



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

Academy Schools

School District: Private

School Location: Tukwila

Began participating in the Green Schools Program:
September 2009

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

Level Two of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in May 2012

Level Three of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in May 2014

Sustaining Green School 2015-16:
Achieved in May 2016



Water cistern to capture runoff from school roof.

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- To reduce the amount of food waste in its lunchroom, Academy Schools started a policy in 2010 to send home all uneaten food. This practice both encouraged students to eat the lunches packed by their parents and educated parents about what their children were eating at school.
- The school used durable utensils in the lunchroom.
- During 2009-10, students made phone calls to eliminate unwanted subscriptions.
- Reuse containers for paper used only on one side were placed in all classrooms. Teachers and students used one-sided paper whenever possible.
- The school increased its recycling rate from 23 percent in 2009 to 73 percent in 2014.
- The school switched from having students and teachers taking recyclable materials home to putting them in household recycling bins and contracting with a recycling collection service.
- The school placed stickers listing what can and can't be recycled on its recycling containers.



- In 2012, the school began to contract with an organics collection service. Prior to that time, fifty gallons of organic materials per month were taken home by staff and parents for backyard composting or household yard waste collection.
- Lunchroom monitors educated students by emphasizing both school and home recycling information.
- Upper School students emptied trash and recycling bins. They learned first-hand about recycling and were excellent advocates who encouraged younger students to improve their classroom recycling practices.
- In 2013, students participated in King County Green Team worm bin and food composting workshops.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- The Environmental Issues class focused on energy conservation. Students calculated their personal carbon footprints and learned about ways to reduce their impact.
- Academy Schools saved money on energy bills by reducing its average monthly energy use by 12 percent during 2011-12.
- Students posted signs near light switches and electric equipment to encourage students and staff to turn them off when not in use.
- Staff and students made use of daylight to reduce the need for central lighting.
- Occupancy sensors and fluorescent bulbs and tubes helped the school conserve energy.
- The custodian regularly ensured that proper weekend and holiday shut-down procedures were followed and performed regular maintenance and cleaning of the school's equipment to keep it functioning efficiently.

Water Conservation and Pollution Prevention (Level Three)

- The school created a garden and restoration area with native trees and plants.
- High school students conducted water quality experiments at a local stream.
- School curriculum discussed water sources and how water is globally.
- Low-flow toilets were installed in the school's bathrooms.



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- To conserve water, Academy Schools partnered with Cascade Water Alliance to install a cistern and faucet aerators.
- Staff conserved water by turning off faucets when washing dishes in the school kitchen.
- The facility property owner inspected the sprinkler system each spring.

Sustaining Green School 2015-16

- Academy Schools maintained and built on its Level One waste reduction and recycling practices, Level Two energy conservation practices, and Level Three water conservation strategies.
- The school reached a recycling rate of 79 percent.
- The school introduced a Captain Academy character complete with a cape, to remind fellow students and staff of the waste reduction and recycling practices at the school. Students took turns with this job so each student got a turn to be Captain Academy at least once per year.
- The school collected all yard waste from the school grounds and composted it in an on-site compost bin.
- With the help of Cascade Water Alliance, the school built a water cistern to capture runoff from the school's roof.
- The school planted a rain garden at the bottom of a hill on the school grounds to help filter and reduce storm water runoff.
- Each grade in the school participated in curriculum focused on water conservation and storm water management, and all students received a water education workshop from Nature Vision, a nonprofit environmental education organization.

For more information about the school's conservation achievements and participation in the Green Schools Program, contact:

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