

Recycling

If recycling collection services are available to your school:

- If not recycling yet, set up a recycling program where your school is recycling at least two material types (i.e. paper and plastic containers, or paper and cardboard). Be sure to provide recycling containers and clear signs for a successful program.
- Use data from the waste audit to start or improve the recycling program at your school. Set a specific goal and implement a plan to make improvements.
- Expand an existing recycling program by at least one material type and run a campaign to promote the new addition to the program.
- Monitor the current recycling bins located in your school. Share the results with your school
- Label all the recycling bins located at your school.
- Talk with the custodian regarding the recycling habits of the students and staff at your school. Ask if he/she has any recommendations for changes that could be made to improve the program. If feasible implement those recommendations.
- Make sure there are recycling bins located throughout the school, either in every classroom or in central collection areas.
- If more bins are needed, contact your local jurisdiction or hauler to see if they can give you more bins or determine other means to have the appropriate amount of bins.

If recycling collection services are not available for your school

- Research recycling buy-back centers available in your area and present options to your administration on how your school might start a recycling program using the buy-back centers.
- If a buy-back recycling center was identified as available:* Start a recycling program at your school or address the barriers identified by the administration that would prevent a recycling program.

Waste Reduction

- Use one-sided prints for scratch pads/drafts. Place labeled trays for reuse paper in each classroom and office. Encourage paper reuse.
- Create and promote policy of double-sided photocopying and printing, and provide instructions to photocopier users. Encourage double-sided copying and printing.
- Set printer to default to double-sided printing
- Use email instead of paper copies for one or more regularly issued newsletters, bulletins or memos.
- Reduce print runs based on number of leftover copies, or "right size" the paper used (i.e. use half sheets), or encourage the double checking of formatting documents so that one or two lines do not carry over to the final page. Think of and document other methods.
- Promote "paper free" days at least twice during the school year.
- Establish, promote and monitor a reuse station for supplies such as file folders and envelopes.
- Purchase office paper and paper products that contain at least 30% recycled content.
- Hold an end-of-year locker cleanout and gather school supplies for reuse (*Great Locker Cleanout*).
- Hold a student-run reuse exchange event/fair/garage sale.
- Create a book recycling program for your old library books or textbooks and send a school or community in need.

Recycling & Waste Reduction Action List

- Hold a "Waste Free" lunch day
- Start a bag reuse campaign for lunch sacks and/or encourage reusable lunch containers.
- Promote "waste free lunches." Promotional messages may include: "Take or bring only what you will eat" and "Bring reusable containers and lunch sacks for your home lunches." Measure the effects of your efforts throughout the year.
- Establish and promote the use tap water (filtered if necessary) rather than bottled water for students
Example: "Bottle tops" – Ask Acacia – MG teaching kits
www.progressivekid.com/shop/BottledWaterTrouble.aspx
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/8141569.stm>
- Develop a program to decrease the *uneaten* and *unopened food* in the garbage.
- Research milk carton recycling in your area. If recycling is not an option, research other packaging options (including plastic pouches).
- Replace disposable plates, glasses and cups with durable products in the staff break room.
- Purchase and reuse durable, reusable party/holiday decorations.
- Replace disposable utensils with durable utensils in the student lunchroom/cafeteria.
- Replace plastic wrapped packets of utensils and straws with individual utensils and straws.
- Replace disposable plates, glasses and cups with reusable products in the student lunchroom/cafeteria.
- Use bulk dispensers instead of packaged products (ketchup, mustard, milk, etc) in the lunchroom/cafeteria.
- Replace disposable trays with durable trays – or eliminate use of lunchroom trays.
- If school does not have dishwashing capabilities, do an analysis of ways to decrease disposable waste.

Composting

- Start grasscycling – leaving grass clippings on the lawn/athletic fields.
- Research composting or vermi-composting options that are available to your school. Determine the steps necessary to start composting at the school.
- Research three local or international schools to find out what they are doing with food waste and look for opportunities available in your area to begin a composting program.
- Start a worm bin in at least 1 classroom
- Implement composting of food waste either on-site (via a minimum of two classroom worm bins or school-wide on-site composting using a BioStack, Earth Tub, etc.) or off-site (via a hauler collection program that transports food waste to a composting facility).
- Set up a program to compost yard debris from school grounds either on-site or offsite.
- Plant drought tolerant landscaping and use resultant compost from above as a soil amendment and/or mulch.
- Work with and mentor another class or school to start a worm bin.

Planning/Education/Outreach

- Research 10 facts about waste reduction/recycling/composting and share with your school community.
- Measure your school's carbon footprint reduction or the energy saved resulting from waste reduction, recycling and/or composting effort, using one of the online carbon calculator tools.
- Have students calculate the school's "ecological or global footprint" using one of the many online calculators, and present information, findings and recommendations to the school community or other appropriate audience.
Example <http://www.globalfootprints.org/issues/footprint/councquiz1.htm>



Recycling & Waste Reduction Action List

- Establish an Environmental Club, Recycling Club, or other club that focuses on environmental issues in your school and community
- Have older students teach younger students about recycling, waste reduction, composting, etc.
- Students create and perform a skit, puppet show, or other type of entertainment about recycling, waste reduction or composting in your school to the school, community, or another school.
- Design a campaign to educate other students at your school about the recycling, waste reduction or composting actions at your school.
- Design a display for the foyer, commons, cafeteria or other public space to educate students and staff about your school's recycling, waste reduction or composting actions.
- Make a public service announcement film or radio ad about recycling, waste reduction or composting in your school and involve your local media.
- Give a presentation to school board, PTA, or other appropriate group, proposing a new district policy or procedures that would address waste reduction and recycling issues.
- Mentor another school in your school district or county to improve its recycling, waste reduction or composting practices.
- Establish a relationship with a school internationally with similar academic/environmental goals so students can be engaged with the global community. Share information with whole school community.
- Research three local or international schools to find out what they are doing to recycle and reduce waste, and how they are measuring and evaluating their results. Present your findings to the school community or other appropriate audience.
- Identify barriers to making additional improvements in recycling, waste reduction or composting based on your Recycling & Waste Reduction Assessment, and propose solutions to the school or school district.
- Create a school wide recognition program for students who participate in waste reduction and recycling activities outside of the classroom and/or have students partner with community groups, non-profits, or businesses on conservation related projects.
- Participate in a volunteer gleaning project to help get food left in farmers' fields into local food banks.
Example: Harvest Against Hunger www.firstharvest.org/hah
- Other: _____
What other significant recycling, composting or waste reduction practice can your school initiate? Make a plan and take action!