

Headline:

A “New” School

By: Abby Sharkey

A Green school can make a significant impact on the environment. The program empowers students in grades pre-K through 12th grade with educational opportunities to reduce environmental impact. Becoming a green school can add additional things that your school never knew they could do. A green school can significantly impact other students and have a massive impact on the environment. By becoming a green school, students can build student awareness for the environment. The Maryland green school program (MDGS) is one way to get a School Environmentally friendly. The program empowers PreK-12th Grade students with educational opportunities to reduce environmental impact in Maryland. There are currently 680 Maryland green schools. This is only 36% of approximately 2,200 Maryland public or independent schools.

There are many community and school benefits as an effect to becoming a green school. Becoming a green school can decrease financial problems, and as an after effect, your school can save up to \$100,000. Green schools also utilize 33% less energy and 32% less water than traditional schools. Green schools can also decrease your use of toxic products. For example, when you become a green school, your school uses 1,300 fewer pounds of sulfur dioxide, along with 74% less waste! Green schools can also benefit students as well. Becoming a green school can also decrease Asthma incidence decreases by 25%. Americans used around 50 billion plastic water bottles last year, which means the U.S plastic recycling rate is only 23%. Along with the benefits stated, there are many other benefits to a green school.

Farm to table can also assist your own community along with your school. Farm to table is a way to grow your own crops for your school's cafeteria so both you and the environment feel good! Farm to table is a way to have students, teachers, and other Community members grow crops such as lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, and many other fruits and vegetables. Farm to table can encourage students to have a healthy intake, meaning that less sugar and more nutrients goes into their mouths. More fresh food can be given to schools if some students would help. Much less spoilage can happen due to the fresh amounts of food coming from gardens. It feels good to have someone eat what you made!

“Kids are more likely to eat and try different kinds of fruits and vegetables if they help to grow them.” -Mrs. Lattizori, First Grade teacher in YBES.

Green Schools also create pollinator gardens which also help the environment. Your school can make a pollinator garden by simply planting milk weed, black eyed Susens, and many other pollen infused plants. There are many benefits to pollinator gardens as well. Pollinator gardens can increase students' science achievement scores while planting. This can also increase the communities' and students' appreciation for the natural world. During planting Pollinator gardens, Students can improve teamwork between other individuals. Planting pollinator gardens can even cater to students with diverse learning styles. Plants and Pollinators depend on each other for survival!

Green schools also help the environment by conserving Energy and Water. There are many ways to preserve these appliances that include water and or energy. One way is by turning off the lights when you leave the room, this can save lights and prevent light bulbs going out, by getting new light bulbs, you could possibly be hurting the environment. You can also conserve water by turning off faucets when not needed and reporting leaks immediately. One more helpful thing you can do is try to remove unnecessary and often prohibited appliances such as heaters, microwaves, and mini fridges.

“Green schools use 33% less energy and 32% less water than other schools! This would greatly help our environment.”

-Ms.Smith, fourth grade teacher at YBES

In conclusion, A green school can have a significant impact on the environment. After seeing all the above, you can see that a green school would be beneficial to the environment and school community. You can help your school become a green school by planting pollinator gardens, creating farm to table gardens, and many other environmentally friendly ways. You could also ask your parents or teacher about how to help the environment yourself, it is all what you think you can do!