



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

Springbrook Elementary School

School district: Kent

School location: Kent

Began participating in the Green Schools Program: October 2009

Level One of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in June 2010

Level Two of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in May 2011

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Springbrook increased its recycling rate from 34% to 46%.
- To achieve this, the school improved classroom recycling and started to recycle empty cans, bottles, and milk cartons at lunch.
- Springbrook also piloted collection of food scraps and food-soiled paper to be transported to a regional composting facility. Buckets lined with newspapers were used in classrooms to collect food scraps, paper napkins, and paper towels.
- Staff placed recycling stickers from the Green Schools Program on all indoor recycling bins to show what can be recycled.
- A student Green Team with student representatives from each grade level was started. Student representatives share information with their classes about waste reduction, recycling, and composting, and why these actions are important.
- Teacher Linda Smethers used school Smartboards to create recycling sorting activities, Counselor Jami Kaurzlarich visited all classes to share lessons about waste reduction and recycling.
- Second- and third-grade students created electronic photo stories about environmental topics, and fourth- through sixth-grade students created 20-second commercials on the theme "It's my environment."
- Springbrook students participated in a technology fair to share information about conservation practices.



Students help collect food scraps to be recycled.



Student assists with school recycling efforts.



Student Green Team proudly displays Green Schools banner.



Teacher Welsh accepts the King County award in April 2011 on behalf of his student group, S.A.V.E., the Student Association of Vampire Elimination, for their efforts to reduce energy waste.



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- In 2010-11, staff and students increased the amount of food scraps diverted from the landfill. A pilot program for compost collection services was paid for by a grant from the Disney Planet Challenge.
- Springbrook reduced waste by placing paper reuse boxes in classrooms and offices, and collecting ink cartridges for recycling.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- Students posted signs from the Green Schools Program to encourage energy conservation, and shared energy conservation tips in announcements and posters.
- Students and staff reduced energy waste by turning off computers in classrooms and labs after using them.
- Teacher Shawn Welsh built a replica of the school equipped with solar panels, which the school hopes to install.
- Through its conservation efforts, Springbrook helped realize its goal of “Our students are good citizens and are working to make the school and community a better place.”

Awards

- In 2011 a group of fifth-grade students formed SAVE, Student Association of Vampire Elimination, to compete in the Disney Planet Challenge grant competition. The project was one of four projects honored in Washington State.
- SAVE students received a King County Earth Hero at School Award in April 2011.

Comment

“Springbrook students have stepped up and taken ownership and responsibility for a successful recycling program.” - **Gaynell T. Walker, principal**