

May 2017 Newsletter

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"The students and I care about the work we do and look to find innovative ways to make a difference within our community."

- Jessica Lazarus, Bridgewater-Raynham Regional High School, Bridgewater

Hello GREEN TEAM Teachers!

Thanks to everyone who submitted a Teacher Response Form sharing their GREEN TEAM activities this school year! We've heard from over 60 schools, and will be including your stories, quotes, and photos in the newsletter and the [GREEN TEAM Spotlight](#) on the website. Photos we have received so far to the [GREEN TEAM Photo Gallery](#) will be posted soon. Prizes and Certificates of Recognition will be shipped this month!

R3 Conference Presentations

Attendees to the 2017 R3 Conference on March 27 had the opportunity to learn valuable tips about school recycling and diverting lunchroom waste from disposal. If you missed the conference, you can view these PowerPoint presentations from the K-12 Track:

MassDEP [School Recycling Nuts & Bolts Moving Toward Zero Waste](#)

MassDEP [The Green Team Program Highlights](#)

Winchester School District [Recycling Before the Grant](#)

Greenfield Public Schools [MassDEP Sustainable Materials Recovery Program Grant](#)

Ipswich School District [The System of Sustainability in Education](#)

"Greenout" Your Locker Cleanout

As you prepare for the end of the school year, don't forget to make a waste reduction plan for your locker cleanout. MassRecycle's [Great Locker Greenout Toolkit](#) offers suggestions for how to organize a locker "greenout" that maximizes reuse and recycling, and minimizes trash.

GREEN TEAM in the Spotlight

Youth Environmental & Social Society (YESS) students at **Bridgewater-Raynham Regional High School** in Bridgewater have been busy with a number of environmental activities, including field trips, guest speakers, fundraisers, events, and hands-on activities! These activities are frequently written about in their school newspaper and shared with the local community.

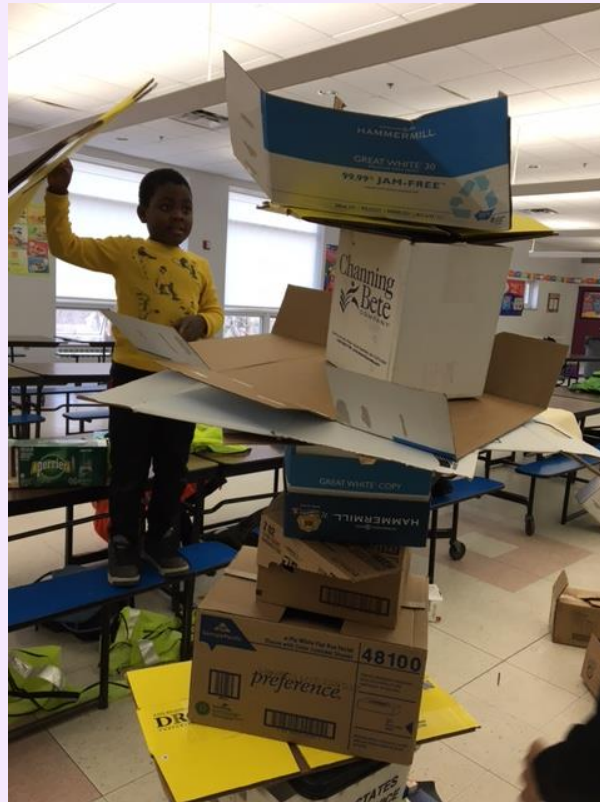


*Students from **Bridgewater-Raynham Regional High School**
clean up the beach!*

Students in the 21st Century After School Program at **South Street Elementary School** in Fitchburg started a recycling program. Students worked with the school's custodian to set up recycling bins in all areas of the school, and also put up posters and sent out messages to classrooms. Two days each week students collected, sorted, and weighed the recyclables. They kept weekly graphs to learn about ways to limit what is going into landfills. This recycling effort is related to district-wide recycling assistance for the City of Fitchburg from a MassDEP [Sustainable Materials Recovery Program \(SMRP\)](#).

