



King County Green Schools Program

# Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

## Camelot Elementary School

**School District:** Federal Way

**School Location:** Auburn

**Began participating in the Green Schools Program:**  
January 2009

**Level One of the Green Schools Program:**  
Achieved in June 2010

**Level Two of the Green Schools Program:**  
Achieved in November 2010

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

**Sustaining Green School 2014-15:**  
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



Student Green Team members help with the lunchroom recycling program.



Students and staff are proud of their conservation efforts and "The Greening of Camelot."

### Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Camelot Elementary School maintained a 48 percent recycling rate.
- The school used the theme "Camelot Cares about the Earth" to encourage staff and students to protect the environment. Beginning in early 2009, the Camelot Green Team – known as the "Green Knights" – achieved significant changes in how the school thinks about and treats the environment.
- On Fridays, second to fifth-grade student Green Knights wore green t-shirts to support their environmental efforts.
- The Green Knights shared a green tip of the day during morning announcements and on posters hung around the school.



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- Camelot began to recycle food scraps in its lunchroom which reduced the garbage dumpster size and garbage service costs by 25 percent.
- A student team wearing green aprons provided by King County Green Schools Program monitored lunchroom recycling stations to help other students properly sort their waste and recyclable materials.
- The Green Knights placed bins for used paper towels near the sink in each classroom. Students emptied these bins into the lunchroom food scrap containers each day so that the paper towels would be composted along with food scraps at a regional composting facility.
- The school further reduced lunchroom waste by recycling Capri-Sun pouches and chip bags through TerraCycle, a company that uses the pouches and bags to make new products.
- In 2011, Camelot Elementary families used City of Federal Way recycling events to recycle batteries, plastic bags, and polystyrene from holiday and birthday packaging.

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

- The Green Team placed labels on each computer and on light switches to remind students and teachers to turn them off when not in use.
- Camelot made a number of energy improvements including setting standard school-wide heating and cooling points and installing fluorescent light bulbs, occupancy sensors in frequently used rooms, an energy-efficient soda machine in the staff lounge, and new energy-efficient exit signs.
- Students generated posters that graphed Camelot's monthly energy use.
- The school added energy conservation facts to the school website using the Green School Program's facts and announcement templates.
- Teachers removed personal space heaters, refrigerators, coffee pots and other appliances that they had brought into their classrooms.
- During community outreach, Camelot used the motto "Being Green is Cool."
- In 2017, the Green Knights completed an energy audit of the school and created signs based on the results to remind students to conserve water and energy.



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## Water Conservation and Pollution Prevention (Level Three)

- The school held an annual water conservation poster contest and received over 100 entries from students in 2014-15.
- The Student Council participated in a WE Day conference as part of the WE Act program where students raised money to build a well for a community in Ghana. The WE Act program offers educational resources to help young people take sustained action on local and global causes.
- Custodial staff monitored the water meter and fixed broken sprinklers. Students graphed the school's monthly water consumption.
- Camelot received \$3,000 in grants from the local community to build a community garden.
- To reduce water consumption, maintenance staff reduced the water pressure in classroom sinks.
- Students participated in the *Salmon in the Classroom* program, welcomed guest speakers from King County, and participated in a school field trip to the Issaquah Hatchery.

## Sustaining Green School recognition

- Camelot Elementary School sustained and built on its Level One waste reduction and recycling practices, Level Two energy conservation practices, and Level Three water conservation strategies.
- How details below about how the school accomplished this each school year.

## Sustaining Green School 2014-15

- The school held a Green Festival Harvest where students presented conservation successes, and local vendors showcased green business practices to the community.
- In 2015, the school received 100 bags of Cedar Grove compost because students and staff removed fruit and vegetable produce stickers that otherwise would have contaminated food waste sent to Cedar Grove Composting facility.
- Students worked with Weyerhaeuser professionals for three years to create an outdoor classroom to foster environmental stewardship throughout the school. In



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2012, the students designed the project, which included native plants and careful consideration of how the pathways could be accessible to all students, even those with physical handicaps. Sixth-grade students from Kilo Middle School helped lead the project by planning work parties, meeting with district maintenance and presenting updates to the school board.

- The school participated in multiple Geo-Literacy Alliance Summer Leadership Institutes to develop understanding of interconnected human and environmental systems. Students applied their knowledge by investigating and acting on local issues.

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

- The Green Knights took turns going from class to class once each month with a checklist to monitor energy use in individual classrooms. Classes with the highest accomplishments received a green flag award at the end of each month.
- The school garden was expanded to accommodate more classes that participate in school garden efforts.
- The school planned its third annual Garden Summer Camp for K-5 students. The week-long camp focused on hands-on garden education that invites community members such as master gardeners, local chefs, and engineers to make guest appearances to enhance student educational experiences.
- With the help of a grant, the school built a drainage system to limit storm water run-off from eroding a large slope on the school's campus. The storm water run-off was filtered to a collection pond where wetland plants helped filter pollution and slow the flow of the storm water.
- Students helped restore campus areas by cutting back invasive blackberry bushes and planting native plants.

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

- The school hosted an Earth Day festival which brought together school community members and staff members from Puget Sound Energy (PSE) and Lakehaven Utility Conservation District.



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## Sustaining Green School 2017-18

- Through its annual Green Festival, students raised awareness about a variety of environmental issues by offering workshops, games, and competitions.

## Awards

- Camelot Elementary School received King County Earth Heroes at School awards in 2009 and 2016.
- Camelot received a \$1,000 Terry Husseman School Award in 2011.
- Mrs. Fischer's class participated in the Project Citizen National Showcase and recommended a plastic bag ban ordinance for the City of Federal Way. The class received first place in Washington State, with Best Oral Presentation and Best Portfolio, as well as achieving Superior Level at Nationals.

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

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