



Alpac Elementary School

School District: Auburn

School Location: Pacific

Began participating in the Green Schools Program: September 2017

Level One of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in May 2017

Level Two of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in May 2018

Level Three of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in May 2019

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Alpac Elementary School maintained a recycling rate of 59 percent.
- The school established a student Green Team made up of 12 volunteers who helped collect recyclable materials around the school.
- A partnership with City of Auburn and UW Livable City Year Program, with assistance from King County Green Schools Program, led to a cafeteria waste audit in March 2017. The audit provided data about the potential for unopened, packaged foods from the school lunch program to be donated to community members experiencing hunger instead of disposed, and led to recommendations about collecting recyclable materials in each classroom where students ate lunch and for improving education about waste reduction and recycling.
- Teachers and custodians helped train students about what belongs in recycling and waste bins. Teachers worked with student helpers to assist other students to sort their lunch materials.
- Weekly morning announcements included tips and fun facts about the 4R's (reduce, reuse, recycle, and rethink).



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

- To reduce food waste, Alpac Elementary set up a food share table where students could place unwanted, unopened packaged foods for other students to take.
- To reduce paper use, administrators and teachers used the school website and text alerts to communicate with parents.
- Custodians monitored waste collection to reduce contamination in recycling bins.
- To reduce paper waste, reusable badges and hall passes were used.
- Students received star tickets -- “caught ‘ya doing something good” -- when they brought a waste-free lunch.
- To reduce single-use plastic bottles, the school encouraged students to bring reusable water bottles and to use the water filling station.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- “Turn off Lights” and “Turn off Equipment” signs were placed in all classrooms to remind students and staff to turn them off when not in use.
- The Green Team formed an “Energy Conservation Patrol” which helped ensure that all lights and equipment were turned off when not in use.
- Regular monthly announcements included energy conservation tips and facts.
- Teachers incorporated energy conservation themes into classroom assignments and activities.
- Teachers turned off lights in unoccupied spaces and used daylight instead of electric lights whenever possible.
- All incandescent lights were replaced with fluorescent or LED bulbs.
- School administrators encouraged students and employees to dress appropriately for the weather rather than adjust thermostats.



Water Conservation and Pollution Prevention (Level Three)

- In November 2018, all fifth-grade classrooms learned about stormwater pollution prevention from a City of Auburn guest speaker.
- Second-grade students learned about the water cycle, local sources of drinking water, and watersheds as part of the curriculum.
- Water conservation facts and tips were posted near faucets in classrooms, restrooms, kitchen, and staff lounge. Water conservation reminders about turning off water while soaping hands were placed in classrooms, restrooms, and kitchens.
- The school worked with the nonprofit organization Futurewise to plant native, drought-resistant plants on school grounds to help filter pollutants from soil and thus protect the watershed from stormwater pollution.
- In March 2019, several classrooms read, signed, and displayed water conservation pledges. Teachers monitored water use in classrooms and encouraged students to reduce water use when washing equipment.
- In newsletters and emails, the school shared water conservation facts and tips with teachers and parents.
- The custodian turned off hot water and circulation pumps during school breaks.
- Assistant principal Tonni Best used email to share with all employees about Green Schools Program participation and goals, as well as examples of how staff can encourage sustainable practices.



Water conservation signs remind students and employees to conserve water.