

### ***Part B. Summary of 2014-2015 Green School Activities***

Our school inherently lends itself to include environmental inquiry-based learning within the International Baccalaureate Organization Primary Years Programme (PYP).

Each grade level has a series of “Units of Inquiry” which are taught through Math, Reading, Writing, Fine Arts and World Language. “Sharing the Planet” is a six week study where teachers take their students outdoors and on field trips to enhance lessons taught about our environment. The administration has added a BC to our IB planning sheets. Teachers document when they are using the environment as an integrating context throughout the school year in every Unit of Inquiry. Units of Inquiry prepare students to understand how each of us has a duty to understand environmental issues and how we can improve on challenges for future generations. Students observe the many species of birds in our Bird Sanctuary, native butterflies in the Butterfly Garden and become one with nature in the Japanese Rock Garden. The Green Guru club was amazed to see the caterpillars on the milk weed plants. We decided to move some of them to a butterfly pavilion so that the students could study their changes. When we set them free, the students were so excited. *(See picture 1)*

Our Aftercare Environmentalist Group has designed and created a square foot vegetable and herb garden. Here they have the ability to be involved from the beginning. From conception to creating nutritious dishes using the fresh organically grown produce. The parents also get to sample freshly picked cabbage, lettuce, eggplant, peppers and an assortment of herbs to take home. *(See picture 2)*

The school café continues to collect organic wastes such as fruits and vegetables for the three compost bins located by the solar powered hydroponic garden. Each table is given an individual recycling bin with labeled drawers for plastic caps, cardboard, plastic and organic waste. On top of this rolling bin is the bucket for liquids. This liquid is properly disposed of by students throughout the day. This compost is used to nourish our gardens and fruit trees that are scattered throughout campus. Our aftercare program has partnered with a couple of parents that use our collected waste to compost for their small farms or home gardens. Each classroom teacher assigns a student to oversee the collection of liquids, plastic and organic waste when lunch has ended. Labeled collection bins are placed in the café to collect items for TerraCycle. We also have additional collections sites throughout the school. Items collected in our brigade: empty glue sticks, tape dispensers, old markers, ink cartridges, drink pouches, Entenmann’s Little Bites, snack bags, plastic lunch kit. Students understand that the amount of trash has been decreased with these added collections and enjoy being a part of it all.

Keeping our campus clean is top priority for our Litter Patrol students. Their job is to police the school grounds and pick up litter. Daily morning announcements are made to remind students of the importance and correct way to recycle. Each week "fun facts" are shared. Students participated in a contest on recycling. Posters were hung all around our campus for all to see. Teachers are on board with keeping their classrooms green. Each classroom has a tower of bins that are colored and labeled. These bins are emptied by the Recycling Club and placed in the designated bins for proper disposal. Aftercare students often volunteer to "pick up trash" whenever possible. (See picture 3)

Students are elected jobs within each classroom as "environmentalists and energy patrols". Their job is to insure that lights are off, water is not running and electronics are off.

Students participate in physically active afterschool enrichment programs such as Yoga, Sports, Zumba, Cheer Dance and Hip Hop. The P.E. teacher hosts a Field Day that encourages student and family physical involvement. Students and staff are encouraged to be fit by eating the proper foods and to exercise daily. Our P.E. teacher conducts her classes outside, which encourages students to get moving outdoors.

Our school is involved with many collections that benefit our community. Some examples are: the collection of canned foods, toy collection, trick-or-treat for Unicef, costume collection school supplies for schools in need, and Caps of Love (plastic cap collection to raise funds for the disabled.) The PTA has their annual "Pink Night" that honors cancer survivors and raises funds for the Lynn University Institute for Breast Cancer Research. Our PTA also hosts a school carnival during the year as well where the students enjoy activities, food and games on our field. This year our 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes were able to promote their Exhibition topics during the carnival. For instance, our Green Team promoted recycling, and another class ran a "Forever Friends" area where dogs and cats were available for adoption. The school and PTA host an annual Earth Day Celebration. This celebration highlights what students have learned throughout the year in regards to how we share our planet and how our environment affects our lives. Students create works of art using natural items found from the earth. They participated in creating a mini greenhouse and viewed a short film that explained to the students what Earth Day means. Tastes of the garden are prepared and presented to visitors. Outside vendors come to speak and present to our fellow environmentalists. Project Wild activities have students and families fully engaged. (See picture 4)

Another step to sustainability is our uniform exchange. PTA gathers uniforms that no longer fit and sponsors an exchange with families in need of uniforms for their children. This allows us to cut down on the carbon footprint of packaging, shipment and paper trail. PTA also has been

committed to using “green” fundraisers. Our Smencils are made of rolled sheets of recycled newspaper, environmentally friendly fragrances, corn-based biodegradable plastic and erasers. The “Helping Hands” fundraiser offers handcrafted projects from Thailand, China and Cambodia. Because of this fundraiser, these people are offered a chance to transform their lives and overcome poverty and adversity.

The annual Boosterthon Fundraiser is a type of walk-a-thon where students raise funds for our school by taking pledges for each lap that is completed. Being physically fit is supported throughout the school. Staff is also involved with “The Biggest Loser” contests and other health and wellness incentives.

Administration continues to support healthy habits by having a “parent pickup area for walkers” We are not a neighborhood school so most students are bused or driven. By allowing parents to park by the Civic Center, walk to the school and pick up their child, we reduce the amount of idling cars and support our efforts to implement alternative modes of transportation.

Water usage is limited by the amount of watering time and the time of day it is watered. By watering during nighttime, water is most efficiently absorbed into the earth and not evaporated in the daytime heat.

Our school proudly displays our Green School of Excellence banner and the yearly window clings in the front entrance of our school so that all who enter can see it. The logo is used in all of our correspondence with families and partners.

The PTA newsletter has a designated “Green” section so that we can share facts, stories and inform our families of our schools efforts to support our school, community and environment.

Teachers are encouraged to take their classroom outside for reading and a science lesson at least once during the school year. Monthly IB planning sheets include “How will you include the environment as an integrating context?” This has expanded upon our already excellent green curriculum and administration is able to see how our teachers are embracing our school culture.

Families can go to our Edline site to access any and all information regarding our school and aftercare program. PTA’s monthly newsletters are electronic, which decreases the amount of paper being used to print the multi- paged document. Information regarding enrichment schedules and flyers, fee payment schedules, future activities, snack and lunch menus and upcoming school functions are posted for easy access.

