

Part B-Summary of Green School Activities

Benoist Farms Elementary School has demonstrated the conservation and commitment to attain the status first of Green School of Promise two years ago, and of Green School of Excellence for the last two years. For the past three years, our school has put forth effort and dedication in the ongoing work of our Green Team. Our Green Team consists of teachers, parents, administration, students and student council members. We understand the importance of recycling, reusing and reducing the drain on Earth's natural resources.

Benoist Farms Elementary School has continued the use of recycling bins in every classroom as well as the cafeteria, front office, teacher workrooms and mailroom, separating recyclable waste products. Our school SACC committee continues with a group of students and staff that are called the "Earth Patrol." These individual patrol our campus looking for "offenders" or people not following the Green Way of living. Citations being issued will make the citizens of our school more aware of their actions and how they negatively affect our environment.

Our PTO sells T-shirts with environmentally positive messages as well as participating in earth-friendly fundraisers. The administration at Benoist Farms supports ongoing professional learning in Green School Education by offering to sponsor any instructional staff to attend the Learn Green Conference as well as Outdoor Learning Workshops. This supports our transfer of our knowledge of Green living to our students.

Grants totaling over \$15,000 were obtained last year with the main focus on our gardens. The materials purchased with the grant monies are still being used in our gardens. These gardens will benefit and help sustain the ecosystem on our campus. We now are working toward sustaining our butterfly, vegetable and wildflower gardens. These gardens are used by classroom teachers as an ongoing great opportunity for our urban students to learn about planting and taking care of the earth. We are beginning to realize our goals of integrating classroom curriculum into these gardens so that our students can get a hands-on method of learning. Our administration also supports and promotes that we are a Green School of Excellence and has a link to our Green School Status on our website. Our school is unique in that it has made a commitment to "Going Green" in both scientific and social aspects. From the look of wonder at the sprouting of a seed in the faces of the youngest Pre K student to the more sophisticated 5th grader, our students show real love and appreciation of our Green spaces. There are now opportunities to enjoy the new wildflower garden in front of the school, or to utilize the quiet spaces in the back of the school to read a book and watch butterflies. The enjoyment of caretaking of the vegetable garden is also inspiring. Instead of complaining about the hard physical work, the students are seeing a life lesson in the success of their ventures. The real value and forward thinking of Benoist Farms is shown in our adoption of