



## **Green Gables Elementary School**

**School District:** Federal Way

**School Location:** Federal Way

**Began participating in the Green Schools Program:** March 2009

**Level One of the Green Schools Program:** Achieved in April 2010

**Level Two of the Green Schools Program:** Achieved in May 2011

**Level Three of the Green Schools Program:** Achieved in May 2016

**Sustaining Green School 2016-17:** Achieved in May 2017

**Sustaining Green School 2017-18:** Achieved in May 2018

### **Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)**

- Green Gables Elementary School maintained a 54 percent recycling rate.
- At the beginning of the school year, the school had a King County's Going Green Together assembly to teach students about the importance of recycling and how to do it properly. Four classes participated in King County's "Garbology" and "Rethink and Reuse" WRR workshops.
- The school started to collect food scraps in the lunchroom and classrooms, for transport to a regional composting facility.
- Educational and outreach efforts included staff meeting presentations, classroom presentations on the 4 R's - Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rethink - and a weekly litter patrol.
- The student Green Team created classroom certificates to recognize classes that did a good job recycling. The team also created posters and videos to promote waste-free Wednesdays, recycling, and composting.
- Recycling bins, including food scrap containers, were set up during parent nights and other family events.
- Student volunteers monitored lunchroom waste stations to help students properly sort their garbage and their compostable and recyclable materials.



# *Success Story*

*Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink*

---

- Recycling bins were placed in the lunchroom for milk cartons, juice boxes, plastic bottles and aluminum cans, and stickers listing what can and can't be recycled were placed on all recycling containers.
- Newsletters were sent electronically to reduce paper use.
- Students created and posted signs in the bathrooms encouraging students to use only one paper towel to dry their hands.
- All new staff members were educated about waste reduction and recycling programs and policies at Green Gables.
- Every year, students create a multi-media Earth Day assembly which includes drama, dance, music and information about environmental issues and how each student can become an earth steward.

## **Energy Conservation (Level Two)**

- The Green Team created posters about how to reduce energy use and placed them throughout the school.
- Each classroom conducted an energy audit. The Green Team compiled the results and shared them with students.
- Students shared daily conservation tips with all students and staff members via morning announcements.
- Green Team members participated in an energy reduction workshop through the King County Green Team program.
- Students created an energy conservation game to support the school goal of reducing energy use.
- The Green Team wrote and performed a play titled "The Energy Vampire Strikes Back" that highlights how recycling reduces energy and how to reduce energy at school.

## **Water Conservation and Pollution Prevention (Level Three)**

- Students tested the water flow rate of school faucets and reported findings to staff members.
- The school held a school-wide water conservation poster contest.



King County Green Schools Program

# *Success Story*

*Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink*

---

- Fifth-grade students went to Island Wood, an outdoor education center on Bainbridge Island, and learned about watersheds, water conservation, and pollution prevention.
- Mrs. Konrad's classes participated in the Storming the Sound with Salmon curriculum which educated students on how to protect their local watershed.
- The school maintained a vegetable garden that used drip irrigation.
- The school partnered with City of Federal Way to install a rain garden with a variety of flowers, shrubs, and grasses that "don't mind getting their feet wet" to soak up excess water from impervious surfaces. This helps prevent pollution from entering the local water ways, recharges the aquifer, and attracts birds, butterflies, and bees.
- Green Team members educated their classes and ensured water conservation checklists were being completed.

## **Sustaining Green School recognition**

- The school sustained and built on its Level One waste reduction and recycling practices, Level Two energy conservation practices, and Level Three water conservation strategies. How the school did this each year is described below.

## **Sustaining Green School 2016-2017**

- The Green Team shared green tips every morning during announcements and in the school newsletter.
- New checklists were put up on the doors of every classroom to remind students to conserve water and energy.

## **Sustaining Green School 2017-2018**

- Students were assigned to make sure computer carts were turned off at the end of each day.
- The Green Team planted a new native plant garden with a water efficient sprinkler system.



King County Green Schools Program

# *Success Story*

*Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink*

---

## **Awards**

- Teacher Karen Konrad received a King County Earth Hero at School award in April 2010.
- Students Sun Hong and Alexis Lolley received a 2016 King County Earth Heroes at School award.

## **A Leader in the District**

- Green Gables was the first Federal Way Public School to recycle food scraps. The school's success was a model for the district.
- Green Gables was the first school in the district to establish an organic garden. Garden features included six internal raised beds, a wheelchair accessible bed surrounding the perimeter, drip lines, a sink, and an open air compost bin. The garden was an integral part of the school's curriculum and community outreach efforts.

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

Karen Konrad, teacher  
[kkonrad@fwps.org](mailto:kkonrad@fwps.org)