McMicken Heights Elementary School

School District: Highline
School Location: SeaTac
Began participating in Green Schools Program: March 2012
Level One of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in May 2013
Level Two of the Green Schools Program: Achieved in May 2019

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- McMicken Heights Elementary School achieved a 47 percent recycling rate.
- At the beginning of the school year, students learned about school expectations including proper recycling in the lunch room and classrooms.
- Students promoted recycling at school using announcements, posters, and an all-school assembly presentation.
- McMicken Heights received a King County waste reduction and recycling assembly during fall 2012. The fourth-grade students learned about landfills and making earth-smart choices during classroom workshops.
- To reduce paper use, a copy limit was established, and staff made double-sided copies. In January 2019, teacher Jennifer Walsh set up a G.O.O.S (Good on One Side) paper box in the staff workroom.
The garden club, which grows pesticide-free organic plants, composted the garden waste on-site.

Teachers and students collected used markers to be recycled through the Crayola ColorCycle program.

During 2018-19, the student council made announcements at an all-school assembly and over the PA program to reinforce waste reduction and recycling practices.

Staff members received reminders and tips about waste reduction and recycling via email and daily bulletins.

Throughout 2018-19, Ecowarriors helped with proper sorting in the classroom and monitored waste stations for contamination.

Kindergarten students cleaned up litter on school grounds and wrote a letter to parents about recycling right and reducing contamination.

In 2018-19, third-grade students wrote and presented persuasive speeches on how and why to reduce ocean plastic pollution by limiting the use of single-use plastics.

Teachers encouraged students to bring reusable water bottles and maintained a shared storage space for reusing classroom decorations, posters, and supplies.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

In spring 2019, teacher Jennifer Walsh sent out an announcement about the school’s energy conservation goals with reminders about how to conserve energy during school breaks.

The student Ecowarriors group conducted presentations in classrooms and energy audits throughout the school year to encourage energy conservation practices.

To promote energy conservation, during Earth week 2019, students and staff members were encouraged to sign the school’s conservation pledge located in the main hallway.

Third-grade students participated in Brain Pop Junior (a website that creates online animated curriculum-based content that is aligned to state education standards).
and watched YouTube videos about energy use, energy conservation, and climate change.

- Signs were displayed next to automatic light switches to encourage students and staff to manually turn off the lights when not in use.
- Teachers assigned a student “light watcher” role in each classroom to help promote energy conservation practices.
- The school building was designed to take advantage of daylight to reduce the need for electricity. Permanent signs were displayed to explain how access to natural light part of energy conservation at McMicken Heights is.
- Vending machine display lights were permanently turned off in the staff lounge.
- Custodians shut down all lights and electronic equipment before weekends and school breaks.