

2017



[Café Recycling Handbook]

A guide for getting your school's recycling rates up and for helping make a bigger impact in your school! As each school is different, please keep your schools unique needs in mind. These are suggestions based on schools successfully recycling during lunch time.

CONTENTS

Contacts	1
Making a big impact in your school	2
Starting your program	2
Styrofoam Trays?	4
Examples	5
Program Maintenance	6
Program Growth	6
Extention for a Zero Waste Lesson Plan	7

CONTACTS

Seth Williams – Frisco ISD Recycling Coordinator

williase@friscoisd.org

Molly Kinson – City of Frisco Environmental Education Coordinator

mkinson@friscotexas.gov

Julianah Marie – City of Frisco Environmental Education Coordinator & PTA Environmental Chair
Leader

jmarie@friscotexas.gov

Waste Connections (formerly Progressive/IESI) –
Recycling Company

MAKING A BIG IMPACT IN YOUR SCHOOL

By weight, the most waste generated in schools happens during lunch. Even if your school is doing excellent in recycling the classroom your school still has room to improve. What are the benefits to your school for implementing waste reduction programs during lunch?

- Reducing trash costs in the schools.
- Opportunities for schools to be leaders (awards and recognition).
- Hands-on learning experience that goes past the classroom.
- Teaching the importance of resource conservation.
- Reduce food waste.
- Help feed hungry children in your school.
- Reduce litter on campus.
- Educate students and their families on reducing food waste.
- Keep costs of preparing food down.

Did you know?

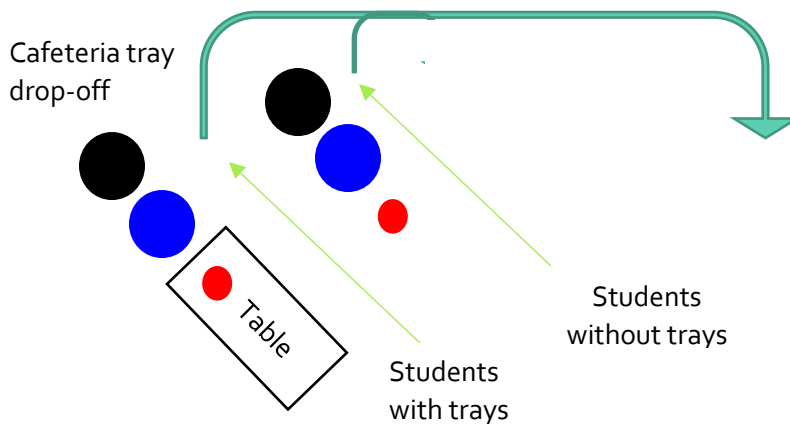
The average cost of packaging is \$1 for every \$11 spent! In other words, 9% of what you're spending goes into the packaging of your products.

STARTING YOUR PROGRAM

1. **Identify a point-person.** Especially during the kick-off period this person will coordinate with the rest of the team, both internally and externally.
2. **Assemble the Avengers!** Create a recycling team; Identify key players and community support. Your team should include: Principal, Recycling Coordinator, Café staff, Custodial staff, PTA Environmental Chair, parents, students, Fisd Recycling Coordinator, City of Frisco Environmental Educators.
3. **Request supplies for your school.** The items that your school may find to be useful:
 - Liquids bucket(s)
 - Extra gloves
 - Recycle bins/ lids
 - Posters
 - Example kits
 - Aprons for volunteers
 - Table
 - Plastic colander for liquids bucket to catch straws
4. **Set up the recycling stations.** The set-up we've found most successful is below:

