Cascade Ridge Elementary School

School District: Issaquah

School Location: Sammamish

Began participating in the Green Schools Program: 2006–07

Level One of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in December 2009

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

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)

- Cascade Ridge Elementary School maintained a recycling rate of 50 percent.
- The school collected compostable materials in the lunchroom and classrooms.
- To encourage proper sorting, students decorated lids and made signs with recycling instructions.
- The school promoted recycling and composting at school-wide and PTA-sponsored events. Recycling and composting bins were placed at the annual Walk-A-Thon, Field Day, and other events.
- School staff promoted waste-free Wednesdays in the school cafeteria.
- To reduce paper use, Cascade Ridge switched to e-newsletters and fliers instead of paper copies.
- “Good on one side” paper bins were placed in the staff workroom and the collected paper was used to make scratch pads.
- During Earth Week, parent volunteers held an annual waste reduction book swap event. The school partnered with a Girl Scout troop which made an Earth Week book swap poster for the school cafeteria.
- Students placed stickers provided by the King County Green Schools Program listing what can and can’t be recycled on recycling bins throughout the school.
- Along with all schools in the district, Cascade Ridge’s lunchroom eliminated the use of straws and used compostable paper trays in place of polystyrene trays.
- Issaquah School District provided a recycling container next to garbage bins at school entrances to increase recycling practices from families and visitors.
- The school received the King County elementary school assembly and follow-up classroom workshops about waste reduction and recycling.
- In 2016 and 2017, after receiving training from the King County Green Schools Program, student waste watchers assisted other students to sort in the cafeteria.
- Staff members received regular reminders about waste reduction and recycling, as well as a presentation by the King County Green Schools Program in January 2017 emphasizing waste reduction and recycling practices.
- In recognition of Earth Week, the school focused on a different conservation topic each day, including waste reduction and recycling.
- Lead custodian Shawna Carrigan replaced school paper towel and toilet paper rolls when completely empty rather than when they are low and saved the empty rolls in a box for first grade classes to use in art projects. This action significantly cut down on paper product orders and partial rolls going unused.
- The school recycled items not accepted in its regular recycling collection program through TerraCycle, a company that uses a variety of materials to make new products. The school recycled 2,862 apple sauce pouches and more than 18,000 drink pouches which are made of plastic with an aluminum lining.
Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- Energy conservation signs were posted on light switches and electronics to remind staff and students to turn them off when not in use.
- Teachers incorporated energy conservation methods into fifth-grade curriculum.
- The school’s vending machine lights were permanently turned off.
- A leadership team shared the school’s energy usage with the school community and staff members.
- Staff and students were encouraged to dress appropriately for the weather rather than adjusting the thermostat settings.
- Energy conservation tips were promoted in the school’s electronic newsletter.
- To reduce energy use, projectors were set on Eco Mode.
- The school tracked energy use hours for classroom projector light bulbs. Staff members were contacted if their use was over the typical monthly amount.
- Cascade Ridge realized a steady decrease in overall energy use from 2010 to 2014.
- The Dean of Students promoted carpooling to reduce parking lot congestion, reduce use of fossil fuels, and improve air quality.

Water Conservation and Pollution Prevention (Level Three)

- Green Team students created water conservation and pollution prevention posters and asked students and staff members to pledge to protect water.
- Third-grade classes participated in City of Sammamish Healthy Watershed, Healthy World classroom workshops which focused on storm water pollution prevention and protecting local Kokanee Salmon.
- Third-grade classes participated in and won the City of Sammamish 2015 Kokanee Classroom Challenge. Students took home action sheets, noted each time they took a specific action to protect storm water within a two week period, and parents signed the completed action sheets. The students completed the School staff promoted Waste Free Wednesdays in the school cafeteria.
- Staff members submitted work orders to district maintenance personnel when they observed water fixture leaks.
During Earth Week, parent volunteers held an annual waste reduction book swap event. The school partnered with a Girl Scout troop which made an Earth Week book swap poster for the school cafeteria.

Water conservation signs were posted next to school faucets to remind students to turn off the water when not in use.

Students tested water faucet flows and shared the results along with water conservation tips on the school’s Green Team web page.

The school switched to new foaming soap dispensers that limits the amount of soap released with each pump and water needed to rinse off hands.

To prevent water pollution, the school’s Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) sold Brown Bear commercial car wash tickets rather than holding a charity car wash.

Sustaining Green School recognition

Cascade Ridge 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 built on its Level One through Three achievements each year is described below.

Sustaining Green School 2016-17

The school partnered with the after-school Coyote Club to reduce waste and properly sort waste during after-school care.

The Coyote Club began using compostable serving ware for snacks.

Student Green Team Waste Watchers monitored waste stations and helped other students sort waste properly after school.

Sustaining Green School 2017-18

Cascade Ridge replaced all disposable utensils in the cafeteria with durable utensils.
For more information about this school’s conservation achievements and participation in the Green Schools Program, contact:

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