



Somerset 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 May 2009

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

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

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- As of April 2011, staff and students had increased the school's recycling rate from 52% to 63%.
- City of Bellevue partnered with the Green Schools Program to assist Bellevue schools with recycling improvements.
- To save paper, the weekly school newsletter is emailed to families, saving approximately 500 sheets of paper each week.
- The principal emailed the 2008-09 parent input form, saving 650 pieces of paper.
- In staff workrooms, special bins are designated for photocopy paper that has been printed on one side. School staff uses the other side to make draft copies.
- The cost of Somerset's photocopy paper decreased from more than \$30,000 per year to \$11,000 in 2009.
- The school started to recycle milk cartons throughout the school. An estimated 6,000 milk cartons are recycled each month.
- Students stack their polystyrene lunch trays to help take up less space in the garbage Dumpster.
- To kick off milk carton recycling and lunch tray stacking, a brief video was broadcast throughout the school for three days. The video was produced by student council members Michelle Jones and Judy Brison with assistance from the Green Schools Program.



- Green team members passed out approximately 50 stickers to classrooms and workrooms that list what can and can't be recycled at school.
- Teacher Stephanie Wright and her third grade class created a video to educate students on how to pack a green lunch. The video focused on reusable products and was broadcast for several days before the green lunch kick off. Wright also sent an email to parents on how to pack green lunches for their children and listed two websites to provide further resources.
- During the green lunch kickoff, green team staff members recognized students who packed green lunches by giving them pencils made from recycled newspaper.
- Reusable dishware and silverware are used at all staff parties and meetings.
- The school website includes a green section that lists tips, resources and websites for the school community.
- Teacher Ann Grant created a Sharepoint survey that teachers and students took to rate themselves on their school conservation practices. The survey results were used to create conservation goals.
- During 2010-11, the school invited a guest speaker from the City of Bellevue to remind students about garbage, recycling and composting at lunchtime.
- By participating in a compostable tray pilot, the school kept an estimated 4,500 trays from the landfill each month.
- The school reduced garbage from 12 cubic yards per week to eight cubic yards per week.
- Teachers created a classroom worm bin to handle some waste and teach students about vermi-composting.
- The school's green team created a powerpoint, "garbage or composting," and showed it to students.
- To educate students and staff about what is and is not recyclable, the school signed up for a waste reduction and recycling assembly.
- Two fourth-grade classes participated in worm bin workshops.



Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- Many teachers assigned a student to turn off lights when the class leaves and to turn off lights in empty rooms while walking down the hall.
- In the 13 rooms in the school that do not have an automatic light sensor, a sign was placed near the light switch as a reminder to turn off the lights. The signs, printed on recycled paper, read: “If this is in sight...please turn off the lights.”
- Daily energy saving suggestions were publicized through smartboard presentations and intercom announcements.
- In 2010-11, Somerset reduced energy use by almost 10%, thanks to energy conservation practices and reduced district heating temperature requirements.
- Green team and PTSA worked together to start a walk to school program.
- They held an anti-idling campaign to encourage parents to turn off their car engines while waiting to pick up their children after school, passed out bumper stickers and brochures to parents as they picked up their children. Anti-idling signs were placed in the drop off/pick up area. An article about idling was written and published in the parent newsletter.
- Emails were sent to staff about alternative transportation options such as riding the bus, carpooling, walking and bicycling. Some staff members carpool to work each day. A bike rack is located on the school campus.

Water Conservation (Level Three)

- The school held the new City of Bellevue “poo-lution” workshop to teach students about water quality issues. Fourth-grade classes participated in Nature Vision’s healthy water systems and salmon workshops.
- Students learned where drinking water comes and completed activities related to water sources. The green team created monthly water conservation fun fact slides to be shown to all classes during morning announcement time.
- Students placed “turn water off” stickers by sinks throughout the school.