest speaker who discussed climate change and the carbon tax initiative on the November ballot.

Sustaining Green School 2017-18

Students went on a field trip to Camp Terry where they dissected salmon to learn more about them and to plant herbs to take home to grow and eat. The Green Team created an Energy Vampire skit video to share during the school's talent show. In 2018, sixth-grade classes received King County's Consumption Junction workshops.

Sustaining Green School 2018-19

Student Green Team members met weekly, regularly wrote and shared PA announcements about conservation, made conservation posters, and created educational videos to show in homeroom classes during Earth Week.

Sustaining Green School 2019-20

- The student Green Team met weekly to plan effective ways to encourage fellow students to sort recyclable and compostable materials, and conserve energy and water. New members were trained to help monitor lunchroom sorting stations.
- Core members created scripts for lunchtime talks about waste reduction and recycling. In Jan. and Feb. 2020, the team held a sorting relay race and a spinning wheel game during lunch as fun ways to educate students.
- In Dec. 2019, as part of their research about sustainable buildings, students created a "sustainable" gingerbread house with solar panels and other sustainable features.
- In partnership with the YMCA, Pine Lake students removed invasive species at Camp Steller.



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- Before Pickering Barn, Issaquah's community garden, was bulldozed, students saved food crops and native species to transplant in Camp Perry's garden. The food grown at Camp Perry was donated to the local food bank.

Awards

- Meagan Elliot, school counselor, received a King County Earth Heroes at School award in April 2010.
- The Green Team at Pine Lake Middle School received a King County Earth Heroes at School award in April 2010.