



CERTIFICATION GUIDE

Recycling, Waste Management and Sustainability Initiative

In partnership with



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ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
<http://www.asdk12.org/asdgreenschools>
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Table of Contents

1	ASD Green Schools	2
1.1	ASD GREEN SCHOOLS Certification Process	3
1.2	Waste Characterization Study (WCS)	4
1.2.1	What will be sorted during the Study?	4
1.2.2	Methods	4
2	Incentives/Events/Ideas	7
2.1	ASD Green Schools Recycling Slip (required for certification)	7
2.2	Keep America Beautiful - Recycling Bowl	7
2.3	PepsiCo. Recycling Rally	8
2.4	Green Events	9
2.5	Expand your Recycling Program	9
2.6	Introduce Reuse Bins	10
2.7	Start a Food Share / Share Table	10
2.7.1	Recycling Announcements	10
3	Incentives and Benefits	11
3.1	Recycling Mini-Grants	11
3.2	Recycling Vests	12
	12
	Get Certified Now!	12
4	ASD Green Schools - Sustainability Guide	13

1 ASD GREEN SCHOOLS

ASD Green Schools is a recycling, waste reduction and sustainability initiative for schools. The initiative is voluntary and achievable through a certification process. A set of criteria define certification requirements for schools and each school will be re-assessed every other year. The initiative will provide a low cost, low time platform that will enable schools to achieve and meet sustainability goals while educating students on the importance of recycling, waste reduction, and sustainability.

The creation of school specific sustainability plans are part of the initiative, allowing schools to integrate them into the curriculum or supplement their lesson plans. A classroom, club, student body, teacher, BPO or parent can be the ambassadors of the program. ASD Green Schools will provide training to a small group and allow the group to educate the entire school through a series of activities and events. The initiative will provide recycling and waste management feedback to schools while creating an educational environment for students. In addition, the program will generate recycling data that will facilitate tracking of recycling and



Figure 1 - Food waste collection at schools

waste reduction at ASD.

1.1 ASD GREEN SCHOOLS CERTIFICATION PROCESS

ASD Green Schools will require each school to meet a set of criteria prior to achieving certification. The questionnaire provided at the end of this document, defines the criteria used for the certification process. Once the school is ready to be certified, the recycling coordinator will visit and certify those schools who meet the criteria. In addition, the recycling coordinator will provide support to those schools that need help starting the program or those who need help finalizing the process. Below are the criteria for certification.

1. ***Establish a Green Team*** The green team will be the leaders of the schools recycling efforts. The green team must be sponsored by a staff member, BPO, Parent or Volunteer and can consist of a motivated student group, classroom, or student body
2. ***Assess your Waste*** A waste characterization study (WCS) done by each school will provide information regarding type and origin of waste for the school. If a WCS is not possible, the school will use the weighted waste characterization for the district. The waste characterization study will allow the school to measure their progress and set goals for each year. The green team with the help of teachers, sponsors and the recycling coordinator will perform the waste characterization studies.
3. ***Set Goals and Make a Plan*** Outline a recycling and waste reduction plan based on the results from your waste study. The recycling coordinator will help each school through the process of making plans to meet the set goals.
4. ***Promote/Educate/Incentivize*** There are a variety of educational resources, activities and initiatives are available to promote recycling, waste reduction, and sustainability. Programs can vary depending on the desired involvement the school and students. Each school will be required to implement at least one event/activity that will aid in waste reduction and recycling. In an effort to reduce contamination in the recycling bin, each school will implement a recycling feedback system to evaluate classrooms during recycling day.
5. ***Measure and Share your Success*** As part of ASD Green Schools, measuring your success is of utmost importance. Each school will have an own website page, within the recycling website, to enable them to measure and share their success. Analyzing and reporting data will help spread environmental education through data analysis.

To share your success, schools can utilize intercom announcements in the mornings to acknowledge recycling students or classroom, give recycling tips, and keep the school informed of their recycling data.

Recycling contamination records and WCS results can be presented at PTA/PTO meetings, school events and be used in competitions with other schools.
6. ***Celebrate your CERTIFICATION!*** Once you have met the above criteria you will become a certified ASD Green School. The certification will provide you with a certificate plaque, acknowledgment in newsletters, principal meetings, and the Education Center.

