



King County Green Schools Program

# Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

## Grand Ridge Elementary School

**School District:** Issaquah

**School Location:** Issaquah

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

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

**Level Two of the Green Schools Program:**  
Achieved in May 2012

**Level Three of the Green Schools Program:**  
Achieved in May 2014

**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

### Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- Grand Ridge maintained a recycling rate of 59 percent through a school-wide program that included classroom, office, and lunchroom recycling.
- Students placed stickers listing what can and can't be recycled on containers throughout the school.
- Student volunteer Waste Watchers monitored cafeteria recycling and garbage bins to ensure proper sorting.



4th grade students empty classroom recyclable materials into hallway recycling container.



A first grader in Mrs. Holzer's class recycles paper.



Grand Ridge received the King County award in April 2011.



Students hone their recycling skills.



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- In 2009-10, food scraps collected during one week each month were used for onsite composting. The finished compost was used in the school garden, the Grizzly Patch.
- Grand Ridge participated in the King County waste reduction and recycling assembly.
- With help from City of Issaquah, the school set up collection of compostable materials from cafeteria and classrooms for delivery to a regional composting facility.
- Along with all schools in the Issaquah School District, the school's lunchroom eliminated the straws and used durable trays that were washed and reused.
- When not possible to use durable trays, the lunchroom used compostable paper instead of polystyrene trays.
- Students created a video and signs demonstrating which materials should be recycled and composted.
- The school promoted recycling at school-wide events and at events sponsored by the PTSA. Recycling receptacles were placed at the annual Walk-A-Thon, Field Day, and other events.
- Grand Ridge Elementary significantly reduced paper use by converting to electronic newsletters and fliers instead of paper copies.
- Classrooms, offices, and workrooms have G.O.O.S. (Good on One Side) boxes to collect paper used on one side. G.O.O.S. paper was also made into scratch pads for the staff workroom.
- The school posted reminders in every bathroom to use only one or two sheets of paper towels.
- In 2017, the school switched from compostable utensils in the lunchroom to durable metal utensils.
- In fall 2017, with district support, the school kitchen began a weekly School Food Share Program in collaboration with Issaquah Food and Clothing Bank. Unopened, packaged items from the school cafeteria were picked up by the Issaquah Food Bank each week instead of being disposed.



## Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- Signs reminding staff and students to shut off lights when they leave a room was placed in each room, including classrooms, restrooms, and offices.
- The school created an Energy Conservation Checklist to be completed at the end of the day by each classroom.
- An energy pledge was written to be sung by students to remind them how they can help the Earth.
- The school posted reminders outside all doors to keep doors closed in order to save energy.
- Third-grade students posted signs throughout the school with reminders of how energy conservation protects salmon habitat and the earth.
- District software automatically shut off computers each evening.

## Water Conservation and Pollution Prevention (Level Three)

- Grand Ridge shared water conservation tips and leak reports with staff and community members through lunch announcements, monthly emails, and newsletters.
- The school used a rain barrel in the community garden to recycle rain water for watering plants.
- Water use was monitored monthly by a district staff member.
- Custodial staff routinely checked for leaky faucets and reported problems for maintenance.
- Signs were placed near faucets to remind students to turn them off when done.
- Grand Ridge dedicated one day of Earth Week 2014 to promoting water conservation.
- Student bathroom faucets were connected to a time-controlled water savings system that only allowed faucets to run for 60 seconds at a time.
- Fourth-grade students engineered a water filtration system, learned about problems related to contaminated water, and explored problem solving methods.
- Third-grade students studied watersheds and how pollution affects the water in our local watersheds.



## **Sustaining Green School recognition**

- To earn Sustaining Green School recognition, the school sustained and built on its Level One through Level Three conservation practices.
- How the school did this each year is described below.

## **Sustaining Green School 2014-15**

- In 2014-15 student Green Team leaders collected used plastic bags at school and took them to a grocery store collection bin for recycling.
- The Green Team conducted regular litter clean-up projects.
- The school participated in the district-wide waste free lunch challenge and reduced daily lunchroom waste from 23.6 pounds to 16.6 pounds.
- The school released 18,000 ladybugs as part of an education unit about alternatives to pesticides.

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

- A student litter brigade picked up litter around the school and reported results.
- Portable classrooms placed their wax-lined Dixie cups in a compost bin to be composted at a regional composting facility.

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

- The school frequently shared information about conservation practices via e-news and teacher newsletters. Green reminders were also included in the the school newsletter, Grizzly Growl.
- Holiday waste reduction and recycling tips were sent to all staff in November 2016
- Grand Ridge piloted the City of Issaquah School pool transportation reduction system.
- A King County Green Schools Program representative observed the new lunchroom durable utensil process and met with Green Team students.

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

- Kitchen staff and students participated in the School Food Share program initiative.
- In October 2017, students received King County's Going Green Together assembly.



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## Award

- Grand Ridge received a King County Earth Heroes at School Award in 2011.
- Two members of the Grand Ridge staff and one third grade class received King County Earth Heroes Awards in 2012.

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

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