

## Reusable News - Recycling in Schools

Our school kids are in the recycling spotlight this year, and they are going to be playing major environmental roles in this new era of recycling awareness. For too long, tons of cardboard and paper have been thrown away in our schools. What a waste! Recycling saves time, energy, and money. Not only is it our environmental responsibility to recycle, but it's also the law.

One of the goals of the Selectmen's Recycling Advisory Committee is to implement district-wide school participation in recycling and to educate our youngest citizens about all of its benefits. These kids are the most effective advocates in spreading the word about recycling at home, in the community, and into the future. Effective school recycling encourages effective recycling for all citizens of our town.

The good news is that recycling is happening in four of our schools. There, children learn first-hand about the benefits of recycling by participating in recycling cardboard and white/mixed paper. Last spring at PCIS, Mr. Phillips' HOWL (Help Others While Learning) group won two awards for their recycling efforts. From Abitibi, the mixed paper recycler, they received a \$200 award for exceeding the paper recycling goal for the year, and from the Commonwealth, they won the 2007 Secretary's Award for Excellence in Environmental Education, a \$400 prize! The Green Team, an interactive educational program supported by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, that "empowers students and teachers to help the environment through waste reduction, reuse, recycling and composting," also awarded the Plymouth schools five assemblies from comedic performance artist, Jack Golden, entitled "Garbage is My Bag" as well as recycling supplies such as wheeled barrels, bins, and recycling containers. Thank you to all teachers, staff and students for your effort and time in this important work.

We now need to phase in recycling programs for the remaining eight schools in our district. With the help of volunteer 'Recycling Point People' at each school, standard operating procedures for recycling can be established and implemented. Ideally, the point person will be a member of the staff at that school or a dedicated volunteer committed to the recycling effort.

If anyone is interested in volunteering to be a school recycling liaison, please email [heidi@heidimayo.com](mailto:heidi@heidimayo.com) for more information. Let's make Plymouth a successful recycling community. Let's start with our future: our kids!

The Reusable News is a monthly column by the Selectmen's Recycling Advisory Committee. This article was written by committee members, Donna Petrangelo and Nancy Drummey.