

Olympic Middle School

School District: Auburn

School Location: Auburn

Began participating in the Green Schools Program:
September 2011

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

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

Level Three of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in May 2015

Sustaining Green School 2017-18:
Achieved in May 2018

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Olympic Middle School maintained a recycling rate of 60 percent as a result of collecting recyclable materials in classrooms, offices, and hallways, and collecting compostable materials in the lunchroom.
- With assistance from the district resource conservation manager, the school began to use durable silverware and trays and to collect food scraps and other compostable materials to be composted at a local composting facility.
- Students monitored lunchroom recycling stations and assisted other students with placing items in the correct waste containers.
- To promote recycling, students conducted outreach and education projects, including classroom presentations, lunchroom posters, and PA announcements.



Student lunchroom monitors and clear signs lead to a successful recycling program.



Student lunchroom monitors assist other students to properly sort waste.



Teacher Laine Lenihan, Auburn School District resource conservation manager Scott Weide, and City of Auburn representatives Kathleen Edman and Kim Ducote receive award in 2014.



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

- A King County representative provided a recycling presentation and trivia game at the school-wide composting kick off.
- The Green Team received Green Schools training to educate members about waste reduction and recycling practices.
- Collection of compostables expanded to the staff lounge and Native American program.
- The school placed recycling stickers listing what can and can't be recycled on recycling containers throughout the school, and included recycling tips and information in online school newsletters.
- Classroom teachers were encouraged to make double-sided copies and to create monthly paper-free lessons.
- Classrooms created G.O.O.S. (Good on One Side) boxes to collect paper used on one side, allowing students and staff to use paper more efficiently.
- Bottle cap and lid collection boxes were placed in each classroom to reduce the amount of contamination in recycling bins. Students created mosaics with the collected caps and lids.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- Energy conservation signs were posted on all light switches and electronics to remind staff and students to turn them off when not in use.
- Green Team members created recycling and energy conservation kits for each classroom to educate the entire school about conservation actions.
- Students signed a poster pledging to conserve energy.
- Energy monitoring checklists were displayed in each classroom to remind staff members of various ways to conserve energy.
- Students designed and displayed energy fact posters throughout the school, and energy facts, reminders, and tips were promoted during morning announcements.

Water Conservation and Pollution Prevention (Level Three)

- Students planted and maintained a native plant garden with drought tolerant plants.



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- Signs were placed by school faucets to remind students to turn off the faucet while soaping hands.
- Water conservation facts and tips were shared in a parent and student newsletter, on the school website, and in morning PA announcements.
- Eighth-grade students completed an Earth and Human curriculum unit that included information on climate change, sustainability, and energy and water conservation. All students learned about monitoring and minimizing their impact on Earth.
- During Water Week, students created water conservation posters in computer classes and posted them around the school, signed a water conservation pledge, watched videos about storm water in teacher Laine Lenihan's class, and completed a water survey for math class that was linked to the school website so that students could see live results.
- Olympic Middle School's ground technicians regularly tested the irrigation system for leaks and read the irrigation meter weekly. The grounds lead, supervisor, and resource conservation manager met weekly to review irrigation data.
- To reduce water pollution caused by toxins in cleaning supplies, Auburn School District purchased Sustainable Earth cleaning products.

Sustaining Green School 2017-18

- Olympic Middle School sustained and built on its Level One waste reduction and recycling practices, Level Two energy conservation practices, and Level Three water conservation strategies.
- Eighth-grader students led a campaign to teach the school community about toxic products and how to avoid using them. Students made posters, wrote announcements, and presented to classes about toxic products, their environmental effects, and easy "Do it yourself" alternatives.
- Seventh-grade students completed a class project on food waste and disposable product reduction.



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Awards

- Laine Lenihan, teacher, received a King County Earth Heroes at School award in 2014.

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

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