



## Island Park Elementary School

**School district:** Mercer Island

**School location:** Mercer Island

**Began participating in the Green Schools Program:**  
March 2008

**Level One of the Green Schools Program:**  
Achieved in May 2009

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

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

**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

### Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

- The school maintained a recycling rate of 52 percent.
- Fourth and fifth-grade students actively helped with recycling efforts throughout the school.
- Staff members placed recycling stickers listing what can and cannot be recycled on all classroom and lunchroom recycling containers.
- The school reduced lunchtime garbage volume by recycling plastic bottles, aluminum cans, juice boxes and milk cartons. Island Park also began lunchroom recycling of food scraps, which are collected each week by Cedar Grove Composting.



Island Park's principal, teachers and a student accept King County award in April 2011



Students learn about habitats and natural resources



The Green Team starting their habitat protection action posters.



King County Green Schools Program

# Success Story

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- Students and staff promoted waste-free lunches and used classroom worm bins to compost leftover food scraps from snacks.
- The Green Team received training about waste reduction and recycling practices from the King County Green Schools Program.
- Lunchtime announcements encouraging students to sort their waste were made regularly.
- Through this combination of efforts, Island Park reduced lunchroom garbage from six bags to one and a half bags per day.



Green Team students get their aprons on and make sure waste is correctly sorted at a family school event

## Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- In January 2011, the school created an Energy Patrol of students who placed stickers on light switches throughout the school to remind students, teachers, and other school community members to turn off lights in unoccupied spaces.
- Students in grades three to five participated in King County Green Team workshops that included energy conservation themes. The students shared this information with their K-2 buddy classrooms.
- The Energy Patrol wrote energy conservation tips that were posted on the school website and shared during morning announcements.
- Green Team students created and delivered energy conservation checklists to every classroom.
- All incandescent light bulbs were replaced with Energy Star light bulbs.

## Water Conservation and Pollution Prevention (Level Three)

- The third-grade Green Team created water conservation public service announcements (PSAs) which were shown in the lunchroom. Turning the water off while soaping hands was demonstrated.
- Low-flow flush valves were installed by the district when repairs were needed.
- The school stopped purchasing bottled water for school functions and instead offered bulk water coolers with compostable cups.



King County Green Schools Program

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- Watering schedules were adjusted on a weekly basis during the watering season.
- In 2009, volunteers constructed the Island Learning Garden with areas for each grade level to plant and maintain. Garden curriculum units were developed in 2009–10 and have been used each year since inception.
- Island Park installed rain barrels to collect water to be used in the school garden.

## **Sustaining Green School Recognition**

Island Park Elementary sustained and built on its Level One waste reduction and recycling practices, Level Two energy conservation practices, and Level Three water conservation strategies. How the school did this each year is described below.

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

- Students tracked quantities of plastic bags and utensils disposed in the lunchroom over a three-month period. The results were used to create an action plan reducing the amount of plastic waste at school.
- The Green Team created posters describing waste reduction actions individuals can take to protect animals and their habitats. The posters were displayed in hallways throughout the school.

### **Sustaining Green School 2018-19**

- The school participated in the Crayola ColorCycle program by collecting used markers to be recycled. The school set up containers in several locations and made announcements about the program.
- Students counted the number of Ziplock bags disposed at lunch, shared the data with the school community, and recommended alternative options. The number of disposable plastic bags decreased over time.

### **Sustaining Green School 2019-20**

- Green Team students participated in a sorting workshop led by a King County Green Schools Program representative. The representative shared a fact or fiction PowerPoint presentation on waste reduction and recycling.



King County Green Schools Program

# *Success Story*

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- Green Team students discussed waste reduction actions families can take during the holidays and shared those tips with their classmates.
- A guest speaker educated students about solar panels and sustainable energy sources. Students then created posters about different sources of energy including wind, solar, and hydropower.
- Students educated each other about energy and water conservation best practices and reminded their peers about those practices.
- During Earth Week, teachers shared information about the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day. Teachers also encouraged practical science activities and shared readings and vocabulary pertaining to Earth Day.
- Principal Hoffman sent a message to the whole school community about green activities for students to do at home to celebrate Earth Day.

## **Award**

- Island Park received a King County Earth Hero at School award in April 2011.