

Summary of 2014-2015 Green School Activities

This year is Independence Middle School's (IMS) first in its effort to become a Green School. Through all of our work with this program, we have learned what being representative of a Green School means to us. We believe that IMS fulfills this status, as we have implemented many programs that have changed not only policies and procedures at our school, but also states of mind.

In the **School Grounds Enhancement** category, we have continued our efforts to improve the school as a habitat for native animals and as an outdoor learning environment for students. Students have maintained school butterfly and vegetable gardens and created a bird garden. Students worked with local professionals to research best practices.

In the **School Sustainability** category, Environmental Club sponsored a cap collection, and NJHS students collect recycling from classrooms weekly. Students and staff took part in 5k races. Energy stickers were posted in all classrooms as a reminder to turn off lights. We have organized several green fundraisers. Rain barrels and AC outflow were used for water collection. School pool was contacted to evaluate transportation data, and teachers have started to compost their lunch waste.

In the **Curriculum Integration** category, art students have worked closely with Environmental Club students to design and paint garden stepping stones. Students took part in many field excursions, including Riverwoods Research Center and the Everglades. The science and math department planned a STEM night with Palm Beach Science Museum. Many in-school field trips were also coordinated.

In the **Community Involvement** category, students have participated in beach clean-ups and created a partnership with Lox River Center. Green Team teachers worked with the local Home Depot, Lowes, garden club, and landscapers. NJHS students lead collection for Angel Giving Tree and Salvation Army, as well as DVD drive to donate movies to St. Mary's Children Hospital, and a book drive to donate books to Grove Park Elementary School.

In the **Administrative Support** category, the school principal has openly accepted ideas about school improvements from Green Team teachers. She has also agreed to help lead the environmental SOAR curriculum. In addition, Green Team teachers and Environmental Club students were given a day to work on the Green School application together. Each of our green successes has been shared at staff meetings and on the announcements or through our school newspaper.

In the **Innovation** category, Environmental Club students, along with Green Team teachers planned a color run, which benefitted an IMS student. The SOAR positive behavior program has environmentally-themed stations, promoted Environmental awareness school-wide.