



## The Evergreen School

**School district:** Private

**School location:** Shoreline

**Began to participate in the Green Schools Program:** 2003–2005, again in 2012

**Level One of the Green Schools Program:** Achieved in December 2012

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

**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 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 increased its recycling rate from 65 to 79 percent and reduced its garbage volume by 50 percent.
- All-school waste audits were conducted by seventh-grade students in fall 2011 and 2012 with Recology-CleanScapes, the waste management company that serves the City of Shoreline.
- As a result of these audits, the school standardized all recycling, composting and garbage receptacles, and posted labels and information sheets about what materials should be placed into each receptacle. Students made “What Goes in each Waste Bin” posters for common areas.
- The school replaced all plastic utensils and bottled water from the school lunch program, classrooms and school events with compostable or reusable supplies.
- Fourth- and fifth-grade students inspected waste receptacles in classrooms and reported to teachers if the waste was sorted appropriately. They also tracked the

fullness of the garbage, recycling, and compost dumpsters and shared the information with the school community.

- Nearly all the school's communications, registration forms, and business office transactions were electronic, instead of on paper.
- At the beginning and end of the school year, the staff held Free Cycle events where items no longer needed were placed in a location for others to take.
- The school performed assemblies and shared reminders in the weekly bulletin and e-newsletter on the themes of waste reduction, recycling, reusing, and composting.
- The school eliminated subscriptions to unwanted newspapers, catalogues, and mail.
- School copy machines were set to print double-sided.
- All unwanted computer equipment was taken to a recycling facility.
- The Evergreen School collected and recycled energy bar wrappers and school supplies through TerraCycle.

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

- All thermostats were set to 65 - 67 degrees during the school day, and shut off when school was out. With a new centralized automated management system, energy use was reduced by more than 30 percent.
- A 9.66 kilowatt solar electric system was installed during the 2011-12 school year, thanks to a grant from the Bonneville Education Foundation, Solar 4R Schools program, the class of 2011 parents, the Mathieu/Washienko family and the Mark and Susan Torrance Foundation.
- Evergreen participated in the Green School Alliance Green Cup Challenge, an annual energy conservation competition among schools across the country, resulting in increased awareness of electricity use and a 10-12 percent reduction in electricity during this competition.
- Energy conservation tips were included in the weekly all school bulletin, on the internal school website, and sent to all staff via e-mail.
- In their science class, eighth-grade students conducted a school-wide, multi-year energy audit, analyzed the information, and made recommendations about how the school could reduce its energy use.



- During 2012-13, the school joined EPA's Energy Star Program to assess and improve energy conservation.
- In 2012, according to EPA Energy Star Target Finder, the school achieved a performance rating of 90 for K-12 schools.

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

- Annual water audits were conducted to determine the maintenance and replacement of leaky faucets. Results led to the inclusion of high-efficiency water systems and improved irrigation practices.
- The school's sustainability coordinator and facilities director monitored the monthly water bills for spikes in water consumption.
- The school installed high-efficiency toilets and faucets to meet conservation standards for water use.
- Large containers of tap water were provided during school events and students were encouraged to bring reusable water bottles or cups to school.
- Students created and signed Green Pledges to conserve water.
- The majority of the campus' landscape was composed of native plants requiring little or no watering. Roughly one percent of the landscape was grass and 14 percent was protected wetlands, ponds, and intermittent streams. Watering was monitored by the landscaping crew and only done when necessary.
- 43 percent of the school grounds were devoted to ecologically beneficial uses with two bio-filtration swales and a 31 percent tree canopy over the property.
- Fifth-grade students learned about their local watershed and conducted water quality tests and studied invertebrates at several sites. They analyzed their data and presented it to other classrooms. Students visited the Brightwater Center and learned how their daily actions influence the Puget Sound watershed.
- Kindergarten, fourth- and fifth-grade students removed non-native vegetation and planted native plants along the school's stream riparian zone.
- Third-grade students studied wetlands and how people impact wetland ecosystems, including the school's wetland and Twin Ponds Park in Shoreline.
- Fourth- and fifth-grade students conducted a biodiversity audit of school grounds and completed projects to benefit wildlife. Fifth-grade students



partnered with kindergarten classes to create a habitat area for amphibians in the school's wetland.

