



## **Stillwater Elementary School**

**School district:** Riverview

**School location:** Carnation

**Began participating in Green Schools Program:** May 2012

**Level One of the Green Schools Program:** Achieved in May 2013

**Level Two of the Green Schools Program:** Achieved in June 2020

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

- The school has maintained a recycling rate of 50 percent.
- Through announcements and parent newsletters, the school regularly promoted waste reduction and recycling practices.
- In 2013, in a display case near its main office, Stillwater exhibited information about being a Green School and tips on how to recycle and compost.
- In 2012, students measured the amount of compostable materials discarded after lunch. Each lunch period averaged 15 pounds of food waste and food soiled paper. As a result of this compostable materials audit, the school installed a BioStack worm composting system in the school garden to collect lunchtime compostable materials. The Garden Club used the finished compost in the school's garden.
- Second-grade students learned about decomposition during King County classroom workshops in 2012, and they helped to monitor the Bio-Stack worm composting system.
- In 2012-13, parent volunteers trained ASB students to assist their peers to sort recyclable and compostable materials in the lunchroom.
- Bulk dispensers and durable lunch trays and utensils reduced waste in the lunchroom.
- A food share table in the lunchroom for unopened packaged food items decreased food waste.



King County Green Schools Program

# Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

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- Custodians Mike Nelson and Rick Bouloumpas supported the school's waste reduction and recycling efforts by emptying hallway recycling bins, monitoring outdoor collection containers, and repurposing furniture and materials for reuse.
- In April 2013, third-grade students collected recyclable materials to create outfits and sculptures featured in a school Trash-ion show.
- Science classes incorporated waste reduction and recycling lessons. Many materials in the science room were repurposed and reused.
- To reduce paper use, staff bulletins, parent newsletters, calendars, and other announcements were sent electronically.
- Office staff members printed double-sided copies.
- In 2011-12, recyclable paper collected by custodians decreased from five bags to two bags per day after the school shared messages about reducing paper use.
- In November 2018, the student Green Team and parent volunteers held a Green Week celebration to introduce new lunchroom waste reduction practices. Students participated in a recycling relay, trivia games, and a Trashion show (featuring fashions made from unwanted items) during Green Week.
- Starting November 2018, students began sorting milk cartons to be recycled and collecting food scraps to be donated to a local pig farmer.
- In Fall 2018, Green Team students planned a milk carton recycling kick-off assembly in which students engaged in a recycling relay, trivia games, and a "Trash-ion" show.
- Throughout 2018-19, Green Team students and parents conducted waste audits to measure and track the amount of garbage, recyclable materials, and food scraps the school generated. By June 2019, students and parents estimated that 81 percent of lunchroom waste was being diverted from the landfill thanks to reducing food waste and recycling milk cartons.
- In Spring 2019, Green Team students and parent volunteers installed a school garden to grow fruits and vegetables. These healthy foods were incorporated into school lunches. By the end of the school year, the garden was producing six



pounds of leafy greens each week, allowing the school to replace bagged lettuce with school-grown greens.

- In April 2019, students participated in a waste-free lunch competition. Information on how to pack a waste-free lunch was shared via announcements and the school newsletter. Students were encouraged to pack a waste-free lunch every day for a week, and the lunch period that generated the least waste at the end of the week won a prize.
- In September 2019, staff replaced disposable, plastic utensils with durable, reusable utensils. To reduce utensil sorting time, only spoons were used for breakfast and only forks were used for lunch. Students volunteers reminded others to stack their trays and place reusable utensils in a collection bin during each lunch period.
- In fall 2019, lunch staff and principal reminded students of the school's waste reduction and recycling practices.
- Students volunteers called Waste Detectives helped their peers to correctly sort waste at the cafeteria waste station.
- Kitchen employees monitored a food share table and encouraged students to place unopened food items in the share bin to reduce food waste.
- Parent volunteer Roslyn Reeps created several reusable school party kits that included reusable serving ware to be used for school parties and other school events.
- At staff meetings, the school principal reminded staff members to reuse supplies whenever possible.

## Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- Green Team students posted signs near light switches throughout the school to encourage students and staff members to turn off lights in unoccupied spaces. They also made energy conservation signs from reusable materials for the common areas.
- Green Team students conducted multiple energy audits in classrooms, and then shared their audit notes and energy conservation tips with teachers.



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- In October 2019, principal Jack Madigan sent the King County energy conservation pledge to all teachers via email and encouraged them to complete the pledge with their classes.
- In November 2019, head custodian Todd Russel signed a custodial energy conservation pledge which included actions such as checking vents regularly for obstructions, turning off lights and appliances at the end of the day, and shutting down unused electronics during long weekends and extended school breaks.
- Green Team students delivered a presentation in home classrooms to encourage students to conserve energy. At a staff meeting, the students conducted a presentation about the school's energy use and energy conservation practices. A follow-up letter with energy conservation tips and reminders to use daylighting when possible was sent to staff members.
- Green Team students designed an energy conservation game, similar to the board game Candyland, for other students to play during recess and lunchtime.
- In January 2020, a Puget Sound Energy representative shared information about energy sources, renewable energy, and energy conservation practices at a Green Team meeting.
- All after-hours activities were consolidated into the all-purpose gym and cafeteria.
- The school replaced gym and parking lot lights with LED energy-saving lights, and purchased an Energy Star washer and dryer in August 2019.
- At an all-staff member meeting in November 2019, Green Team students provided reminders about dressing appropriately for the weather. Teachers regularly shared those reminders with students.

## Awards

- Custodians Mike Nelson and Rick Bouloumpas received a King County Earth Hero at School award in April 2012.