

Puesta del Sol Elementary School

School district: Bellevue

School location: Bellevue

Began participating in the Green Schools Program: September 2008

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

Level Two of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in May 2010

Level Three of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in April 2011

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- The school increased its recycling rate from 43% to 64%.
- The school placed recycling bins in the cafeteria and in each classroom and office.
- The City of Bellevue, which partnered with the Green Schools Program to provide assistance to Bellevue schools, provided stickers in Spanish listing what materials can and can't be recycled at the school.
- Students and faculty participated in a Green Week which included a "waste free" lunch day, wearing green and raising awareness through the newscast and skits. Students began to stack polystyrene trays to reduce volume in the school's garbage dumpster.
- In 2009-10 the school began to collect food scraps and other compostable materials in its cafeteria and in the teacher's lounge. Approximately 140 gallons of compostable material were collected each week.
- To reduce paper use, the school counts each copy made and holds regular staff competitions for the fewest copies.
- For meetings and conferences, staff members post information online instead of making photocopies.



Student Kylie Martin composts food scraps in worm bin.



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

- All classrooms had paper reuse stations and teachers make double-sided copies whenever possible.
- Laminating, color copies and colored paper have been reduced significantly.
- Academic progress report cards and teacher letters to families are sent electronically. The PTA shares information through its website and is working on a paperless newsletter.
- The school eliminated use of cleansing wipes to reduce its solid waste.
- Teachers use durable coffee mugs in the staff lounge instead of disposable cups.
- One teacher started a classroom worm bin.
- The school participated in a recycling and waste reduction assembly.
- Through a pilot program, the school used compostable trays and kept an estimated 3,500 polystyrene trays from the landfill each month.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- Many teachers celebrated Earth Day by turning off lights in their classrooms and discussing environmental issues.
- The school's policy is for the last person to leave each room to turn off the lights.
- Students placed "lights out" stickers near light switches throughout the school.
- Before school breaks, staff were reminded to turn off and unplug all electrically powered items.
- Staff and students hold "energy free" Fridays during which the community was encouraged to conserve energy.
- From September through December during the 2010-11 school year, Puesta del Sol reduced energy use by three percent thanks to energy conservation practices and reduced heating temperature requirements from the district.

Water Conservation (Level Three)

- The school's new student green team placed "turn water off" stickers by sinks throughout the school, sent an email to all staff about water conservation practices.
- Students signed a water conservation pledge to take shorter showers.



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Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

- Water conservation is studied in science classes.
- City of Bellevue provided a poo-lution workshop about pet waste and surface water pollution.
- Three fourth-grade classes participated in Nature Vision's "Healthy Water Systems" workshop. Four third-grade classes participated in a "Healthy Habitat" workshop.

Comments:

"Puesta del Sol made a commitment to become a Level Two school and we were successful in large part due to the support of King County Green Schools program coordinators. They helped us decrease our waste and to be more aware of our energy use on a monthly basis. We communicated in both English and Spanish in student led assemblies, newscasts and printed labels. Thanks to King County, our school now has labels that say "turn off lights!" in Spanish! King County has made this process easy to implement and has created support each step along the way. At lunch we compost our food, recycle our milk cartons and separate trash and recyclable materials. Students and staff welcomed the new green routine and fully participate. We minimize the number of copies we make and send information by e-mail or post it on the school's Sharepoint site whenever possible. The Student Council has become a leading partner in these efforts."

– Teacher **Maya Stevens** and principal **Mark Migliore**, 2010