



Cougar Ridge Elementary School

School District: Issaquah

School Location: Bellevue

Began participating in the Green Schools Program: September 2010

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 2019

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Cougar Ridge maintained a 45 percent recycling rate.
- Third and fourth grade students trained other students about waste reduction, recycling, composting and reusing materials.
- Six teachers and 64 students were involved in leading Green Schools activities at Cougar Ridge.
- In 2011-12, the school created reusable passes for volunteers, bathroom, health room, and office. At the end of the school year, teachers offer supplies and decorations they no longer need to the rest of the staff before tossing them.
- Art classes focused on reusing materials to create something new and the second-grade music classes incorporated conservation themes into their music choices.
- In 2010-11, with support from the City of Issaquah, Cougar Ridge set up a food scrap collection program in its lunchroom. Student volunteers helped monitor lunchroom recycling and compostable materials containers for two weeks after kick-off.
- During 2011-12, the school continued this program in which food scraps and other compostable materials are collected and brought to a composting facility.



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Success Story

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- The Cougar Ridge Green Team performed a skit about correct sorting of recyclable and compostable items that was seen by all students during their lunch period. During the presentation, students had a chance to practice sorting recyclable and compostable materials from waste materials.
- Posters about recycling and composting were made by students and hung in hallways and the lunchroom.
- Students were encouraged to take only what they can eat and to eat what they take. As a result, less food was wasted.
- Recycling stickers were placed on all recycling containers. Students emptied classroom recycling bins into larger containers, which the custodian emptied into the outdoor recycling container.
- Cougar Ridge recycled printer cartridges and plastic bags in its staff area.
- To reduce paper use, the newsletter was sent via email and many classrooms collect paper that's only been used on one side and offer it to students for notes and projects.
- In 2018-2019, the school began to collect paper towels in restrooms to be transported to Cedar Grove Composting facility. They received yellow containers labeled with "paper towel only" from Cedar Grove and educated students and staff on this project.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- Student Green Team members placed stickers next to each light switch reminding students and staff to conserve energy by turning off the lights when not in the room.
- Student Green Team members calculated their carbon footprint and compared it with the average individual's carbon footprint in the United States and worldwide. They shared this information with their classmates and families.
- Student Green Team members and the school PE teacher started Walk-to-School Thursdays, where students were encouraged to walk or ride their bike to school every Thursday from April through the end of the school year. Green team



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members counted the number of cars coming to the school each Thursday and reported the information to students to try to reduce the number of cars driven.

- Tips about energy conservation and waste reduction were included in the parent newsletter.
- Weekly conservation tips were shared with students over the morning announcements.
- Many classrooms participated in lessons and activities about conservation in observance of Earth Day 2012.
- Math classes conducted surveys to determine how much energy students consume by using televisions, computers and other electronics.
- Issaquah School District's contract with its vending machine company required that the machine's display lights are permanently shut off.
- Problems with heating and cooling systems were reported to district staff and corrected by the district.

Water Conservation and Pollution Prevention (Level Three)

- Each Friday the music teacher and fifth-grade students read the weekly water conservation tips in Cougar Ridge News and parents received digital links to those tips.
- Third-grade classes received the City of Bellevue Climate Change classroom workshops.
- The third-grade curriculum included the water cycle and healthy streams for salmon.
 - Students designed and created a model community within a watershed to gain understanding of the systemic nature of watersheds.
 - Students predicted the consequences of human activities on a watershed and on salmon populations.
 - Students investigated the effects of water deposition on landforms in a watershed.



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- Students listed the possible activities they can take individually and as a group to preserve and support salmon populations at various stages of their life cycles.
- The City of Bellevue presented to fifth-grade classes on household hazardous waste and safer alternatives.
- A parent volunteer presented to students on climate change and water conservation.
- The school installed automatic shut-off faucets and displayed signs by all faucets to remind students and staff members to turn off the water while soaping hands.