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Go Green achieves high waste diversion nationwide

Schools participating in the Go Green Initiative nationwide are reporting remarkable results when it comes to waste diversion. The Go Green Initiative Association, providing a comprehensive environmental improvement plan to schools across the country, is the first program of its kind to collect these types of diversion numbers.

For many of the participating schools, the only incentive for diverting waste and reporting their efforts was to fully participate in Go Green. Being part of the national movement to help children help the environment was motivation enough.

“We are so excited to see such positive results – to know that so many schools across the country are involved because they *want* to be, not because they *have* to be,” said Jill Buck, founder and executive director of Go Green. “It’s so inspiring to see this level of voluntary stewardship.”

And the numbers speak for themselves. In the first quarter only, reporting Go Green schools saved:

- ◆ 715,765 pounds of paper
- ◆ 26,103 pounds of cardboard
- ◆ 6,951 pounds of aluminum
- ◆ 11,094 pounds of plastic beverage containers
- ◆ 845 cellular phones
- ◆ 2,821 printer cartridges
- ◆ 32,845 pounds of mixed recyclables
- ◆ 305 pounds of food waste

And that’s just from the 54 schools in five states that reported their waste diversion results.

“We’re proud to be able to show what a difference our schools have made in such a short period of time,” said Casey Magnuson, environmental chairwoman for the Texas State PTA. “I hope that after seeing these impressive numbers, others will feel encouraged to follow in our footsteps.”

Texas had the highest number of schools – 25 – reporting first quarter diversion results. Texas was closely followed by California, which had 24 schools reporting. Schools in Georgia, New York and Ohio also participated in reporting their results. Schools in the city of Grand Prairie, Texas, reported recycling 327,434 pounds of paper, with Kennedy Middle School contributing 36,860 recycled pounds on its own.

”The figures present proof that a small group of dedicated students and citizens can truly make a significant difference,” said Edwin Pinero, the White House's Federal Environmental Executive. ”These schools are on the right track and are setting an example for others to follow in the true spirit of cooperative conservation in America.”

Practically speaking, the cumulative diversion results can be interpreted to learn the real environmental impact the reporting Go Green schools are having on the planet. These schools:

- ◆ Saved 8,592 trees
- ◆ Avoided 4.9 billion BTUs of energy use
- ◆ Avoided 279 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions
- ◆ Avoided 2,505,177 gallons of water use, due to paper recycling
- ◆ Avoided 135,995 gallons of oil use, due to paper recycling
- ◆ Kept 7,052 pounds of petroleum products out of our rivers and oceans, due to ink cartridge recycling

“The numbers don’t lie,” said Anne Bryant, executive director of the National School Boards Association. “It’s easy to see the beneficial impact Go Green schools are having on the environment.”

The reporting schools, along with other schools in the Go Green family, are looking forward to a continuous improvement of their waste diversion in 2006.

About the Go Green Initiative Association – The Go Green Initiative is the nation’s fastest growing fully comprehensive environmental action plan for schools. By promoting environmental stewardship on campuses from elementary schools through universities, Go Green works to involve families, businesses and local governments in the common goal of protecting human health through environmental stewardship. Since its inception in July 2002, the Go Green Initiative has been adopted by four State PTA Boards, implemented in 13 states and 235 schools, along with one school in Africa. More information is available online at www.GoGreenInitiative.org.