



Tahoma School District

Began Participating in the Green Schools Program: October 2007

Level One Green School District: Achieved in May 2010

Level Two Green School District: Achieved in June 2012

Level Three Green School District: Achieved in June 2012

Sustaining Green School District: Achieved for

- 2017-18
- 2018-19
- 2019-20
- 2021-22
- 2022-23

2017-18 was the first year the program recognized districts at this program level



Dale Alekel, Green Schools Program manager (left), recognizing Mike Maryanski, Tahoma School District Superintendent (right), in 2012 for the district's sustainability achievements

Overview

- Each school had a staff Green Team leader and a student Green Team. The district paid a stipend to staff Green Team leaders. In 2021-22, student teams were restarted after disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- With leadership from Dawn Wakeley, executive director of teaching and learning, and McKinstry, the district's resource conservation manager, Green Team leaders met about every six weeks throughout the school year to share successes and challenges, and to plan district-wide conservation and education activities. The Green Schools Program manager participated in meetings to share information, answer questions, and make recommendations.
- Each school received assistance and resources from the Green Schools Program, and all schools have been recognized as Level One, Level Two, Level Three, and Sustaining Green Schools.
- The district enforced its conservation policies and procedures in all school facilities.



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

- Environmental education was integrated into curriculum across grade levels. Tools included field trips and use of school grounds for outdoor classrooms and gardens.
- All staff received information three times each year on how they can conserve energy and other resources, and custodians learned about conservation practices in trainings twice each year.
- All utility bills were monitored by McKinstry, and reported to school and district leaders through a performance dashboard and to the school board annually.

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Tahoma School District was the first district in King County to meet district Level One recognition criteria.
- All district schools have been recognized as Level One Green Schools for their waste reduction and recycling practices. Glacier Park Elementary was the first district school to participate in the program, leading the way for the other schools.
- All district schools set up collection of food scraps and other compostable materials, for transport to Cedar Grove Composting, the regional composting facility.
- Glacier Park Elementary, the first school in the district to add organics collection, increased its recycling rate from 10% to 68% by collecting recyclables such as paper, bottles, and cans, and by collecting organics such as food scraps.
- Durable trays were used in every school, and compostable cardboard trays were used only when necessary.
- Thanks to increased recycling and decreased garbage volumes, the district reduced its garbage disposal costs by 24% - a total of \$25,000 - when comparing September to April 2007-08 costs to September through April 2009-10 costs.
- The district reduced paper use due to its double-sided photocopying and printing policy, a fax machine that printed double-sided, and a voice mail system to send district-wide messages to families.





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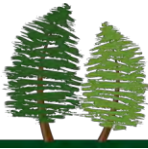
- To avoid food waste, prior to the end of the school year the district's food service team used up food that would otherwise become inedible over the summer or reach expiration dates before September.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- The district completed actions required to receive recognition as a Level Two Green School District.
- All district schools received recognition as Level Two King County Green Schools after completing required energy conservation actions.
- Students and staff learned why energy conservation is important, and became engaged in actions such as turning off lights in unoccupied spaces and turning off equipment after use.
- In 2018-19, McKinstry led a building operator tour of mechanical spaces in each school to share how building systems consume energy and water.
- Student teams were encouraged to form Power Patrols to help promote energy conservation actions in classrooms and throughout each school facility.
- District policies restricted use of personal space heats, refrigerators, and other appliances in classrooms and offices, and shut down HVAC (heating, cooling, air conditioning) equipment on weekends and whenever school facilities were closed.

Water Conservation (Level Three)

- The district met all Level Three Green School District criteria.
- All district schools were recognized as Level Three Green Schools.
- The district conserved water through water-efficient irrigation practices, planted drought-tolerant plants, and established rain gardens at several schools.
- Water was conserved thanks to faucets with motion sensors and water-efficient equipment such as high-efficiency pre-rinse spray heads in kitchen wash stations.
- The district had a system to regularly check for, report, and correct any water leaks.



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Sustaining Green School District recognition

To receive recognition as a Sustaining Green School District, the district sustained and built on its Level One through Three practices from fall 2017 through spring 2023.

- In 2018-19, in each school, McKinstry led a building operator tour of mechanical spaces to share how building systems use energy and water. Schools continued to use McKinstry's People Power Planet educational tools and activities to engage students and staff in taking steps each day to conserve resources. Student teams were encouraged to form Power Patrols to help promote energy conservation actions in classrooms and throughout each school.
- In 2021-22, the district rebalanced and optimized building HVAC systems to minimize energy use and improve indoor air quality.
- In 2022-23, after disruptions caused by Covid, the district made sure each school fully re-started student Green Teams and sustainability activities, including recycling in classrooms, offices, and cafeterias with support from custodial staff.
 - Elisabeth (Liz) White served as the district's Green Teams facilitator.
 - Student teams planned and hosted Earth Week activities in each school. Weekly district newsletters highlighted student Green Team activities.
 - McKinstry presented to custodial staff about recycling best practices and data from the monthly power, water, and waste billing.
 - Operations supervisor Sean Kelly emailed all staff prior to each school break period with reminders to unplug electrical equipment and prepare rooms for both safety and energy efficiency.
 - The district prepared to fully restart collection of organics in all schools in fall 2023.

Awards

- In 2015, Tahoma School District received a U.S. Green Ribbon District award from the U.S. Department of Education.
- In 2015, the district received a King County Green Globe award.



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- The district received a 2013 Green Leader District award from Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, based on criteria established by the U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School award program. The district was recognized for achievements in Pillar 1 (reduced environmental impact and costs) and Pillar 3 (effective environmental and sustainability education).
- In 2012, Tahoma High received a Washington State Green Leader School award.
- Tahoma High student Cort Hammond received a King County Earth Hero at School award in 2011.
- Tahoma High School Green Team won the President's Environmental Youth Award from Region 10 of the United States Environmental Protection Agency in 2010.
- In 2010, Glacier Park Elementary's head custodian, Connie Jo Erickson, and teacher Cathy Haws each received a King County Earth Hero at School award.
- The Cedar River Middle School Green Team received a King County Earth Hero at School award in 2010.
- The Glacier Park Elementary Green Team received a King County Earth Hero at School award in 2008.
- Glacier Park Elementary received a greenhouse and \$1,000 from the Washington State Potato Commission.