

Garbologist Audits

Activity

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Garbologist Audits are best being done before the program starts and occasionally during the audit process to show levels of success and keep the enthusiasm going. Garbage is the fastest and easiest of the waste, energy and water programs to show change over time. Nothing compares to statements like: “What one class used to create as garbage in one day is now the total of garbage the school create in one week.”

Each school should have representation at the table from each class. At least one custodian, teacher, and school administrator should also be there. Steps should be taken to ensure that all waste is collected and counted in the same manner. Older classes in the elementary panel could help younger classes to ensure success.

Steps to Take

1. Have organizing body pick the day for the audit.
2. Have proper tools and materials ready for the big day (gloves, scales, etc.).
3. Have the day be a surprise so there is an actual count of what is happening in the school not a false record of what is going on.
4. Decide whom to invite.
5. Incentives: could be given for least garbage, most improved in recycling, weirdest piece of garbage, most creative re-use of materials in classroom. These awards could come from ideas and suggestions by students, teachers, parent committee or a variety of stakeholders.
6. Accountability: Set goals for the next garbage hunt in the school.

Communications

The more who know your school is doing great things, the better. Leave no channel of communication unturned. Classes need to know where they stand and hopefully allow for opportunity to improve class standings. Challenges of “this class will try to reduce its waste by 5 kg for the next audit should be recorded and checked at the next round.

Stakeholder Involvement

Never forget the people who helped get you where your project is now. Parents, school volunteers, teachers, custodians, secretaries, administration staff, should all be involved if only to thank them for their participation and hope that they will continue in the future.

Mentorship

This is the perfect chance to use the interschool links in and between each division (all grade 4's to reading buddies to high school co-op students connections).

Role of Class

In setting the class-by-class audit there are some things to consider:

- Who will touch the garbage
- Who will record the information and what forms will be used
- How will the class report its results
- How did the overall school do
- Do they want to challenge other schools to their success
- What goals do they have for next time and who will record and keep those promises
- Who is reporting to the event to the EarthCARE Project Manager or EC Team for a success story in future communications

Lesson Plan Links

All waste-related lessons in grades junior/senior kindergarten to grade 8