



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

Clark Elementary School

School District: Issaquah

School Location: Issaquah

Began Participating in the Green Schools Program:
October 2009

Level One of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in May 2010

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

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

Sustaining Green School 2017-18:
Achieved in April 2018



Art docents worked with students to create art and projects from natural or repurposed materials, such as creating new guitar picks out of used plastic gift cards.

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Clark Elementary increased its recycling rate to 74 percent thanks to a school-wide program collecting recyclable materials in classrooms and offices, and both recyclable and compostable materials in the lunchroom.
- Green Team students monitored lunchroom recycling, composting, and garbage bins daily to ensure proper sorting.
- Students created a video demonstrating which materials should be recycled and composted. The video was shown in classrooms school-wide.
- A classroom recycling competition encouraged proper sorting with no contamination in recycling bins. Winning classes made the Green Class of the Week list announced each Friday.
- Throughout the school year, in lunchroom and classroom announcements, Clark Elementary promoted recycling practices as well as waste-free lunches.
- During waste-free Wednesdays, students generating the least amount of garbage at each lunch table were recognized.
- Clark Elementary participated in the waste-free Wednesday annual competition.



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- The school reduced paper use by 90 percent by switching to electronic newsletters and fliers.
- The school, along with all schools in the Issaquah School District, eliminated the use of straws during lunch.
- A video about litter and pollution prevention was shown in homeroom classes and during lunches.
- The school began collecting compostable materials during staff meetings and switched to using unlined compostable paper plates.
- Sixth-grade classes received the King County Biospheres and Food for Thought classroom workshops.
- A student Trashion Show was part of the annual school variety show.
- In fall 2016, the Student Earth Service Corps presented an environmentally themed film series after school on rainy days and eco-themed trivia games during lunches. The students recruited new students with posters, a Power Point, and eco-themed trivia during lunches.
- Staff members ensured all waste containers in classrooms, offices, kitchens and cafeterias are color-coded, paired, and signed.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- Energy conservation signs were posted on light switches and computers to remind staff and students to turn them off when not in use.
- School employees were instructed to keep windows and doors shut and to turn off lights when leaving rooms.
- Staff and students were encouraged to dress appropriately for the weather rather than adjusting the thermostat settings.
- Student Green Team members served as Green Team Fairies to spot check classrooms for energy conservation practices. Weekly awards were given to classes who consistently conserved energy in their classrooms.
- The school's vending machine lights were permanently turned off.
- The school communicated its energy conservation efforts through weekly announcements.



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- Fifth-grade students participated in Wheat Week, a series of five one-hour lessons delivered over the course of one week to educate students about water, soil, watersheds, energy, systems, wheat, and how they impact our lives.
- Science Tech students made posters about energy conservation and hung them throughout the school.

Water Conservation and Pollution Prevention (Level Three)

- Water conservation signs were placed near faucets to encourage less water use.
- Science Tech classes worked with the organization Mountains to Sound Greenway on water stewardship projects.
- About 50 science/technology students tested water from Issaquah Creek through the school's Mountains to Sound partnership.
- Wheat Week speakers presented to fifth-grade classes and covered topics that included water conservation, watersheds, erosion, global water availability, and water use.
- Fourth-grade classes included water conservation and pollution prevention topics in their curriculum.
- Clark Elementary created a Water Ecology week in which water ecology lessons were presented each day during student library sessions.
- The school worked with the City of Issaquah on a School Pool Project to reduce emissions and increase walking, biking, and carpooling to and from school.

Sustaining Green School 2017-18

- Clark Elementary sustained its Level One waste reduction and recycling practices, Level Two energy conservation practices, and Level Three water conservation strategies.
- The school held a book swap to encourage the reuse of old books.
- Art docents led student art projects that used unwanted and recyclable materials. Guitar pics were created using old credit cards, scrap metal was used to create figurines, and art scenes were created using natural materials such as leaves and pine cones.



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

Tracy Guillen, librarian

GuillenT@issaquah.wednet.edu

Dawn Wallace, Issaquah School District director of teaching and learning services

WallaceD@issaquah.wednet.edu

Chris Bruno, Issaquah School District resource conservation manager

BrunoC@issaquah.wednet.edu