

May 2018 Newsletter

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"Our school is moving very quickly towards zero-waste goals, farm-to-table goals, and recycling goals. I am excited for the opportunities that The GREEN TEAM encourages us to take, and cannot be more proud of our "Green Beans".

-Mary Stucklen, Science Teacher, Monument Valley Regional Middle School

Hello GREEN TEAM Teachers!

Thanks to everyone who submitted a Teacher Response Form sharing their GREEN TEAM activities this school year! We will be accepting [Teacher Response Forms](#) until May 11 this year due to all the snow days. We've heard from 35 schools, and will be including your stories, quotes, and photos in the newsletter and The [GREEN TEAM Spotlight](#) on the website. We posted the photos we have received so far to The [GREEN TEAM Photo Gallery](#). Prizes and Certificates of Recognition will be shipped this month! Please send in your [Teacher Response Form](#) today if you haven't already done so.

New GREEN TEAM Instructional Video: Source Separation

Source separation is a system by which organic and recyclable materials are separated from the waste stream and collected for recycling, animal feed, composting, or anaerobic digestion. This instructional video is intended to serve as an informative and helpful resource for administrative staff, students, chefs, custodial staff, teachers, and parents to learn best practices for implementing a successful

source separation program in school cafeterias.



Highlights from MassRecycle R3 Conference

Attendees at the 2018 R3 Conference on March 26 had the opportunity to learn about strategies for eliminating disposable trays and reducing food waste from the cafeteria. If you missed the conference, check out the following PowerPoint presentations from the K-12 Track:

- [School Composting: Food Scraps & Trays](#) – Meryl Brott, City of Cambridge Recycling Program Manager
- [Moving from Recycling to Composting in School Kitchens](#) – Gail Koutroubas, Andover Public Schools Director of Food & Nutrition Services

Also at the R3 Conference, **Hingham High School** received the MassRecycle K-12 Recycler of the Year Award. Congratulations to the Hingham High School Green Team!

GREEN TEAM Spotlight

Thompson Elementary School in Arlington recently hosted a school-wide Science Expo and participated in the Town of Arlington's 2018 EcoFest. The school focused on different types of natural decomposers including soil bacteria, gut bacteria, tree fungi and lichen, and composting with red wiggler worms. Fourth grade students also transformed trash and compost into art, education, and

collective action. Several highly-motivated students submitted essays to the school's director of food service about the benefits of switching to compostable and re-usable straws and cafeteria trays.



Thompson Elementary School students submitted “trashformation” ideas around the theme of Ecosystem Superheroes. Photo provided by Elizabeth Rocco.

Students at **West Brookfield Elementary School** recently created windmills to power model water pumps. Inspired by the book *A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park, students in the school's Green Team calculated their personal daily water usage and created a display of plastic water jugs to raise awareness about water access and conservation.



Students at West Brookfield Elementary School experimented with wind-powered model water pumps and worked to raise awareness surrounding everyday water usage.

Photo provided by Karen Oliveira.

Students at **Oakmont Regional High School** in Ashburnham have been busy all school year with their school-wide recycling program, participating in the [Lexus Eco Challenge](#), and increasing environmental awareness during the school's Green Week.



Oakmont Regional High School students created a plastic pollution fishing game to raise awareness during Green Week. Photo provided by Alana Archangelo.

Benjamin Banneker Charter Public School in Cambridge will be hosting its annual STEAMS Expo on June 12, integrating science, technology, engineering, art, math, and social studies.



Save THE Date

Benjamin Banneker
Charter Public School's
Annual STEAMS Expo!

When: June 12, 2018

Time: 9:00 - 2:00 & 5:30 - 7:00

Where: 21 Notre Dame Ave., Cambridge

Check out The [GREEN TEAM Photo Gallery](#) for even more recent photos. Please email your photos to recycle@thegreenteam.org to share them in the gallery and in upcoming newsletters.

GREEN TEAM in the Media

Wicked Local Lexington reported on the great strides **Arlington and Lexington Public Schools** are [making in reducing their cafeteria waste](#). Both districts have accomplished significant reductions in the amount of waste generated in their school cafeterias since implementing recycling and composting. In the elementary schools alone, lunchroom trash has been slashed from an average of six to seven bags per day to one!

