



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

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

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

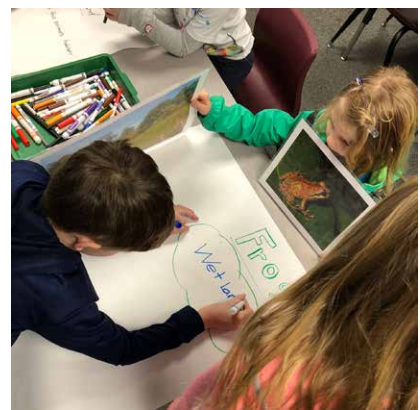
- Island Park Elementary School maintained a recycling rate of 52 percent.
- Fourth and fifth-grade students actively helped with recycling efforts throughout the school.
- Staff members placed recycling stickers listing what can and cannot be recycled on all classroom and lunchroom recycling containers.
- 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.



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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.

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.
- Watering schedules were adjusted on a weekly basis during the watering season.



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- 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 2017-18

- Island Park 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.
- 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 participated in a habitat awareness presentation in which they made posters describing waste reduction actions individuals can take to protect animals and environments. The posters were displayed in hallways throughout the school.

Award

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

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

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