JOIN THE

READY*SET*RECYCLE

SCHOOL CHALLENGE

The READY SET RECYCLE SCHOOL CHALLENGE is an educational program designed by StopWaste to engage Alameda County students and educators in the practice and benefits of proper recycling.

The Challenge is comprised of classroom curriculum and activities that track a school’s waste weight and volume and chart progress towards achieving recycling goals. Student “Green Team” monitors, teachers and custodians lead efforts that build awareness and engage the whole school in proper sorting of recyclables and compostables.

WHY SHOULD YOUR SCHOOL PARTICIPATE?
The Ready Set Recycle Challenge provides a number of benefits to schools, students, teachers, parents and the surrounding community.

- Increased academic achievement
  - The Impact of Environmentally-Related Education on Academic Achievement Literature Review study by Community Resources for Science shows that students who engage in environmental education can increase academic achievement.
  - The StopWaste curriculum provides real-world application of academics and is aligned to 5th grade Common Core and Next Generation Science standards, allowing students to meaningfully apply math, science and English language arts skills outside the classroom.

- Leadership, service-learning and civic education
  - By collaborating to set goals, monitor school progress and help teach their peers proper recycling behavior, students are empowered to become leaders and spokespeople in their schools, families and communities while practicing school values such as “Respect” and “Responsibility”.

- Free resources for teachers and schools
  - StopWaste offers a free in-class teacher training program and 4Rs Student Action Project academic curriculum, with lessons including a scientific waste audit where students compare and contrast data they collect. StopWaste also provides students with school-wide rewards, such as school supplies, as incentive for meeting recycling goals.

- Opportunities to become a leading school and develop new community partnerships
  - Participating schools have access to Ready Set Recycle media resources and opportunities for local press coverage related to the Challenge. The Challenge offers schools the opportunity to be seen as a leader and inspire other schools in their district and county.
Interested schools can sign up for the Ready Set Recycle School Challenge in one of two ways:


• Register through participation with the 5th Grade 4Rs Student Action Project by emailing schools@stopwaste.org.

A Ready Set Recycle team coordinator will work with each school to set up the Ready Set Recycle Challenge.

Schools meet the Challenge by following these basic steps:

1. Conduct a waste audit using the scientific-method
   • Students sort through a sample of cafeteria landfill trash, measuring weight and volume and analyzing the data to make conclusions and assess if their prediction was correct.

2. Set a school-wide diversion goal and identify benchmarks of progress
   • Students, in collaboration with StopWaste staff, set at least four dates for benchmark audits to track progress toward their diversion goal.

3. Develop a school-wide recycling campaign to reduce waste
   Campaign elements include:
   • StopWaste coordinates a Ready Set Recycle Challenge School Challenge kick-off assembly and a Student Green Team shares baseline waste audit findings to introduce the Challenge.
   • Designated Ready Set Recycle Challenge point person communicates program details to school stakeholders, including teachers, parents, principal/vice principal, custodians and nutrition services staff.
   • Bulletin board in cafeteria sorting area displays Ready Set Recycle Challenge posters and progress charts [Display materials supplied by StopWaste].

4. Conduct benchmark waste audits to assess progress and distribute school-wide prizes when each benchmark has been reached.

5. Reflect, evaluate and celebrate the school’s achievement!
   • The Student Green Team creates a final report of the school’s accomplishments and receives framed Ready Set Recycle Challenge certificates of achievement.
   • StopWaste documents the entire project through photography and conducts mainstream media outreach announcing the school’s achievement of their goals.
   • The Ready Set Recycle Challenge achievement becomes a Success Story to inspire other schools in the district and county.