## **Sustaining Green School recognition**

The school has been 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 Three practices each year is described below.

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

- The school formed a staff committee to audit, assess, and implement best practices for healthy schools that focused on indoor air quality, pest management, healthy food, and healthy classroom practices.
- In 2014-15, students and staff displayed “No idling” signs and reminded parents to turn off their engines while waiting to pick up students in the parking lot.
- The school set up a system to facilitate carpooling to and from the school.
- Evergreen officially adopted a sustainable purchasing plan which was shared with all employees. The facilities manager asked the school's contracted cleaning company to only use products with the Green Seal.
- The school built a new Gold Certified LEED building complete with light sensors, LED lighting, and dual flush toilets.
- Sustainability and Environmental Curriculum Coordinator Janet Charnley presented the school's new Healthy School plan and Green Purchasing policies at a staff meeting in April 2015.

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

- Reminders were sent to students about how to have a green Halloween and cut down on waste during the holiday season.
- First-grade students checked all of the faucets for leaks and reported leaks to the facilities staff so they could be fixed.
- The school standardized the colors of all recycling and garbage stations and installed two new outdoor recycling stations.

- Evergreen worked with the school's cleaning company to develop a cleaning system using non-toxic cleaning solutions.
- Teacher and sustainability coordinator Janet Charnley presented on purchasing sustainable and non-toxic products at a staff meeting and provided staff with resources on which products or brands to purchase.
- The school received 10 "No Idling" signs for the student pick-up area.
- The school researched monthly paper purchases and met with intermediate and middle school teachers to brainstorm solutions for reducing paper use.

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

- The school's new buildings were equipped with LED lighting and automatic light sensors.
- Email reminders were sent to staff to power down equipment and shut off lights when not in use.
- Students learned about the importance of water conservation and storm water pollution prevention through classroom curriculum and the Salmon in the Classroom program.
- Anti-idle signs were posted in the school parking lots to reduce CO2 emissions.
- Two electric vehicle charging stations were installed at the school.
- Students planted a school vegetable garden with six raised edible garden beds. Students helped maintain and harvest the gardens.
- Newly constructed school buildings meet LEED standards.
- Students at The Evergreen School initiated projects focusing on Green School practices, including searching for and reporting leaking faucets, testing faucet flows and planning to purchase even lower-flow aerators, and researching, piloting, and collecting feedback on two different aerators on classroom sinks.
- Students searched, documented and reported blocked storm drains on campus.
- Students designed a leaf-catching filter for school storm drains backed up by natural debris.
- Fifth-grade students completed a Citizen Science Project with Seattle Public Utilities and Thornton Creek by testing water and tracking water pollution.

- Students created their own mulch and tested it in the nearby wetlands. To investigate further, students added their mulch to a school garden bed and tracked plant growth in the “test” bed vs. the other beds.
- To promote paper reduction, the school shared King County personalized paper reduction and recycling infographic with the student population.
- Ms. Charnley presented results of a paper audit at a monthly faculty/staff meeting and teachers discussed ways to help to reduce paper use.
- Fourth- and fifth-grade students kept track of the number of reams of copy paper used at four of the copy machines on campus and how much copy paper went unclaimed at the end of each week.
- The school completed an audit with Recology CleanScapes and determined that recycling/composting was going well, but there was more recyclable material that could be recovered from garbage bins.
- The fourth- and fifth-grade Intermediate Service Club shared its waste audit skit, song and slide presentations to all Intermediate students. The club presented at an all school Earth Day Assembly.
- The Intermediate Service Club created signs showing what items should go into which waste container, and posted them around the school.

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

- The newly formed Middle School Restoration student club partnered with stewards at City of Shoreline Twin Ponds Park to conduct monthly restoration work parties for students and community members.
- During Earth Week, all classes learned about an endangered species in Washington and created presentations to share with the rest of the school.
- On its website, City of Shoreline recognized the school for its sustainability efforts.



