

PART B: GREEN SCHOOL SUMMARY

American Heritage School has made and continues to make strides in creating a green campus whose ideals reach from our students to administration...from our cleaning products to our curriculum. At the core of our green initiative is a student driven Green Team whose responsibilities include recycling paper and plastics on a regular basis school wide. Each class maintains their individual recycling bins in the classroom and at lunch. Aside from the standard paper and plastic, our campus participates in other recycling programs such as cell phones, ink cartridges, newspapers, and cardboard, and we continue to participate in green fundraising through Terracycle.

The Green Team's responsibilities don't end with recycling. They do a variety of school and community activities such as upkeep in the butterfly garden, beach cleanups, Earth Day activities, and Science Night. The Team also maintains our aquaponics system which is a focal point of our lower school campus. Whether it's a quick hello to the koi, fresh mint from the garden, or a hands-on experiences for students, there is always some kind of science fun taking place there. It is a teaching tool utilized by all grade levels and to give the classes ample space to participate in this outdoor learning experience, administration took steps to expand the area by increasing the size and location of the butterfly garden. The garden is often used school-wide for lower school reading areas, hands-on science lab experiences, integrating curriculum, and photography lessons.

In an attempt to bring the natural beauty of south Florida inside as well, our lower school library is a replica of a full-size forest, complete with a 3-D coral reef cave. The cave provides opportunities for students to learn about marine environment as well as offer a super cool classroom where students can sit in a giant shell or gaze at marine life. While the sealife in the library are sculpted, our students are just a short walk away from the real thing. In our Science lab, children turtle watch, observe chicks hatching, and learn about the proper diet for our rabbit. Students take part in activities centered around gardening, reducing, reusing and recycling, solar energy, ecosystems, and more. The field studies also continue through upper school with an environmental studies trips and shark tagging with UM researchers.

This year at American Heritage we have tried to think outside the "recycling" box and find other ways to go green. From running environmental videos on the announcements to an Earth Day tshirt design contest, we are trying to raise awareness and spark creativity. Efforts are also being made to reuse before we recycle with class projects and crafts for the holidays. In addition, we are in the process of starting a store selling upcycled items and crafts. The proceeds will be allocated to world wide environmental initiatives that our Green Team has chosen to support.

Our student body and our administration realizes that going green is not just a change in practice, but a change in lifestyle. We stress doing good things for our world, our community, our school, and also ourselves. We focus on health and well-being through physical education, yoga, sports programs, swimming, and healthy lunch choices.

American Heritage School of Boca/Delray's motto is "Knowledge, Integrity, and Compassion." Through our green practices, we are showing our students, staff, administration and our entire school family that this motto not only applies to us as individuals, but to us as a planet. Our students go on to be leaders in this world in every field from athletics and the fine arts to science and math. As we make strides as a green school, we are showing them how to leave their mark in this world without leaving their mark on this Earth.