Contact Recycle Coordinator at Fisd

Contact Julianah/ Molly at City of Frisco



5. **Educate your team** on not only what can be recycled but how they recycle each item.
6. **Prepare for the Café Recycling Kick-off.** Meet with your team and discuss the roles of each individual (can be done over email). Ensure ample volunteers – at least 3 – for each kick-off stage (sign-up forms from google forms, doodle polls, etc.). Decide on how your school wants to handle cafeteria recycling. This can be easily adapted from our guidelines to best meet the needs of your school and students. Some of the important decisions include:
 - Timeline – we suggest doing the entire kick-off to all grade levels within a week to not lose momentum in the program.
 - Share table – this is up to the principal at your school whether or not to have one. If there are any leftovers after the 5th grade lunch it might be an option to have the share table available as a snack table after school where first come, first serve can pick-up afternoon snacks.
 - i. Not only is the share table legal but it is encouraged! Good Samaritan Act was signed into place so that no person donating food could be sued if said food makes the recipient ill.
 - Any exception items – though it is up to the school to decide if there are items that aren't accepted in the recycling or trash. The biggest single item of waste is milk, it doesn't have to be. Milk can be poured into the liquids bucket and the carton can be recycled. Full milk cartons can be left on the share table (if available at your school). This is the lowest hanging fruit that can drastically improve your schools recycling rates!
 - Finalize volunteer list of at least 2-5 parent volunteers (the kick-off team) to help the students separate the items that need to be discarded.
 - Any incentives for teachers (like jeans passes) or contests for students, have the guidelines, judging, and prizes planned and promoted.
 - Green Team Coordinators send out a PowerPoint to all faculty, staff, and teachers about café recycling. There will be 2 formats of the PowerPoint, one as a refresher for schools who had already been doing recycling in the cafeteria and one for schools who are newly introducing recycling in the cafeteria. (suggested that teachers show these prior to lunch)
 - i. Refresher = 5 minute PowerPoint overview of all recycle items, single presentation (could be done on day 1 of kick-off)
 - ii. Intro for new schools = (4) 1 minute PowerPoints introducing a new type of item for each stage, then the 5 minute refresher PowerPoint with all items included.
7. **Kick-off your Café Recycling Program** Have a scheduled date and time line and stick with it!
 - Include a reminder in the morning announcements about the items being recycled in the cafeteria based on the stage (see Table 1 below for the suggested stages) – for example: “as part of our cafeteria recycling, we’re going to be recycling drink containers at lunch! Be sure to put your straws in the trash and dump your liquids before placing your drink container in the blue recycle bin.”
 - Additional signage is optional for each stage displayed in a promenade location. Staple examples of the trash and recycle items on poster board and taped to the front of the trash/ recycle bins. Environmental services will provide signage upon request.
 - Strongly encouraged to give students 2 extra minutes on the first day of each stage to clean up. The recycle team can expedite this by going around to each table during lunch and asking the students what in front of them is going in the trash and in the recycle so they can answer questions before the student’s cleanup.
 - During the cleanup, the recycle team will be stationed at the two lines (as shown in the diagram above) if possible one at each bin/bucket. If not possible, one at each line.

- The recycle team and teachers can point out students who are doing an extra good job at recycling for a chance to win a cool reusable lunch kit from Environmental Services!
- After each kickoff stage, have the recycle team discuss what went wrong and right and make note of it during the next kickoff stage to help reinforce good behavior and limit contamination and messes.

Table 1. Cafeteria Recycling Stages

Stage	Recycle	Trash	Dump
Stage 1: Drink Containers	Milk cartons, juice boxes, plastic bottles, glass bottles, beverage cans	Pouches (capri sun), straws	Liquids
Stage 2: Boxes and Bags	Lunchables boxes and trays, ziplock bags, plastic bags, microwave lunch boxes	Pizza boxes, chip/ cookie bags, food	
Stage 3: bowls and tubs	Yogurt containers, soup cans/ bowls, fruit cans/bowls	Food, yogurt tubes, fruit pouches	
Stage 4: Café trays	Clamshells, milk cartons, clean paper boats	Food, Paper napkins, utensils, straws, condiment packets, Styrofoam cups/trays, greasy/ dirty paper boats	liquids
Stage 5: All recycling	Clean (all food/ liquid gone): paper, plastic, cardboard, metal, glass	Food, greasy containers, food/drink pouches, yogurt tubes, Styrofoam, condiment packets, straws, utensils, paper napkins	liquids

STYROFOAM TRAYS?

New for 2017, we're allowing clean Styrofoam to be recycled as part of Environmental Services special pick-up! Schools don't pay for trash based on weight but rather based on space. Styrofoam trays can take up a lot of space in your schools dumpsters. Lunch trays For Styrofoam trays have 2 stacks: one for clean trays one for dirty trays. Using the stack then tap method (so all of the trays fit in the groves of each other) Figure 2.