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

- In Fall 2019, students made “What Goes in each Waste Bin” posters for the common areas.
- The Green Team set a goal of increasing the school’s recycling rate to 90 percent by reducing single-use plastic waste.
- In Fall 2019, students conducted a plastic waste audit for 12 days. Fourth- and fifth-grade students sorted, weighed, and recorded the volume of plastic. The plastic was sorted into garbage, regular recycling, and film plastic recycling (e.g., plastic bags, plastic from mail packages, and plastic wrapping around paper towels and drink bottles).
- In November 2019, the school began to take film plastic and Styrofoam collected at school to a local recycling facility once each month.

## **Environmental Education**

- Fourth- and fifth-grade classes investigated conservation practices in the use, or re-use, of natural resources, conducted a survey of the biodiversity of the campus and explored sustainable practices at school. Based on their research, the students developed a presentation and a hands-on lesson that was delivered to the primary classrooms.
- In a Farm to Food unit, fourth- and fifth-grade students learned about issues related to the lifecycle of food, including resource use, energy, pollution and soil and water conservation. They took field trips to the organic Full Circle Farm, a public market, Pike Place Market and a solid waste transfer station to learn about farming, food and where waste goes in our region.
- Preschool, pre-kindergarten, first and second grades used the school’s garden beds to grow vegetables as part of their science and health curriculum.
- A fifth-grade science unit on weather focused on solar energy as an alternative energy source, while students in the Pacific salmon unit also investigated environmental issues affecting salmon populations and conducted water quality testing of a local salmon spawning stream.
- Fourth-grade science curriculum integrated renewable energy into the study of electrical circuits and the students investigated wind energy and how windmills can generate power.

- Sixth-grade health classes learned about global health issues, such as global trends in malnutrition and specific nutrient deficiencies, and agricultural difficulties posed by intensive farming and loss of soil nutrients.
- In the Ecosystem Biology unit of the seventh-grade science class, students were involved in a student-designed field study investigation of the Elwha River system on the Olympic Peninsula. They analyzed the ecosystem impacts of hydroelectric dams, and evaluated and compared the energy production and ecological impacts of different energy sources. The dams were removed in 2011 and the students are taking part in the long-term monitoring of this large scale watershed restoration project.
- In eighth-grade science, the students conducted a school-wide, multi-year energy audit. They analyzed the data and made recommendations about reducing energy use.
- In eighth-grade English, the students participated in non-fiction book groups centered on environmental issues. The students wrote essays on environmental or sustainability topics.
- The preschool and prekindergarten programs included learning about gardening, composting, reducing, reusing, recycling, pollution, habitats including wetlands, temperate rainforests, and marine environments.
- In kindergarten social studies, science and service learning projects, the subjects included lessons about nature, community and culture, how we create homes from the environment and the impact of waste on our environment.
- In first grade, students learned about social justice and diversity in social studies. In science units, the students learned about, habitats, water conservation, ecosystems, packaging, service learning, and food banks.
- Second-grade students learned about the local community and habitats, while third-grade students participated in service learning and green pledges, while learning how Native Americans used local resources, wetlands, ethno-botany and food webs.

## **Transportation**

- The school partnered with Community Transit to provide student bus services.

- In 2013-14, the school increased the number of staff members biking, walking, and using public transportation or Metro's Vanpool program by 13 percent.
- The school started parent volunteer positions for Neighborhood Carpool Captains who helped create carpools to and from The Evergreen School.
- A Community Transportation page was created for the school's website that listed alternative transportation options linked to the Neighborhood Carpool Captains.
- The Green Team promoted alternative transportation options through presentations at parent meetings, new parent and guardian orientation, back to school events, the school website, and in the all-school bulletin.

## **Awards**

- In spring 2013, the school received the U.S. Green Ribbon School award for reducing environmental impacts, including waste reduction, energy and water conservation, for excellence in health and wellness programs for students and staff, and for excellent environmental and sustainability education.
- In 2013, the school achieved a Silver Award through the National Wildlife Federation's Eco-Schools Program.
- In March 2012, the school received a Washington State Green Leader School, Pillar 3 Award for excellence in environmental and sustainability education.
- In January 2012, the school achieved Level 1 certification for Waste and Recycling through the Washington Green Schools program, and in May 2013, the school achieved Level 2 certification for Energy Conservation.
- The school received the King County Green Globe Leader in Sustainable Schools Award in 2005 for its outstanding efforts to expand conservation practices and raise awareness among students and staff about the importance of stewardship practices.