1.2 WASTE CHARACTERIZATION STUDY (WCS)

Waste characterization studies are a unique way of determining the types of waste generated by a particular school. The study will help answer questions, such as, what quantity of waste is being generated? What type of waste is being generated? How much of the waste is recyclable? Compostable? Or garbage? Answering such questions facilitate the creation of a robust waste reduction and recycling plan for each school. In addition, the study will provide hands-on involvement for students by allowing teachers to use the data collected to supplement math lessons plans on weight, volume and data analysis.

The green team with the aid of their sponsor and recycling coordinator will complete the WCS at each participating school. The waste study will last approximately 1 to 2 hours, depending on the study type. The study will provide educational and hands-on opportunities for the students. Additionally, the study will allow the green team set goals/targets for waste reduction and understand the composition of their garbage.

The study will separate waste into five categories: recyclables, reusables, food waste/compostables, liquids and landfill material. The results will help identify major waste contributors, allowing schools to create an efficient waste reduction plan focusing on composting, reducing, reusing and recycling.

1.2.1 What will be sorted during the Study?

The WCS will have the option of sorting waste in the following categories:

1. Recyclables
 - a. Recyclable paper
 - b. Recyclable plastics (#1 & #2)
 - c. Recyclable aluminum
2. Reusable Items
 - a. Notebooks
 - b. Books
 - c. Other reusable items
3. Food Waste
 - a. Compostable
 - b. Non- compostable (Will end up in landfill, but used for food waste analysis purposes)
 - i. Packaging
 - ii. Liquid
 - iii. bones
4. Landfill Material (Garbage)

1.2.2 Methods

The study will consist of a series of steps. The WCS is the most time consuming portion of the process and will consist of:

Step 1 – Planning

- Obtain school permission and set dates
- Pick study type – Cafeteria or classroom or school wide
- Collect study waste material (if needed for study type)

Step 2 - Conduct the WCS

- Follow study procedures

Step 3 – Evaluate the results

- Compile results
- Graph results
- Compile surveys and photos

Step 1: Planning

Prior to performing the study, the green group sponsor shall obtain permission from the school to conduct the study and contact the recycling coordinator with a study date. Subsequently, the sponsor shall pick a study type (multiple studies are ok). The cafeteria for the cafeteria waste study and an outdoor covered space or a large indoor area, such as gyms or cafeteria for the classroom/school WCS. In the case, that these locations are not available, classrooms are a great option.

If the selected are classroom or school wide, the sponsor shall coordinate with the custodian to save the previous day's trash from the desired location for the study. ***** DO NOT collect garbage from Outdoor areas, bathroom, and the health room for the study. Emphasize this to the custodians or person collecting garbage*****. Sponsors are to inform the recycling coordinator at least 2 weeks in advance of the desired study date and the type of study desired (i.e. Classroom, school, cafeteria). The recycling coordinator will provide all the materials needed for the study.

Step 2: Conducting the WCS

*****All students shall use rubber, latex-free, gloves and wear close-toed shoes during the study*****

Classroom or school study

1. The recycling coordinator will go over the sorting procedures (catered to each school), recording sheet, WCS kit, and safety precautions.
2. All students will put on gloves and unfold the tarp onto the ground.
3. Prior to starting, weigh all the full bags of trash and an empty sorting bucket. Record the weights onto the recording sheet.
4. **Sponsors or recycling coordinator will empty the full waste bags onto tarp and thoroughly inspect for any sharp objects or any object that can harm students.** Once the garbage is inspected and found safe, the green team will begin to separate waste into the categories listed above.
5. Record the weight of each bucket onto the recording sheet.
6. Make notes, take photos of the progress, and sorted waste – i.e., types of food, types of plastics, observations, etc.

7. CLEAN UP!

- a. Return recyclables to their appropriate bin. The Recycling coordinator will take the recyclables that are not recycled at the school.
- b. Put garbage in the trash compactor or dumpster.
- c. Wash tarp, buckets, and sweep floor. Mop when necessary.
- d. Set a day to review data

Cafeteria Study

1. The recycling coordinator will go over the sorting procedures (catered for each school), recording sheet, WCS kit, sorting table positions and safety precautions.
2. Students will set up the sorting area, weight empty sorting buckets, and put on gloves.
3. Students under the supervision of the sponsors and volunteers will sort lunches prior to disposal into their respective buckets. Each school will have the option of performing a student food survey to access the likes and dislikes of the meal.
4. Once lunchtime is over, weigh filled buckets of sorted material and the recorded their weight on the recording sheet.
5. Make notes and take photos of the separated waste and the study process – types of food, types of plastics, observations, etc.
6. CLEAN UP!
 - a. Return recyclables to their appropriate bins. The Recycling coordinator will take the recyclables that are not recycled at the school.
 - b. Put garbage in its appropriate bin
 - c. Clean, wash buckets, and sweep floor. Mop when necessary.
 - d. Set a day to review data

