



The Recycling Playbook for Student Councils & Teen Leaders

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How To Get Started

You've been elected to Student Council at your school, now what? Lots of student councils look for projects to do that might raise money and/or awareness of an important community topic. By helping reduce waste in our landfills and encouraging sustainable habits, you can accomplish your student council goals and protect the environment! This playbook will give you the rules of the game.

1

Start Here: Create a Green Team Plan

As members of the student council, you already know all about the importance of good leadership. Here's how to create a sustainability plan together:

- Use the **Building Your Sustainable Community Worksheet**.
 - Write down your ideas to get the program started. Then, use your ideas to propose the idea to get your faculty advisor on board.
- Name your team.
- Brainstorm with others.
 - How will recycling benefit your school? What recyclable items are used regularly? How can you encourage the school community to get involved?

2

Plan for Success: Set Recycling Goals

A passionate and organized green team can be very powerful. When you set clear, attainable recycling goals, you can influence the behavior of your school community.

- Use the **Sustainability Statement & Goals Worksheet** to get started.
- Determine the primary purpose of your green team.
Here are some goal ideas:
 - Tracking progress towards decreasing your impact on the environment.
 - Educating others on how to make your school a greener place.
 - Collaborating to implement a project that leaves a lasting impact.
 - Advocating for greener decisions and practices at school.
- Set milestones.
 - Got big plans? That's great – don't shy away from them. To be successful, though, break ambitious goals up into smaller, realistic milestones with specific dates.

Green tip: Use the goal tracking poster ideas to stay on track.

3

Recruit: Gain Support & Volunteers To Reach Your Goals

Sharing your recycling program vision and gaining support is important for success. There are lots of ways to bring people on board to reach your goals.

- Use the **Promotions Worksheet** to spread the word.
- Host a kick-off event to raise awareness.
- Spread the word: use email, social media, posters, and handouts.

Green tip: Be prepared. Write out talking points and identify people who are more likely to be supportive.

4

Organize and Maintain: Establish a Recycling Routine

Now, it's time to start recycling! The most important thing you can do is establish solid daily, weekly, and monthly routines for collecting and tracking recyclables.

- Create a collection plan.
- Place bins next to garbage cans and where recyclables are consumed. Make them easily visible and accessible, and customize bins to reduce confusion and contamination.
- Use the worksheet provided to **Track Progress & Success**.

Green tip: Look for creative ways to make recycling more fun. Work with concessioners at sporting events to collect recyclables and host events that encourage participation for students, teachers, and the community. A great way to incentivize recycling is by creating a school recycling contest!

5

Celebrate: Don't Forget To Thank Everyone

You've put in the hard work, and now it's time to recognize your efforts. Whether you've boosted participation in the recycling program, reduced contamination, or reached a major goal, you deserve to celebrate.

- Recognize custodian heroes.
- Hang a banner to commemorate your achievements.
- Don't forget to thank students, families, staff, or community members for their support.

Green tip: You could even win a National Council of Excellence award!



Building a Sustainable Community

Take the first steps to kickstart your program and make recycling a habit in your school community by answering these brainstorming questions.



1. Who is on your green team and what are their roles?

2. What adults will help you succeed, and how do you need their help?
(Examples: faculty advisor, custodians, principal)

Tip: Use the letter of support linked to at the end of this tool kit to get administration involved.

3. How will recycling benefit our school?

4. What recyclable items are used regularly?

5. Where will recycling bins be placed? List areas where waste is discarded:

Lunchroom: _____

Classrooms: _____

Hallways: _____

Outside of the building: _____

Total # of bins needed: _____

6. What will be used for recycling containers?

(Ideas: decorated cardboard boxes, dollar store bins, milk crates)

How To Promote Your Program

Keeping your school community informed is an important way to involve others and make your program successful. Spread the word about your green team and share news about your success using these tips.



POSTERS

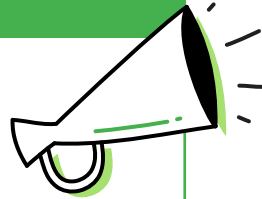
- [Place posters](#) (or create your own!) to put in hallways.
- Don't forget to hang banners to announce the start of your program.
- Have students fill out recycling pledge forms to make a display.
- Distribute the recycling pledge to all classrooms for a great student reminder.

SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Keep spreading the word!

Use areas such as:

- School newspaper.
- Parent newsletter.
- Morning announcement.



RECYCLING CONTESTS

Easily start a school recycling contest using the Recycle Rally program in which you can track recycling for various groups within the school and view an intra-school leaderboard! Compete by grade level or individual classroom.

SHARE YOUR SUCCESS!

Use a tally board to display your collection progress



Track Progress & Success

Tracking recyclables your school has kept out of landfills is an important way to measure your success. Fill out this recycling goal tracker and refer back to your goals to determine your progress.

Collection Date:	What was collected? (Example:10 bottles, 15 cans, # of bags)			
	Bins	Plastic Bottles	Cans	Bags
Classroom 1				
Classroom 2				
Lunchroom				
Hallway				

Measure Success

What was your goal? Did you meet it? If not, what can you change?

Notes

A large area of the page is filled with a grid of small, light gray dots, intended for taking notes.

Reference Page

Here are all the additional and referenced links that you and your green team may need to start your program.

Goal Tracking

<https://resources.pepsicorecycling.com/resources/keep-track-of-your-schools-recycling-goals/>

Customized Bins

<https://resources.pepsicorecycling.com/resources/free-posters-recycle-here/>

School Recycling Contest

<https://resources.pepsicorecycling.com/resources/how-to-set-up-a-school-recycling-contest/>

Custodian Hereos

<https://resources.pepsicorecycling.com/resources/custodian-hero-certificate/>

Hang a Banner

<https://resources.pepsicorecycling.com/resources/everything-you-need-to-celebrate-recycling-milestones/>

Thanking Students

<https://resources.pepsicorecycling.com/resources/thank-community-members-for-participating-in-your-recycling-program/>

National Council of Excellence

<https://www.natstuco.org/council-recognition/national-councils-of-excellence/>

Letter of Support

<https://resources.pepsicorecycling.com/resources/free-email-templates-for-school-green-teams/>

Poster Examples

<https://resources.pepsicorecycling.com/resources/free-poster-four-important-rs/>

Team Banner

<https://resources.pepsicorecycling.com/resources/free-printable-green-team-banner/>

Recycling Pledge Forms

<https://resources.pepsicorecycling.com/resources/free-printables-recycling-pledge-forms/>

Recycling Pledge

<https://resources.pepsicorecycling.com/resources/invite-your-students-to-take-this-recycling-pledge/>

Recycling Contest

<https://resources.pepsicorecycling.com/resources/how-to-set-up-a-school-recycling-contest/>