

Manassas City Public Schools



Growing up Green

In Manassas City Public Schools, we have implemented a division-wide recycling program, **Growing up Green**.

We have been recognized as a MAGNA Award winner by the National School Board Association and received the Outstanding Waste Reduction and Prevention Award by the Virginia Recycling Association in 2009. We also have been recognized by the Virginia School Board

Association as a VSBA Certified Green School Division.

One component of the School Board's Strategic Plan focuses on preparing students for the 21st century by becoming stewards of our community and learning a lifetime commitment for environmental stewardship. Watching a group of high school students empty the recycle bins at the end of the day is reward enough to know we must work together as a team to save our planet.

Recycling successes include one elementary school participating in a campaign that saved an acre of rainforest, one school starting a composting project, several have collected cell phones for our soldiers and one school had a nature trail become Wildlife Habitat Certified.

This entire program has aligned itself with our focus on wellness and saving our environment. Celebrating our success has made this recycling program a collaborative effort for the entire Manassas community, including parents, the School Board, students and staff at our nine campuses and offices.

Reduce-Reuse-Recycle-Rethink

The motto, "Reduce-Reuse-Recycle-Rethink," has been paramount to expanding **Growing up Green** across the entire division.

Recycling is currently collected in 525 bins, which are conveniently located in each classroom and in each office. Each school has a recycling coordinator who spearheads the activities at the individual school sites and offices.



Recycling coordinators, including **Sandy Thompson, Division-wide Coordinator**, meet on a regular basis to plan recycling activities and share successes. The School Recycling Coordinators are as follows: Jill Grissom, Sarah Kessinger, Faye Stewart-Stark, Susan Ridgeway, Pamela Salony, Karen Etherington, Belva Niessen, Gwen Talbot, and Mark Demko.

The schools have formed recycling clubs. To share some of their projects: one school distributed 100 trees at their Shamrock Fun Run; another school provided student volunteers at the City Spring Cleanup Day; and another school participated in the Paper to Pearls

program which takes old recycled paper, makes necklaces and donates the proceeds to Ugandan women. Many schools are recycling ink cartridges, glue sticks, drink containers, and food wrappers.

Creative Plans

Each school has developed a plan based on individual needs and interests, and how creative they have been!



Student participation and ownership has been key to the success of **Growing up Green**. Involving all stakeholders in communicating and training in the art of recycling has provided the framework for success.

Because of **Growing up Green**, students are so engaged in saving our planet that this has spawned other departments to look at their waste. Items such as outdated computers are now recycled; energy-efficient light

bulbs are used in all classrooms; and recycling bins are everywhere one looks. Motivating our students and staff to recycle where they work, play and learn, developed the framework for the buy-in from all stakeholders.

For the entire 2008 time frame, MCPS recycled 81.56 tons of recyclable materials including paper, aluminum, glass and metal. Seventy-eight percent (78%) of our total for recycling was paper.

Successful Partnership

The recycling program, **Growing up Green** is a successful partnership with the Manassas City government, waste disposal company, and schools, which teaches students, families and staff environmentally responsible behaviors.

Major recycling efforts at one school included selling bird seed wreaths to raise money to adopt a polar bear; and The Hug a Tree and Give a Tree Plant projects to save our planet.



Our focus is on saving the environment and teaching our children and staff that the benefits of recycling are priceless.

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