Step 3: Results Analysis

With the help of the sponsor and the recycling coordinator, the students will compile the spreadsheet provided for the study to analyze the data. During the data analysis portion use percentages and graphs to analyze data. AS a class, sort and discuss all comments and results from surveys. As a deliverable, generate a small report to summarize the data and results, create goals, and state recommendations to meet waste reduction and recycling goals.

2 INCENTIVES/EVENTS/IDEAS

A variety of incentives and events are available to promote the recycling program at your school. ASD Green Schools requires schools utilize the recycling slip monitoring system and one other event/incentive a year.

2.1 ASD GREEN SCHOOLS RECYCLING SLIP (REQUIRED FOR CERTIFICATION)

The ASD Green Schools recycling slip is designed to encourage classrooms to recycle. Each week the green team will go around the collect and quickly inspect schools recycling. If the recycling bin is contaminated, students will note type of contaminants on the slip and provide feedback on how to address their contamination issues. The recycling crew will assess the degree of the contamination. If the contamination material can be easily removed, the recycling will be salvaged, if not, the material has to be disposed of in the garbage.

Following collection, the green team will record those classrooms with contamination free recycling bins. Using the intercom, green team members can acknowledge these classrooms and award one (random selection) the recycling classroom champion of the week. As an option, a small trophy can be awarded to the selected classroom. This trophy can be displayed outside of the room, creating pride and ownership of their recycling efforts.



The image shows a 'Recycling Slip' form from ASD Green Schools. It features a logo on the top left with a recycling symbol and the text 'ASD GREEN SCHOOLS'. The title 'Recycling Slip' is centered at the top. Below the title, there are fields for 'Date:', 'Classroom:', 'Type of Contamination:', and 'Comments/Improvement Advice:'. The form is designed for monitoring and providing feedback on classroom recycling efforts.

Figure 2: ASD Green School Recycling Slip

2.2 KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL - RECYCLING BOWL

Recycling is one of the easiest and most effective actions ANYONE can do to protect natural resources, conserve energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and create jobs. Recycling also provides materials that are made into new products. Want to ignite recycling in your school? Friendly competition is a proven way to motivate young people toward adopting sustainable behaviors.

Through Recycle-Bowl, the hope is to galvanize or improve recycling in elementary, middle and high schools across America.

Recycle Bowl Objectives

- Enhance and institute recycling programs within schools
- Increase or improve recycling rates in schools that currently recycle
- Provide teacher/student educational opportunities about recycling and waste reduction

There are 5 simple steps to participate in Recycle-Bowl

1) Register Your School

Recruit volunteers (principals, teachers, custodians and/or students) to help you compete in Recycle-Bowl. Register your school for Recycle-Bowl.

2) Make a Game Plan

Recycle-Bowl is perfect for experienced veterans as well as recycling rookies. Create a game plan to reach your team's goals, whether you're aiming to launch a brand new recycling program or improving your current recycling rate and quality. Find tips in this guide on how to start a school recycling program.

3) Rally Your Team

Communicate with your school's teachers, custodians, staff, and students so they know about the Recycle-Bowl competition and can get in the game! Train your team by educating them on what is recyclable at your school. Find ideas for promoting the competition as well as engaging educational activities in the Recycle-Bowl resources pages.

4) Compete

Collect and track the weight of your recyclables for 4 weeks during the Recycle-Bowl competition. There are many different ways to get the weight of your recyclables.

5) Submit your score

Report your data so you can see how your school stacked up against the competition.

2.3 PEPSICO. RECYCLING RALLY

Reducing waste and increasing recycling in K-12 schools requires effort from all parties, including teachers, students, parents, suppliers and waste and recycling companies. And to help these schools get started with their waste reduction and recycling efforts, PepsiCo is inviting U.S. schools to participate in its Recycle Rally program. With Recycle Rally, PepsiCo aims to make a big impact on recycling by giving schools an opportunity to develop effective recycling programs and the next generation of lifelong recyclers.