Clean trays can be recycled by bagging and storing at your school then contacting Environmental Services for a pickup.

Dirty trays can be bagged and tossed into the trash.

Reminder: all trash and recycling needs to be bagged. Why? When not in bags, lighter items including Styrofoam trays can get swept up in the wind and cause litter on your campus.

EXAMPLES



FIGURE 1. LIQUIDS BUCKET WITH A COLENDAR TO KEEP STRAY STRAWS OUT OF THE BUCKET



FIGURE 2. EXAMPLE OF A CLEANUP LINE



FIGURE 2. NEATLY STACK FOAM TRAYS, SEPERATE STACKS FOR CLEAN TRAYS AND DIRTY TRAYS.

PROGRAM MAINTENANCE

Reconvene with the recycle team, café staff, custodial staff, the principal, and other interested parties one month after Stage 5 has started to see if your program needs any trouble shooting. If issues need outside help, please ask Julianah, Molly, or Mr. Williams.

Regular and open conversations with the custodial and café staff will help prevent problems from turning into habits. That being said – once running this program is mostly self-perpetuating only needing minimal work after the first month. Each year the program should be refreshed with any new changes (for example inclusion of new materials being recycled).

To keep students excited and recycling rates high, consider having a competition between grades. Consider having competitions / kick offs / program revamps around these dates: America Recycles Day (November 15th) Earth Day (April 22nd).

Cafeteria recycling is a very sustainable program, once it's implemented in a school it requires very little work to keep it going.

PROGRAM GROWTH

To prevent program stagnation, we suggest re-introducing it each year and considering going a step beyond to reduce the chance of program fatigue or stagnation. Consider growing your schools programs by:

- Changing purchasing practices from single-use to recyclable or from recyclable to reusable.
- Add different streams of recycling including teracycle for items like Capri sun pouches or chip bags (which can even generate money for the school)!
- Schools who really want to take it the extra mile can look into composting ventures either small-scale at the school or finding a vendor to accept quantities on a regular basis.
- Having "Zero Waste Challenge Days" where students are encouraged to generate no trash.
- Scheduling recesses before lunch has been shown to reduce food waste by up to 30% AND increased consumption of fruits and vegetables by up to 50%.
- Renaming foods ex: "x-ray vision carrots" or "Pop-eye strong spinach" has been shown to reduce food waste and facilitate healthy choices of fruit and veggie consumption.
- Allowing students to self-serve portions.
- Doing a café waste audit and signing up for the U.S. Food Waste Challenge to evaluate how the school stacks up against other schools and sharing challenges and successes.
- Extending lunch periods from 20 minutes to 30 minutes can reduce food waste by up to 1/3.
- Allowing students to keep a lunch or breakfast food item for a snack later in the food day.
- Serving fruits and vegetables sliced versus whole (especially apples).
- Sign up with Cornell's "Smarter Lunchroom" and do the scorecard tracker exercises.
- Purchasing reusable cups for students to use at the water fountains.
- A common misconception is each child needs to get a milk from the lunch line, posting signage so students know they have other options if they're thirsty (like water cups from the tip above).

EXTENTION FOR A ZERO WASTE LESSON PLAN

The goal of zero waste is for nothing to go into the landfill but anything with less than 10% of the discarded materials go to the landfill. The best use of food is to feed people, keep the waste hierarchy in mind when considering the food waste and packaging best end-results, Figure 3.

Reduce – by only including food that will be eaten and try to avoid packaging on foods. Buying snack foods in bulk and putting them into reusable containers is one of the ultimate ways to reduce waste.

Reuse – lunch boxes, sandwich boxes/ reusable wraps, reusable cutlery, reusable straws, cloth napkins.

Recycle – choose single use made with recyclable materials. For paper products, not having grease or liquid contamination.

Compost – (if available) sending nutrients back into the earth to help grow new food. Only for organic material – food waste, soiled paper/paperboard/cardboard/cartons.

Landfill – This is the least environmentally friendly form of disposing of waste.

FIGURE 3. WASTE REDUCTION HIERARCHY

