

*Live Green, Go Bulkeley!* Bulkeley High School, an inner-city school in Hartford (where they build on top of landfills) with a population of 1230 students, is in the process of being redesigned, and big changes are happening here. Last year the upper school added five sections of Environmental Science to the already existing program. This year, our APES class (AP Environmental Science) was also added. The philosophy of the administration is to move us towards a greener direction, and our class is spearheading the effort. Currently, we are working on a recycling project to make our school more Green-Friendly, but we have many more ideas of how to change our school, with the help of the *Live Green Win Green* grant.

Our initial examination of recycling at BUHS revealed that the two areas that actually did recycling were the kitchen that supplies the cafeteria, and the copy rooms. There are no recycling bins now in the hallways, or in the cafeteria itself, although all classrooms have them. However, a closer look showed that even though the recyclables were being separated in the classrooms, they were later being combined with the regular trash after being picked up. Changes have to be made!

Our APES class is already working to improve the recycling habits in our school, starting with student's attitudes, and moving on to the students' cafeteria (where no recycling at all is taking place). We spoke with the head of Food Services and figured out that we could recycle 85% of our lunch waste, including milk cartons, fruit cups, napkins, spoons and forks, plastic bagel containers, salad containers, juice containers and Snapple cans (Did you know that a 100 watt light bulb can run for 20 hours on the energy of one recycled aluminum can?). We also interviewed our school's head custodian and found out that at least eight full bags of trash are taken out of the cafeteria every day. Multiply that by 180 days of school- it really adds up!

To make it a little more interesting, we decided to first find out what students' opinions were towards recycling, and then see if we could alter them through "advertising". We have already passed out a student survey that asks how much the students recycle, and if they're willing to recycle in school. Next, we are going to put up posters and banners with facts about recycling, food waste issues, and global impacts. After two weeks we will pass out the same survey again to see if we made a positive impact on the students' attitudes towards recycling. Afterward, we are going to put recycling bins in the cafeteria. Then we'll compare the amount of recycling done after our second survey. At the end of the quarter, we will check back

with the head custodian to find out how much the daily garbage (that's eight bags) has been reduced.

That's just the beginning, but there is only so much we can do within our school's budget. For example, in our cafeteria, currently we are using Styrofoam trays, but we would like to replace them with something recyclable. (That's where CL&P's *Live Green Win Green* grant comes in.) That alone could increase the recyclables in our cafeteria up to 95%.

We also are going to put recycling bins in the hallways next to the trash cans to make it easier for students to throw out their trash and recyclables. That will reduce the number of those huge garbage bags we generate every day, and decrease the number of times the compactor has to be used. Then this will reduce the number of times a truck has to come to the school to empty it, save gas, and further reduce the carbon footprint.

We are also in the process of trying to obtain copies of the electric bills from last year to compare to this year's to see if our efforts lower the school's energy use. These efforts include posting "PLEASE TURN OFF THE LIGHTS" signs above all of the school's light switches. We also discovered that the school has emergency lights that stay on 24/7 and we would like to replace the emergency light bulbs with energy efficient bulbs that have fewer watts (with your help). It would be awesome if we could lower our school's carbon footprint enough for it to show up on the electric bill!

That leaves the issue of classroom recycling. The custodians are not well equipped to separate the trash from the recyclables, so it all goes into one garbage bag. We are going to redesign the custodial carts so that when they come around to pick up the trash, the recyclables have their own place to go on the cart. But, we will need the grant money to actually make the changes.

In a school as large as BUHS, daily recycling can have a huge impact. Right now, all of our garbage is heading for landfills, or worse, incinerators. Unfortunately, Hartford's landfill was so full, it closed. Now we have to ship our garbage out of state, which uses up fuel, pollutes the air and increases the carbon footprint of our city. So, you can see that if we recycle 85% of our waste, it will have a major impact on the environment.

If our plans succeed, BUHS will be recycling not only in the school kitchen and the copy rooms, but also in the cafeteria, the classrooms and the hallways. The classroom lights will be turned out when not in use, and the emergency lighting system will use less power even though it is always on. We want to increase the recycling at BUHS 110%. Some of that we can achieve through our own efforts, but some of it requires funds that we do not have. With your grant, our plans become possible.

If you have any questions, please contact our teacher, Deborah Davis, at (860) 695-1000 or [david003@hartfordschools.org](mailto:david003@hartfordschools.org). Thank you for your consideration.

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