



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

Washington Elementary School

School district: Auburn

School location: Auburn

Began participating in the Green Schools Program: September 2014

Level One of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in May 2015

Level Two of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in May 2016

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Washington Elementary achieved and maintained a 65% recycling rate by spring 2015.
- By spring 2016, the school's recycling rate further increased to 71%.
- Custodian Bernie Botz regularly trained students on how to sort their recyclable materials and garbage.
- Fourth- and fifth-grade students volunteered to monitor recycling stations during lunch.
- Students participated in a recycling education poster contest in which more than 100 posters were created and posted around the school. Six winners from primary grades and three winners from intermediate grades were recognized at an all-school assembly.
- At school lunches, the school reduced waste by using durable trays, durable utensils, and bulk condiment dispensers.



Student-created posters remind students about school conservation goals



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- The school developed ways to allow students in portables to participate in the collection of recyclable and compostable materials. Student Green Team members monitored sorting and brought the materials to a central location.
- In 2015-16, the school added a clothing reuse box to recycle unwanted textiles.
- Posters from poster contests were hung in the halls to remind students about waste reduction and recycling practices.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- Custodian Botz used a computer dashboard program to monitor classroom temperatures, water heater data, and other energy data daily.
- Student Green Team members helped ensure all electronics were turned off at the end of each day.
- Occupancy sensors were installed to turn off lights when the rooms were not in use.
- Principal Pauline Thomas communicated with students and staff frequently to emphasize important conservation practices at Washington Elementary School.



Student-created posters