

Dixie District Waste Reduction Program

The Dixie School District in Marin County has taken an effort to integrate waste management into their district policies, school community, culture, practices and classrooms. As of July 1, 2012 State Law AB 341 will require the Dixie School District to have an organized recycling service, as a beginning step in achieving the new statewide goal of 75% source reduction, recycling, and composting by 2020. The County of Marin has adopted an 80% diversion rate by 2013 and 94% by 2020 as a goal for waste diversion from landfill. In an effort to be responsive to county and statewide initiatives, the Dixie School District has set goals for attainment to be consistent with these waste reduction objectives, as well as stay current with these policies as they evolve in coming years.

Sparked not only by state legislation, but additionally by the ever-growing environmental interest in the district, the district is now also seeing the financial benefits of successful waste diversion programming. Two schools in the district participated in a pilot compost program with Marin Sanitary Service, which allowed the schools to compost paper towels and food scraps unsuited for garden composting. Through these programs, the District was able to decrease their garbage pickups, savings \$9,158 on waste service, a whopping 21%! As part of the waste policy, the District will be expanding the food waste and paper towel composting program to all schools in the 2012-13 school year.



Vallecito Green Team members help sort waste at lunch

The components of the waste diversion program:

- Students recycle and compost their lunch, with the help of green team students, a parent volunteer, or lunch supervisors, or staff, depending on the school's setup.
- Recyclable materials are picked up by Marin Sanitary Service.
- Paper towels are put into yard waste and collected by Marin Sanitary Service.
- Compostable material (fruits and vegetables) are incorporated into the composting system at each school, as part of the school garden.
- An annual e-waste recycling event is put on by the district-wide Green Initiative Committee.
- Environmental Preferable Purchasing Policy
- Waste Policy and Regulation to be implemented in the 2012-13 school year

