



# NEWSLETTER

May 2009



## End of the School Year 3Rs!!

The end of the year is quickly approaching and can be the busiest time of year for teachers, students and administrators. It is also the busiest time of year for your trash cans. Each year when students clean out their lockers, paper and other materials that

could have been recycled or reused get needlessly thrown away. Developing a system to deal with these materials involves students in a hands-on environmental project, practices resource conservation and could even save your school money.

Start planning for the end of the school year and reduce the amount of waste your school sends to the landfill!!

## Reuse to Reduce: School Swap Day

Do your students have materials that are no longer useful to them but could be used by students next year? Do you have materials that would benefit another teacher? To keep your school in its zero waste mindset, organize a school supply swap day.

Follow these **five easy steps** to keep old school materials (pencils, notebooks, paper, pens, etc.) out of the landfill and in the loop!

1. Share ideas for a swap day at a staff meeting to generate excitement -- and to set a date and time that works for most teachers.
2. Consider setting a school

supply swap day to follow a locker or desk cleanout. (See page 2) While students clean out their supplies, teachers can organize their materials. Then you will have boxes ready to go for the swap.

3. Think about the best place to organize materials. Does it make sense to have everything brought to the gym so that students and teachers can look through materials when they have time? Would it be easier to have a swap with the teachers in your hallway or pod?
4. Determine who should



participate and how it should be arranged. Can a specific time be set aside for each grade level to look through materials? Should students be involved in the swap or just teachers?

5. Identify a teacher, staff member or parent who is willing to take leftover materials to a donation center. Consider waiting until both the locker cleanout and swap day are complete before leftover materials are donated.

Source: King County Schools

## Locker and Desk Clean-out Day!

Spring cleaning is not just for the home anymore. Cleaning out a locker or desk is a great end-of-the year (or mid-year) activity to promote waste reduction and eliminate school clutter. Locker and Desk Clean-Out Day can be a fun and environmentally friendly school activity.

A clean-out effort lets students get rid of loose paper, used-up school supplies and food or beverages that need to be removed; not to mention all of those overdue books that could make their way back to the library!

Many of the items that students clean-out are reusable items and should not end up in the garbage dumpster. For example, students should take home empty lunch containers and recycle their paper waste.

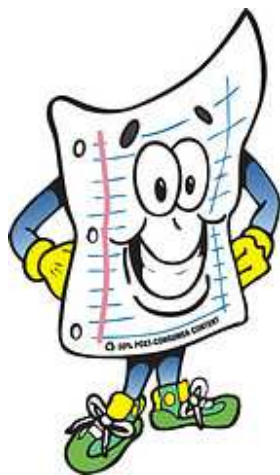
- Get multiple group, clubs and organizations within the school to commit to the project.
- Select project leaders to discuss the following with administration:
  1. Site to be used for collected items—a low traffic area works best
  2. Hall passes for student volunteers
  3. Teacher sponsors— assigned to an area to monitor and give help when needed.
  4. Public relations for the event—make sure all staff are aware of the event and understand the purpose
- Make a list of equipment needed: trash bags, recycle/reuse bins or a tarp, gloves, a scale, clipboards, paper, pens (to record weights) and a camera to record the FUN.
- Include custodial staff in the planning process and to help plan collection and clean up.
- Plan a storage area for items collected to be used later including (but not limited to): paper and other recyclables, and items that will be donated.



*New Hanover  
County  
Schools fill  
enough  
dumpsters to  
go from the  
Battleship to  
Wrightsville  
Beach every  
307 days.*

### Measure your results to make this event a learning experience!

How many bags total were brought to the collection area?



What was the total weight of all the bags?

How many bags ended up going to the dumpster and how much did they weigh?

What was the weight of the paper that was recycled? Aluminum? Glass?

How many pens and pencils for reuse?

How high was the stack of notebooks collected for reuse? Don't forget to take pictures!

How many bags of clothes or shoes?

Record what you did with the reuse items. Some schools put the pens and pencils in the library for use next school year. Some send the materials to poorer nations. Clothing and shoes can be washed and given to Goodwill, Salvation Army etc.

Don't forget to publicize the results of your clean-out in the school newsletter or website!!

## Fun & Games: The 3R Way!

Many schools celebrate the end of the school year with picnics, field days, and parties. These events are perfect opportunities to offer waste reduction and recycling games for both fun and learning experiences.

