



Food waste reduction at Westwood Elementary, Enumclaw School District

Education, student pledges, data collection, and district follow-up

The fifth-grade Green Team at Westwood Elementary School in Enumclaw School District conducted a food waste reduction education campaign. Green Team students presented food waste reduction tips during an all-school assembly, in morning announcements, in individual classrooms, and during both school lunch periods.

The Green Team students hung a large “help stop food waste” sign in the cafeteria, and asked students to sign a printed pledge created by King County Green Schools Program listing actions they can take to reduce food waste. The signed pledge was posted in the cafeteria as an ongoing visual reminder of student commitment.

Green Team students observed and tracked food waste in the school cafeteria during each lunch period and each month reported to the district’s Food Services Manager any school lunch items that were not eaten or only partially eaten. The school district shared that information with school kitchen employees so they could adapt the lunch menus to reduce food waste. One item students were not eating was bagged carrots that were slimy. The district looked into alternatives and decided to discontinue serving bagged carrots and instead to purchase loose carrots. This change reduced food waste.

Westwood Elementary School has been recognized by the King County Green Schools Program as a Sustaining Green School as well as a Level One (waste reduction and recycling), Level Two (energy conservation) and Level Three (water conservation) King County Green School.

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