

Half Day School

2023 Project Report

The Project:

Half Day School's composting program encourages students and faculty to divert food scraps and other organic materials from landfills. The school's Green Team, a group of students in grades 3-5 that meets weekly to tackle environmental issues, implemented a "Waste Free Lunch" raffle contest which challenged students to be more aware of their impact on the environment while also learning about recycling, composting, and zero waste. The Waste Free Lunch Room Challenge resulted in a 75% decrease of the number of bags of landfill each week. Student surveys also indicate a better understanding of sustainability and zero waste.

Project Focus: Path to Net Zero,
Waste Reduction

Staff Involved: 5

Location: Lincolnshire, IL

Students: 40



Students are more aware of their impact on the earth including the importance of composting and recycling.



The Process:

The program began with research to learn about industrial composting. After multiple meetings with the school administration, program leaders secured the funding and approval from the district to begin a school-wide composting program.

Faculty leaders then trained students on how to sort their leftover lunch components into: compost, recyclable, and landfill. Student Green Team Ambassadors oversaw the day-to-day sorting stations located in the school's lunch room. Staff and parents were also informed about the program and educated on how they can help make an impact.

To incentivize the students and focus on zero waste lunches, the Green Team created a raffle, in which students who brought in a zero-waste lunch were awarded a raffle ticket one day of the week. Winners were chosen each week and awarded an "earth-friendly" prize, which was funded by the Illinois Green Alliance mini grant. These prizes include reusable utensils, water bottles, and lunch bags. Looking forward, The Green Team plans to grow the program to include classroom composting stations.

