

## **Part B-Summary of Green School Activities**

Citrus Grove Elementary has been working hard to make a difference in the carbon footprint that our students will be leaving behind. CGE is a newer school, currently in its seventh year. This is our third year proactively pursuing a green difference. Some of the changes that we have done around the school include recycling of juice pouches, glue bottles/stick and plastic bottles. We have also started a school garden in which the food has been donated to a local soup kitchen as well as placed in our school cafeteria for students to eat at lunch. The students have created Go Green, a club, to initiate different green programs around the school. CGE is just starting in making a difference in our school and our community; however, the impacts thus far are great.

CGE began small three years ago by recycling juice pouches only, in addition to the batteries, ink cartridges, and paper that were already recycled in previous years. The juice pouches had a slow start, but the students have really taken to the change and the volume of recycled juice pouches has increased. The juice pouches and glue are sent to the company Terra-cycle Company to be up cycled and the water bottles are sent to our local recycling facility. Our goal is to continue to recycle and limit the solid waste created at our school.

One of our greatest achievements this year was our school garden. As a teacher I was truly proud of the students and their accomplishment. We started in October of 2012 with a small group of nine students. As a group we were able to get vegetables donated from a local nursery to be planted and maintain at the school. Every week the students would pull weeds, water the vegetables and make sure they were well taken care of; in November the time came to harvest the vegetables. As a group we decided to harvest the vegetables and place them in the school cafeteria for all the students at Citrus Grove to enjoy. Now, in the spring Go Green has increased to 32 students, and once again we are starting up a garden to grow vegetables to put in our school cafeteria.

On the horizon for this school year, Citrus Grove is working in collaboration with the local high school. Students from the HS agriculture program will be coming to Citrus Grove to work with the students in Club Go Green to enhance our school landscape with Florida friendly plants that they have grown and maintained at the high school. This is a great way to work with the local schools and make a difference in our community.

CGE is making a difference. In the classroom teachers lessons are taking place to teach the importance of recycling and the difference small changes can make. We held several green fundraisers in which we sold gently used books in a green book fair and CGE family nights at various community restaurants in hopes of raising money to build an outdoor classroom that the teachers can use with their students. We are also fortunate to be in a newer school, our school is set up with motion lights, low flush toilets, sprinklers that only come on when there is a certain amount of humidity in the air. There is so much more that we would like to do in the years to come, making a green difference and teaching the students the same is a great running start for CGE. Looking ahead I know we will continue with our current projects and continue to add new ones.