



The Overlake School

School location: Redmond

Began participating in the Green Schools Program:
September 2007

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

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

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

Sustaining Green School 2015-16: Achieved in May 2016

Sustaining Green School 2017-18: Achieved in April 2018

Sustaining Green School 2018-19: Achieved in May 2019

Sustaining Green School 2019-20: Achieved in December 2020

Student Green Team recognition: Received in June 2023



An Overlake student and three staff members accept 2008 King County Earth Hero at School award.

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- The Overlake School achieved and maintained a recycling rate of 41%.
- That rate was maintained through campus-wide recycling and food scrap collection.
- The school decreased copy paper purchases by 11% after switching to electronic format for publications and forms. Admissions application materials were made available online. Faculty meetings and orientations went paperless.
- Overlake Friends of the Arts (OFTA), the performing arts parent booster club, eliminated plastic water bottles in favor of compostable cups. For all arts performances, OFTA served refreshments in compostable serving-ware.
- In 2008-09, the school started Go Green Grant awards to fund green ideas initiated by faculty, staff, and students.



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

- The business office compiled monthly reports to monitor resource consumption, including paper use, recycling, electricity, natural gas, and water.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- Compact fluorescent light bulbs were provided to each staff member, along with a list of recommendations on how to conserve energy.
- Stickers were placed on light switches and equipment to encourage the Overlake community to turn off lights and equipment when they were not needed.
- The school Green Team completed a campus-wide audit of heating, lighting, and water consumption. The audit report recommended improvements which were adopted and included in short-term and long-term facilities plans. The first recommendation was to retrofit Field House lighting, with Puget Sound Energy rebates from the retrofit to be funneled back to the Go Green Grant fund.
- The Maintenance Department installed 26 LED exit lights using a Puget Sound Energy rebate program, resulting in electricity reduction of 75% per LED unit.
- In 2010-11, the Math/Science Building lighting retrofit was completed, qualifying for a significant rebate from Puget Sound Energy. Additionally, upgraded lighting fixtures were installed in the art barn, campus center and exterior paths.
- In 2010-11, electricity consumption was reduced by 14% and natural gas by 5%. Combined gas and electric bills decreased by 12%.
- In June 2010, the LEED certified Technology and Language Center opened featuring a green roof, solar panels, underground cistern, recycled insulation materials and other green technologies as well as educational signage and an interactive kiosk focused on energy savings.
- An electric car-charging station, donated by an Overlake parent, was installed.

Water Conservation (Level Three)

- Low-flow fixtures were installed in the Field House.
- The Maintenance Department installed 55 sink aerators, resulting in a per faucet water reduction from two gallons per minute to half a gallon per minute.
- A water control system was piloted in the new fifth/sixth-grade center.
- Water use decreased by 35%, resulting in a cost savings of 25%.



King County Green Schools Program

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Sustaining Green School recognition

Overlake sustained and built on its Level One waste reduction and recycling practices, Level Two energy conservation practices, and Level Three water conservation strategies. How the school accomplished this in each school year is detailed below.

Sustaining Green School 2015-16

- Earth-friendly actions were encouraged through reminders at school assemblies and signs posted near trash, recycling, and compost materials bins.
- The school installed on-site composting equipment to break down its food scraps on campus. The compost generated by the school was used in campus gardens.

Sustaining Green School 2017-18

- Environmental Science students performed a school waste audit to assess the quantities of garbage, recyclable materials, and compostable materials were generated during lunch.
- Eighth-grade students visited and collaborated with employees of Tesla/SpaceX to learn about renewable energy options.
- Students helped plant and maintain a new legacy garden which was used to educate the school community about local food, gardening, and conservation. Kitchen staff used produce grown in the garden to prepare healthy meals.
- The school collected rainwater in cisterns to help maintain a school garden.
- In 2017, LED bulbs, timers, and motion sensors were placed on light fixtures.

Sustaining Green School 2018-19

- At the start of the school year, the school held an assembly to educate the whole school, particularly incoming students, about conservation practices.
- Staff were responsible for turning off lights in the gym via a new software that sends an email when a light has been left on in the gym and then allows staff to turn off the lights remotely.



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- The facilities director researched and calculated the large quantity of rainwater runoff the school did not capture in its current cistern system. With this information, the school planned to add eight new rain barrels to its gardens in 2019.

Sustaining Green School 2019-20

- In September 2019, students shared announcements about recycling and composting practices with upper school students.
- Students conducted a transportation study to determine the total number of vehicles arriving at the school campus and the occupancy of those vehicles.
- At fall 2019 school community gatherings, the school shared information about divesting from fossil fuel investments.
- Money was raised at an annual school party to purchase solar panels.
- In March 2020, thermostats and HVAC systems were adjusted to reduce energy after school closures due to Covid-19. New HVAC controls were added across campus to increase efficiency.

Award

In April 2008, Overlake received a King County Earth Hero at School award.