[grant](#), which provided funding to purchase recycling bins.

The school is also adding three raised gardens to three that are already being used. Students will plant a butterfly garden, an herb garden and a vegetable garden, and learn about composting.



*A student from **South Street Elementary School** piles cardboard as part of the school's new recycling program.*

The Garden Club at **Captain Samuel L. Brown School** in Peabody teaches children the benefits of growing their own food, eating well, and how to start a garden at home. Students are mentored by members of the local adult garden club and work with a garden located in the front of the school that also serves as a resource for lessons. Some plants are started in an indoor hydroponic garden for student investigations. Decaying plants are used for science projects and the school is currently working with a Boy Scout to repair and expand the current garden to include a hoop garden bed.

Students also attended Peabody's annual GreenFest, where they made items to sell (such as candles, crayons, upcycled pouches, and can tab jewelry), and presented eco-friendly science fair projects. The school was chosen as the site for this event four years ago because of their efforts with sustainability,

and many former students return to help out.



*Students from **Captain Samuel L. Brown School** show off their upcycled can tab jewelry.*

A team of approximately 25 students at **Sprague Elementary School** in Wellesley helped start a cafeteria recycling program. Students created signs about what can be recycled, and presented the program in a school assembly. One student even wrote a letter to the Board of Health in support of food donation. As a result of their efforts, the school now produces fewer than two bags of trash, down from the six generated before the program was implemented!

“Sprague's success was dependent on learning from the Cafeteria Recycling Pilot conducted at Bates Elementary School, the support of Sprague's principal, Susan Snyder, and the help of the Parent Green Team.” – Ellen Banthin, Sprague Elementary School, Wellesley



*A sign made by students at **Sprague Elementary School**, illustrating the materials from the cafeteria that can be recycled.*

Congratulations to the Project Green Schools' [Green Difference Award Winners](#) from Massachusetts! Project Green Schools honors and recognizes Outstanding National Environmental Education & STEM Education efforts in schools and communities.

- Outstanding Green Student: Anna Shi from Chelmsford High School, Chelmsford
- Outstanding Commitment to Green-o-vation:
 - Quaboag Regional Middle Innovation School, Warren
 - The Sage School, Foxborough
- Outstanding Green Community Hero: Sustainability Efforts in Wellesley's Cafeterias
- Outstanding Green Principal: Rebecca Franks, West Middle School, Andover
- Sustainability Award: Anne T. Dunphy School, Williamsburg

GREEN TEAM in the Media

[Wicked Local](#) published an article about the cafeteria “Food Recovery Program” at several Newburyport Schools, including Nock Middle School, Molin Upper Elementary School, and Bresnahan Elementary School. These schools have rescued nearly 1,500 pounds of food, such as milk cartons and whole fruits, and donated it to Nourishing the North Shore.

[Wicked Local](#) also reports that thanks to a grant request submitted by Keep Mansfield Beautiful, the Coca-Cola Company recently awarded 18 new outdoor recycling bins to the Mansfield school system. The new bins were installed at Mansfield High School’s athletic fields, track, and other strategic locations outside Qualters Middle School, Jordan Jackson School, and Robinson School.

The [Sippican Week](#) reports that the entire school district in the tri-town area (Rochester, Marion, and Mattapoisett) has pitched in to recover textiles. Recycling bins are available at every public school in the tri-town area, and the money raised from the collected textiles will help fund teachers’ requests and help bring a community connection to the schools.

School Programs, Events, Competitions, and Professional Development

Mark your calendars with these grant opportunities, workshops, conferences and more!

April - May – Each year, the [Great Massachusetts Litter Cleanup](#) is held across the state in the months of April and May. You can sign up to volunteer or organize a cleanup in your community.

May 7-13 – The theme for this year’s [International Compost Awareness Week](#) (ICAW) is "Compost! Healthy Soil, Healthy Food." The [2017 winning poster](#) has been announced. The goal of the program, which includes a poster contest, is to raise public awareness about the benefits of using compost to improve or maintain high quality soil, grow healthy plants, reduce the use of fertilizer and pesticides, improve water quality, and protect the environment.

