

## Apollo Elementary School

**School District:** Issaquah

**School Location:** Renton

**Began participating in the Green Schools Program:**  
September 2010

**Level One of the Green Schools Program:**  
Achieved in May 2011

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

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

**Sustaining Green School 2015-16:**  
Achieved in May 2016

**Sustaining Green School 2016-17:**  
Achieved in May 2017

**Sustaining Green School 2017-18:**  
Achieved in May 2018

**Sustaining Green School 2018-19:**  
Achieved in May 2019

**Sustaining Green School 2019-20:**  
Achieved in June 2020



Composting education: Students create posters about composting.



Water conservation education: Students create posters about conserving water.

### Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Apollo Elementary maintained a recycling rate of 45 percent thanks to a school-wide program that included collection of recyclable and compostable materials in classrooms, offices, the lunchroom, and the staff room.
- With assistance from City of Issaquah, Apollo launched a compostable materials collection program in 2010.



King County Green Schools Program

# Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

- Fourth-graders were trained to correctly sort food scraps and to monitor lunchroom food scrap, recycling, and garbage stations. Compostable materials collected from the lunchroom, staff room, and classrooms were delivered to Cedar Grove's composting facility.
- The fourth-grade student Green Team provided school-wide education and promotion for recycling and food scrap collection. Outreach included presentations and quizzes in every classroom and collaboration with the first-grade Green Team to make posters and signs. Students placed stickers listing what can and can't be recycled on all recycling containers in the school.
- The student Green Team met once per month, monitored recycling stations twice a week, and helped other students sort their waste properly. The team promoted waste-free lunches via a video, announcements, and a district STEMposium activity.
- Apollo's staff Green Team made a recycling and composting presentation to all teachers at a staff meeting. Waste reduction and recycling information and school practices were posted on the school website.
- One class held a week-long aluminum can drive and donated proceeds to earthquake relief efforts in Japan.
- School administration encouraged staff to reduce paper use by making double-sided copies, using email for communication, and sending newsletters and parent information electronically.
- A reuse box for "Good on One Side" paper was placed in the staff workroom, and construction paper leftovers were used for notes and art projects.
- To encourage reuse, Apollo held a book swap in during its annual Spring Fling.
- Along with all schools in Issaquah, Apollo replaced plastic wrapped utensils with unwrapped utensils and eliminated the use of straws.



Lunchroom waste and recycling station signs and sign-holder created by Apollo Green Team to help students and staff members sort lunch waste correctly.



King County Green Schools Program

# Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

---

- In 2012-13 Apollo participated in the district's Zero Waste Challenge. The school placed within the top three finalists.
- Apollo's Green Team conducted an annual sustainability pledge for classrooms. Pledges were displayed in the lunchroom. Classrooms that conserved resources received rewards.

## **Energy Conservation (Level Two)**

- The student Green Team posted signs near light and electrical equipment to remind students and employees to turn them off when not in use.
- Information was sent to employees and parents about the school's energy use via the Apollo Orbiter, a monthly e-newsletter.
- A local environmental engineer visited the fourth-grade classroom to discuss the energy practices at his work site and how energy conservation is connected to the science curriculum.
- To conserve energy, teachers shut off some of the overhead lights when natural light was sufficient.
- The Issaquah School District's contract with its drink machine vendor included a requirement that lights on the machine's display would be permanently turned off.
- The school technician sent periodic reminders to staff to use energy efficient modes for smart boards and projectors.
- Employees were reminded via email to keep windows and doors closed when heating and cooling is on.
- Classrooms and multipurpose room used auto-shut off lighting.
- Computers were shut down automatically each evening to conserve energy.

## **Water Conservation and Pollution Prevention (Level Three)**

- Green Team students regularly shared water conservation facts and tips in school announcements.
- During Green Week, teachers shared conservation information with their classes, and students were asked to sign conservation pledges.



