

Lincoln Middle School

2023 Project Report



The Project:

Lincoln Middle School worked last year to implement a waste reduction program, including messaging to students about the sorting stations as well as increasing recycling, composting and landfill diversion. This past school year marked their second year in continuing the initiative with added signage, collaboration outside of the school, and further education of students on green efforts.

Project Focus: Waste Reduction

Staff Involved: 1

Location: Park Ridge, IL

Students: 202



We plan to act as a catalyst and motivator, through our success in the Green School Project, to show the district and other schools what is possible. - Melissa Johnson



The Process:

Middle school teacher Melissa Johnson conducted a survey at the beginning of the year to get student inputs on what Lincoln could do to be more "green." She received 202 responses to the survey, and a common theme was a desire for more messaging and signage to educate and remind students about what is recyclable or not, and to start a "green team" within the school district. The school embarked on both of these goals. Using the Illinois Green Alliance mini-grant of \$117, they purchased high quality signage stickers, which were applied to the cafeteria tables and the food sorting station in January 2023 as a reminder to be sure to recycle and compost. They continued to encourage students to sort waste via the student announcements broadcast. Faculty leaders also planned Earth Week to encourage students to celebrate sustainability each day of the week, which included a "zero waste" lunch day challenge.

The Outcomes:

Students have reported in follow-up surveys that they are more likely to recycle because of increased signage. Other schools in the district reported at a district green team meeting that they were encouraged by the efforts made at Lincoln, and representatives from each school have made plans to tour Lincoln to see what they can implement at their buildings. In terms of next steps, faculty leaders plan to complete an audit at the end of the year to measure the student body's success in improving their recycling and composting habits.