Here are some benefits of participating in the PepsiCo Recycling Rally:

- Download free resources, including poster templates, certificates, lessons, activities, and more from our online portal to promote recycling at your school.
- Track and view customized facts and figures about your school's impact. Share with students and staff to keep everyone motivated and stir up a little competition through our leaderboards.
- Refer to our helpful tips for collecting plastic (#1 PETE) bottles and aluminum cans at your school. Need bins? We'll offer chances to earn them throughout each school year.

- Accumulate reward points in your online account and redeem them for recycling bins, supplies, and other goodies to keep your recycling teams going strong!
- Set a weekly or monthly routine to log your activity in our simple web portal – it takes just a few clicks to enter your totals and revise your customizable goals.
- Compete in contests and promotions to show off creativity, dedication, or enthusiasm for recycling. Enjoy frequent chances to win prizes ranging from \$10 to \$1,000!

2.4 GREEN EVENTS

Schools will be required to host, at a minimum but not limited to, one event per year to raise awareness towards recycling, waste reduction and sustainability. Schools are encouraged to host as many event as they like. Below are some ideas.

- Green Week/Earth Day
- Compost week/Day
- Halloween Costume Trade
- Take Back the Tap Awareness booth/day
- Recycled Art Contest
- Clothes Drive
- Recycling Weekly Tips
- 5R's Campaign week
- Waste Free Wednesday

Through the year, schools hold events that produce a significant amount of waste. To reduce waste at these events, BMP can be taken into effect. Schools, PTA/PTO, clubs, and any administration are encouraged to contact the Recycling Coordinator for help and for ideas to create a low waste event. The recycling program will have an event kit that will facilitate waste separation that can be brought to the event.

2.5 EXPAND YOUR RECYCLING PROGRAM

ASD currently focuses on mixed paper and waste awareness. Schools that want to be more proactive and advance the recycling program, have the options of adding Aluminum can, plastic, E-waste recycling to their stream. Currently, in Anchorage, the only items that are recycled at a commercial level are mixed paper and cardboard. Curbside co-mingled recycling (cans, plastic, mixed paper) is offered as a collection service and can be added to the school's refuse service at a low cost (~\$20/month for bi-monthly collection). Schools also have the option of dropping off their recycling at the central transfer station, community recycling facility, or at drop-off sites located throughout the city.



Figure 3: Items allowed on curbside commingled recycling

2.6 INTRODUCE REUSE BINS

More important than recycling is reusing. On a daily basis students dispose of items that can be reused by other students and/or classrooms. By reusing, items are used to their lifetime potential. Reusing helps schools reduce the refuse at the end of the year. Reusing can also benefit the school community as it can help those in need.

The idea behind the reuse bin is to have a bin in each classroom where students can put items that can be reused. The items will have to be still be usable- no broken or unusable items. Items that can be placed in the bin include

- Notebooks and books
- Pens, pencils, coloring pencils, other classroom material
- Clothing (gloves, hats, sweaters, boots) – All these items must be washed

Items that are not taken by the students can be arranged to be picked up by the salvation army or other non-profit.

2.7 START A FOOD SHARE / SHARE TABLE

Food share allows students to give away unwanted food items that are unopened and/or uneaten so other students can consume them at no cost during lunchtime or after school. Trays, tables, bins, and coolers are good options to collect select food share items at the cafeteria. Food Share items are typically offered to those students that do not have lunch or are still hungry on the way out of school or during lunch. Food share tables are USDA approved and have shown to reduce food waste at schools. Refer to the [recycling SharePoint](#) for more information on share table or contact the recycling coordinator.



Figure 4: Food Share Table Items

2.7.1 Recycling Announcements

Schools typically have morning, weekly or random announcements over the intercom. Green teams can take advantage of this time and broadcast recycling info facts and announcements. On the Recycling SharePoint, there is a resource bank with a list of recycling facts, how-to's, and recycling tips. All this resources can be printed, cut, and placed in a bowl where the can be randomly drawn and read through the intercom. Green teams can also use this time to announce weekly winners and, talk about how to improve classroom recycling during the next week, and promote their recycling efforts.

3 INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS

Becoming a certified ASD Green School comes with benefits. Below are a set of set benefits available to schools after their certification is completed.