King County Green Schools Program

# Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

---

- The Green Team watched the “Story of Bottled Water” video. Teachers sent home requests for students to only bring reusable water bottles to school.
- The school shared its water use rates in school announcements, teacher newsletters, and emails to parents.
- Kitchen staff refrained from pouring fats, oils, or grease down school drains. A sign with the same reminder was posted in the staff room.
- Water conservation signs were laminated and posted by each school sink.
- The majority of school faucets were set to turn off automatically when not in use.
- To conserve water, the school installed low-flow toilets, low-flow sink aerators, and dual flush toilets when possible.
- Apollo eliminated irrigation lines to reduce summer water use.
- Water and energy conservation practices were listed on the school's Green Team webpage, which was linked on the school's homepage.

## **Sustaining Green School recognition**

Apollo Elementary was recognized as a Sustaining Green School for sustaining and building 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 Level Three practices each year is described below.

## **Sustaining Green School 2015-16**

- Green Team activities and successes throughout the school year were shared electronically with the parent community and on the school website.
- The school increased waste-free Wednesday lunches from a one-time event in the spring 2015 to once each month in the 2015-16 school year. Waste-free Wednesday reminders and tips were promoted during lunches, in announcements and e-newsletters, and in-person at the school’s science night.
- The Green Team hosted a waste reduction and recycling booth at the school’s Earth Day science night and facilitated a trash, recycling, and compostable materials sorting game. Participants earned a Rocket Slip (Apollo award) or Earth globe key chain as a prize. Students encouraged adults to pack waste free lunches.



King County Green Schools Program

# Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

---

## **Sustaining Green School 2016-17**

- Apollo increased the frequency of waste-Free Wednesdays from monthly to weekly.
- The school celebrated Earth Week in April 2017. Students created posters, helped prepare rewards for waste free lunches, and made school-wide announcements.
- The school piloted a change from disposable utensils to reusable durable metal utensils in the cafeteria during one lunch.

## **Sustaining Green School 2017-18**

- The school expanded its use of reusable metal utensils in the cafeteria from only the fifth-grade lunch to all school lunches.
- The student Green Team participated in the district-wide STEMposium in February and led data-driven waste-free lunch activities.
- New lunchroom waste and recycling signs and sign-holders were installed.

## **Sustaining Green School 2018-2019**

- At the September 2018 all-staff meeting, the Green Team advisor presented about Green Schools Program participation and goals for the 2018-19 school year.
- The Green Team worked with a King County representative to create a video on how to properly sort waste in the cafeteria. The video was shared with students and teachers in November 2018.
- The Green Schools Program assisted the district to set up a food donation program. Apollo's kitchen manager monitored a cafeteria food share program in which students placed unopened, packaged items and whole fruits with inedible skins from the school lunch program in a Share Bin for other students to take. Once each week, the Issaquah Food and Clothing Bank picked up leftover Share Bin items.
- Students continued to sort garbage, recyclable materials, and compostable materials in their classrooms.



King County Green Schools Program

# Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

---

## Sustaining Green School 2019-2020

- The student Green Team provided school-wide education and promotion about recycling and food scrap collection.
- The school initiated a one-paper towel challenge which encouraged use of one paper towel to dry one's hands. In Fall 2019, the first phase of outreach included an all-school announcement, a demonstration to staff members, and posters given to teachers for each classroom. In phase two, a video was created and shared. Students received reminders about the challenge throughout the year.
- Students promoted the Zero Waste Challenge and correct recycling and compost practices by preparing posters which were hung near the lunchroom. To promote the challenge, the school placed information in the electronic newsletter, made announcements, and created new education posters for Earth Day Spirit Week.
- In April 2020, Green Team leader Miryam Christensen created a virtual Earth Day event. Students learned about the history of Earth Day, water conservation, actions they can take to protect Puget Sound, how students can recycle crayons, and what items belong in garbage, recycling, and composting bins.
- Apollo Elementary continued to use durable utensils and eliminated straw use.

## Awards

Apollo Elementary School won the Waste Free Lunch Challenge sponsored by City of Issaquah and Issaquah School District. Apollo's 601 students generated two pounds of waste - only 0.054 ounces per student - during one lunch period.