Need a few ideas to get your planning started? How about:

1. **Trash bag relay.** Fill bags with clean trash (bottles, cans, paper) and have students run a relay race to see who can recycle the most.
2. **Plastics scavenger hunt.** Hide all seven types of plastic and see who can find them all.
3. **Make recycled paper.** Visit [http://www.paperrecycles.org/school\\_recycling/index.html](http://www.paperrecycles.org/school_recycling/index.html) for instructions and a video about making paper in this standards-based Project Learning Tree activity.
4. **Have a trash sculpture contest.** See how creative students can be forming art out of trash!
5. **Have students create posters** that have a message about reducing, reusing, recycling or anything that has to do with conserving and/or protecting resources!

## Green Is A Noble Color

Students at Noble Middle School realized five years ago how much waste their school produced. In fact, 85% of classroom waste at Noble is paper. This realization led to the formation of a Green Team, and the start a school recycling program to reduce the amount of paper that was going to the landfill. In the beginning, they purchased recycling bins to collect paper that dedicated students, teachers and parents took to the county recycling center at Blair Elementary every week.

Recently, the Noble PTA has began funding weekly comingled recycling pick-up, which gives the team more time to dedicate to things other than just school recycling, such as going on field trips to the county's landfill and recycling facility. But it doesn't end there. The team—made up of 15 students and 2 educators—is active in community beach clean-ups, makes posters and flyers to

put around their school to encourage students and staff to be more environmentally conscious and even has shower meters (provided by Cape Fear Public Utility Authority) to monitor the time it takes them to take a shower.



Currently, the Noble Green Team is recycling plastic bags for the Harris Teeter "We Think Green" contest and is collecting old tennis shoes for the Nike Reuse-A-Shoe program. The shoes that they collect get ground up and turned into such things as playground bedding, tracks, and synthetic basketball and tennis courts.

Even though the students work hard for the greening of the school and encourage and serve as role models to others, they also remember to have fun. When they finish recycling, they love to play outside and throw a Frisbee around with one another. At the end of their weekly meeting, they do a "Green" cheer that brings everyone together—all of their hands together in a circle is a powerful thing!

To learn more about the Noble Green Team—from earth friendly tips to the team's favorite foods and why they're green, visit: [www.bwinzele.blogspot.com](http://www.bwinzele.blogspot.com)

Or contact Ms. Winzeler: [bwinzele@nhcs.net](mailto:bwinzele@nhcs.net)

Want to know more about Nike Reuse-A-Shoe? Check out: [www.nikereuseashoe.com](http://www.nikereuseashoe.com)

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*Q: How many shoes does it take to build a basketball court?*



*A: 3000!*

*Through the Nike Reuse-A-Shoe program, Nike has collected over 22 million pairs of shoes globally since 1990.*

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Founded by Wilmington, NC parents, Sustainable Schools Initiative's mission is to foster Green Programs in North Carolina Schools. Partnering with Keep America Beautiful of New Hanover County, we are committed to helping new and established Environmental Committees and their efforts of starting and maintaining green programs in our local schools. It is our goal to unite school communities and give the needed tools and resources to accomplish the Sustainability Goals of each individual school. In doing so, we— along with everyone involved— will foster the development of generations of students becoming good stewards of the earth.

For information on Sustainable Programs in your school visit our web site

[www.nhcgov.com/AgnAndDpt/KAB](http://www.nhcgov.com/AgnAndDpt/KAB)

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*"The ultimate test of man's conscience may be his willingness to sacrifice something today for future generations whose words of thanks will not be heard."*

— Gaylord Nelson

former governor of Wisconsin, co-founder of Earth Day

## Coming Up...



- **Elementary School Recycling Mini-Grants** being offered through KAB of NHC are **due May 15 by 5pm!** Email your completed application to: [jeokeefe@nhc.gov](mailto:jeokeefe@nhc.gov)  
For more information and an application, visit our website:

[www.nhcgov.com/AgnAndDpt/KAB/Pages/SustainableSchoolsInitiative.aspx](http://www.nhcgov.com/AgnAndDpt/KAB/Pages/SustainableSchoolsInitiative.aspx)

- **Tri-County Workshop** presented in partnership by New Hanover, Brunswick and Pender County Soil and Water Conservation Districts from **June 15– 18**. Activities will include a tour of the landfill, information about vermicomposting, and activities focusing on ways to Reduce, Reuse & Recycle. Cost: \$20, which includes the municipal solid waste guide from Project Learning Tree, “make and take” projects and lunch on the last day. (Credits: 2 continuing education credits and up to 20 hours of environmental education credit hours.) The workshop is open to all teachers and non-formal educators. For questions or to register for the workshop, please contact Dru Harrison 798-6032 or [dru.harrison@nhswcd.org](mailto:dru.harrison@nhswcd.org)