

Monday, 2/7/11

Dear Principals, Custodians, Teachers, Staff, Students, and Administration--

Hello, I hope you had a nice weekend.

Below you will find our green Tip of the Week, a RecycleCraze update, and an application link for the 2011 Massachusetts Awards for Excellence in Energy & Environmental Education (deadline March 28th) that honor teachers and students. In addition to coordinating existing and future sustainability measures, I hope to be a resource for those of you who are interested in leadership in this field, or who simply want to learn more about ways to be involved.

Thanks for taking the time to read.

- Tip of the Week: *Unplug appliances when not in use.* In your classroom, office (and at home) appliances such as televisions, computers, printers, radios, cell phone chargers, lamps, and fans (anything that is plugged in) uses energy even if it is "turned off." The way to stop this energy loss, save money, and reduce carbon consumption is to unplug the appliance altogether, or to plug it into a powerstrip. When a powerstrip is turned off it cuts energy to the appliance. You can unplug appliances when not in use during the day, and definitely when you leave the classroom/office for the night.
- RecycleCraze Check-in: Last week I announced the launch of the annual RecycleCraze competition, where our schools compete to see who can recycle the most between January 31-May 6th. It was great to receive so much feedback from the community at large.
- Among the e-mails I received, several people voiced their concern about how to distinguish between reducing waste and recycling waste. Teachers explained to me, "we don't want to encourage students to throw as much as they can into recycling when they could be using less altogether."
- It is true that as the competition now stands, we award those who recycle the most pounds/per student. This does not address the fact that real conservation happens when we both reduce the amount we're throwing away, and recycle that which we do dispose of. I'd like to thank people for pointing this out, and for beginning a discussion regarding the logistics of RecycleCraze.
- For the time being, the competition will remain the same. I'm working together with Meryl Brott (Recycling Program Manager at DPW) to plan accordingly for next year, and to figure out how we might measure the total pounds of trash generated by each school in order to honor schools that are generating the least trash in addition to recycling. I'd like to note that the fourth award in this competition (newly added this year) is the "Rockin Recycler's Award," which does honor the school that gives the best effort to reduce waste entirely. I've attached the RecycleCraze documents, including award nominations forms, to this e-mail again.
- Awards for Excellence in E&EE: This spring, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Richard K. Sullivan Jr. will honor Massachusetts teachers and students who are involved in school-based programs, projects, and clubs that promote environment and energy education. Deadline March 28th. Click this link for a summary and application.
<http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=eoeceapressrelease&L=5&L0=Home&L1=Grants+%26+Technical+Assistance&L2=Guidance+%26+Technical+Assistance&L3=Agencies+and+Divisions&L4=De>

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Have a great week. -Kristen