Project Green Schools recently announced its 2018 [Green Difference Award Winners](#), and several were from right here in Massachusetts! Congratulations to the following Massachusetts schools for their awards and honorable mentions:

Awardees

- **Andover High School**

- **Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School**
- **Hopkinton Middle School**
- **Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School**
- **Madison Park Technical Vocational High School**
- **Malden High School**
- **Manchester-Essex High School**
- **Mendon Upton Regional School District**
- **Pingree School**
- **Warren Community Elementary School**
- **West Tisbury School**

Honorable Mentions

- **Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School**
- **Peabody Public Schools**
- **Upper Cape Technical Regional High School**
- **Wellesley Middle School**
- **West Tisbury School**

If your school is covered in the local media, let us know and we'll add it to [The GREEN TEAM in the Media](#) page!

School Programs, Events, Competitions, and Professional Development

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

May 6-12 – [International Compost Awareness Week](#). Celebrated annually during the first week in May, International Compost Awareness Week is a comprehensive educational initiative designed to raise awareness of the benefits of composting. This year's theme is Compost! Building a Better Future.

May 9 – [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 who participate each year and to be entered into drawings for bikes and helmets!

May 10 – The Furniture Trust's [8th Annual Eco-Carpentry Challenge](#) invites students across Massachusetts to develop new products from a suite of used office furniture donated by local organizations to increase awareness about the value of upcycling. Participating students showcase their creations at this special event in Boston.

May 14 - Awards Ceremony for the [Secretary's Awards for Excellence in Energy and Environmental Education](#) at the State House, sponsored by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

May 15 – Pledge to get your hands dirty on [Plant Something Day](#). Gardening can beautify your neighborhood, reduce your stress level, cut your home energy costs, and provide pollen or nectar for pollinators.

May 17 – Mark your calendars for [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 18 – Save the date for the [2018 Massachusetts Envirothon](#), at Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park in Uxbridge.

May 19 – Radius at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Boston Latin School YouthCAN will host the [12th Annual Youth Summit on Climate and Sustainability](#). This day-long event includes a keynote speaker, a variety of workshops, and more than 30 exhibitors. [Registration is now open](#).

May 21-22 – Save the Date for the Northeast Resource Recovery Association's (NRRA) [37th Annual Conference & Expo](#) in Manchester, NH, including the [9th Annual School Recycling Conference](#) on May 22.

May 22 – NRRA's [9th Annual School Recycling Conference](#). This one-day event offers hands-on workshops and activities for teachers and students. Workshop topics include repair cafes, vermicomposting, share tables, and more! [Registration is now open](#).

June 18 – Application deadline for the [Ocean Awareness Contest](#). Students aged 11-18 from around the world are invited to explore, express, and advocate for issues related to climate change and our oceans through creative visual art, poetry, prose, film, or music projects.

June 18-24 – [National Pollinator Week](#) is a celebration of valuable species of pollinators including bees, birds, butterflies, and more. The website offers resources to help support these creatures and the critical role they play in our lives. Visit the Pollinator Partnership's [website](#) to learn about events happening in your area, or add your event to the nationwide map!

July 8-21 – [Sustainable Development & Social Entrepreneurship Session](#) at the Yale Young Global

Scholars Program. This program is focused on exploring innovative solutions to the greatest challenges facing the international community today, and aims to prepare students to tackle problems related to particular areas of interest, including global health, international development, environmental sustainability, and gender equality.

Other Resources

The World Wildlife Foundation's [Food Waste Warrior Toolkit & Curriculum](#) provides lessons, activities, and resources for reducing food waste in the cafeteria. Students will continue learning in the lunchroom with these lessons that can be adjusted for grades 5-12.

Sustainable America's blog recently reported on [5 Ways to Green Your School](#). These low-cost efforts include food waste audits and idle-free zones, as well as other ideas and resources to help students learn about and implement sustainability measures in their schools.

[The Green Education Foundation](#) is a national non-profit organization that offers sustainability lesson plans and programs for K-12 students and teachers. You can [join online](#) at no cost and explore a range of environmental education resources and activities, including the [Waste-Free Snack Challenge](#). For this activity, students pledge to carry their drinks and snacks in reusable containers for a week, encouraging reuse and reducing their snack waste. Learn more by watching the [video on Fisher School](#) in Walpole, MA, where nearly 500 students achieved a 53% reduction in their school's total waste!

Wishing you a GREEN start to spring at your school!

Emily Fabel

Green Team Program Administrator

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