May 10 – [Bike to School Day](#) celebrates the benefits of biking and walking to school. Register your school’s event to be counted among the thousands of schools that participate each year, and be entered into drawings for bikes and helmets!

May 13 – Registration is now live for the [11th Annual Youth Summit on Climate and Sustainability](#) at MIT. This free and interactive event brings together young climate leaders from the region to hone their skills, identify ways to collaborate, share best practices, celebrate successes, and take action to create a more sustainable future.

May 15 – Pledge to get your hands dirty on [Plant Something Day!](#) Gardening can beautify your school yard, reduce stress, and provide pollen or nectar for pollinators.

May 15 – Application deadline to attend the [Student Conservation Corps & Congress](#) in Shepherdstown, WV, from June 25-July 1. Empowers student environmental leaders with the skills, knowledge, and tools to address climate change and natural resource conservation challenges.

May 17 – School Nutrition Association Webinar, [Food Waste: The Latest Movement](#), at 2pm. [Register](#) to learn ways to reduce, recover, and recycle wasted food

May 18 – [Massachusetts Envirothon 2017](#) at Drumlin Farm in Lincoln. High school students show how much they know about Massachusetts' soils, forests, water, and wildlife, as well as this year's current issue, agricultural soil and water conservation, at this outdoor field competition. Teams rotate through four "ecostations" where they answer written questions and engage in hands-on activities.

May 18 – [Outdoor Classroom Day](#), a day to celebrate and inspire learning and play outside the classroom. Join schools from across the world in taking at least one class outdoors for one lesson!

May 19 – Project Green Schools' [2017 Green Difference Awards Ceremony](#) will be held at the Massachusetts State House in Boston. Project Green Schools honors and recognizes Outstanding National Environmental Education & STEM Education efforts in schools and communities.

May 22-23 – Save the date for the Northeast Resource Recovery Association (NRRA) [36th Annual Conference & Expo in](#) Manchester, NH, with a School Recycling Conference on May 23.

June 10-14 – Framingham State University is hosting a one-week institute for middle and high school educators, [New Visions for a Changing World: Towards a Pedagogy of Climate Change](#). This [Museum Institute for Teaching Science](#) course gives educators the chance to ask urgent questions about planetary changes, gather and evaluate data, develop hypotheses, and consider evidence and consequences. The experience includes field and laboratory work at the recently opened state-of-the-art Framingham State University Hemenway Laboratories.

June 19 – Entry deadline for the [Marine Debris](#) and [Ocean Pollution: Challenges & Solutions](#) student contests. These contests, funded by [NOAA](#), challenge students to design, implement, and assess a creative advocacy project in their school or community.

June 19 – July 2 – [Sustainable Development & Social Entrepreneurship](#) session at Yale Young Global Scholars Program. The session is designed for students who are interested in exploring innovative

solutions to the greatest challenges facing our species and the planet.

June 19-25 – [National Pollinator Week](#) is a time to celebrate pollinators and spread the word about what we can do to protect them. Join the international celebration of the valuable ecosystem services provided by bees, birds, butterflies, bats and beetles by writing to the Governor or hosting or attending a pollinator event.

June 25 - July 1 – [Student Conservation Corps & Congress](#) in Shepherdstown, WV, which empowers student environmental leaders with the skills, knowledge, and tools to address climate change and natural resource conservation challenges. The application deadline is May 15.

Other Resources

The USDA and EPA published [a new guide to conducting food waste audits](#) at schools. The guide is an easy-to-follow roadmap that students, teachers and staff can use to investigate what food is going to waste in their cafeterias, and learn how to implement solutions for preventing and reducing student waste. [Read more about this tool here.](#)

Wishing you a GREEN wrap-up to your school year!

Emily Fabel

Green Team Program Administrator

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Contact Us:

Tel: (413) 586-7350 ext. 290

Fax: (413) 586-7351

Email: recycle@thegreenteam.org