- **ASD Green Schools Certificate Plaque** – This can be displayed at your school and on the schools website
- **Newsletter Posting** – Newly certified schools Certification will be acknowledged in the weekly newsletter for the ASD.
- **Recycling Website Portion** – Each school will have a website portion with a data dashboard to display waste reduction results and exhibition achievements/photos.
- **School District Acknowledgment** - Certified schools will be acknowledged on a green leaf display at the Education Center.
- **Recycling Vests** - Green Teams will be given vests to be worn while collecting recycling or hosting events.
- **Opportunity to Apply for Recycling Grants** – ALPAR is granting small grants to incentivize the implementation of waste reduction practices.
- **Participate in Recycling and Waste Reduction Competitions** – Recycle-BOWL, PepsiCo Recycling Rally, and others.
- **Receive Awards** – Best school, best sponsor, recycling BPO of the year, Recycle-Bowl local Winner, Recycle Rally Local Winner, and more.
- **Potential Reductions to School Waste Bill** – By implementing more waste reduction practices, your compactor disposal amounts theoretically go down, creating cost savings. If your school's waste reduction is significant, the possibly of removing one of your trash dumpsters can be evaluated.
- **Educational Opportunities** - Create pride in recycling and waste reduction that your students will learn and take home.

3.1 RECYCLING MINI-GRANTS

ALPAR's 2018 recycling micro grant program is available to certified ASD Green Schools. Funds must be used for programs/projects related to recycling or waste management such as purchase of equipment, education, and/or public awareness efforts. Proposals will be accepted until all funds are disbursed. Grant requests can be for up to \$200. Preference will be given to first time applicant schools. Schools may apply for the grant once every two years.

Application Requirements:

- Description of and need for the project
- Goals and outcomes
- Timeline
- Budget
- Description of how ALPAR grant funds will be utilized



- Sources of other funding
- Staff Involved
- Application should short and concise. One or two pages will suffice.

3.2 RECYCLING VESTS

Thanks to a donation from the Municipality of Anchorage Solid Waste Services and Alaska Waste, recycling vests will be given to certified ASD Green Schools to complement their recycling collection crews. The vests will give students recognition for collection, and create pride and ownership of the schools recycling program. Younger students will look up to older students wearing the vests, generating enthusiasm and support from other classes. The vests will also identify the students as part of the green team, providing hall awareness for teachers and staff.



Figure 5: Front of Vest



Figure 6: Back of Vest

GET CERTIFIED NOW!

To become a certified ASD Green School and start taking advantage of the benefits, visit

<http://www.asdk12.org/asdgreenschools>

For more information regarding the recycling program, ASD Green Schools, and other recycling, waste reduction and sustainability inquiries contact the Andres Benitez Ospina (Recycling Coordinator)

Office: (907) 742-5050 / Cell :(907) 310-9003

recycling@asdk12.org

www.asdk12.org/recycling

4 ASD GREEN SCHOOLS - SUSTAINABILITY GUIDE

1. Establishing a green team
 - a. Do you have a green team? If so, describe your green team. (sponsor, number of members, activities)
 - b. Does your green team collect recycling or aid in the collection of recycling?
 - c. How often does your green team meet?
 - d. Does your green team have goals?
 - e. Has your school previously obtained a green star/green award in the past?
 - f. Does your school recycle any other material? (plastic, aluminum, glass)?
 - g. Are your recycling bins adequately labeled?
2. Access your Waste
 - a. Has your school done a waste characterization study?
 - b. Has your school done any type of waste analysis?
 - c. Does your school have a compost program?
 - d. Do students separate their garbage?
 - e. Does your school separate liquids after all meals?
 - f. Does your BPO help collect garbage during meals?
3. Set Goals and make a plan
 - a. Does your school incorporate recycling and waste reduction education in classes?
 - b. Does your school have a recycling monitoring system?
 - c. Does your school have recycling/waste reduction goals?
 - d. Does your school have recycling events?
4. Promote/Educate/incentivize your plan
 - a. Does your school have a recycling assessment system?
 - b. Does your school provide incentives for outstanding recycling?
 - c. Does your school have recycling/waste reduction feedback system?
 - d. Does your school honor your BPO's efforts in recycling?
 - e. Does your school host recycling events?
 - f. What does your school do to promote recycling?
 - g. Does your school use the morning announcements to promote recycling?
5. Measure and celebrate your success
 - a. Does your school keep a record of recycling?
 - b. Does your school keep a record of waste reduction?
 - c. Does your school keep a record of money saved by recycling and waste reduction?
 - d. Does your green team have a poster board or poster space?