

Monday, 3/21/11

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

Hello, I hope this e-mail finds you well. Below, please find our green Tip of the Week, an Energy Update, an application link for the 2011 Massachusetts Awards for Excellence in Energy & Environmental Education (deadline March 28th), Teacher Resources, EarthDay/Sustainability Presentations, and a Composting Update.

Thanks for taking the time to read.

- Tip of the Week: Recycle plastic bags. Why? ...Because throwing them away contributes to the waste stream, and about 89 billion plastic bags, sacks, and wraps are used each year in the U.S. *Good news: did you know that in 2007 there was a 27% increase from 2005 in the number of plastic bags recycled? *Plastic bags can be recycled at your local supermarket chain, and in some dry cleaning stores.*
- Energy Update: Energy savings for our district results in the combined efforts of energy upgrades and energy efficiency, both through operational changes and through people's practice within the buildings. In addition to energy savings we're currently doing in our schools through retrofitting and other building measures, there are simple actions you can take in your classroom or office to help reduce energy and lower our overall carbon footprint. Do you notice ways to save energy in your space and want to share your idea in the weekly e-news? Let us know. We'll feature one energy suggestion every week: *Switch your copier or printer to "off" or "powersave" at the end of the day.*
- 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=eoeepressrelease&L=5&L0=Home&L1=Grants+%26+Technical+Assistance&L2=Guidance+%26+Technical+Assistance&L3=Agencies+and+Divisions&L4=Department+of+Energy+Resources+\(DOER\)&sid=Eoeea&b=pressrelease&f=110113_pr_awards_deadline&csid=Eoeea](http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=eoeepressrelease&L=5&L0=Home&L1=Grants+%26+Technical+Assistance&L2=Guidance+%26+Technical+Assistance&L3=Agencies+and+Divisions&L4=Department+of+Energy+Resources+(DOER)&sid=Eoeea&b=pressrelease&f=110113_pr_awards_deadline&csid=Eoeea)
- Teacher Resources: Facing the Future offers sustainability-global issues curriculum & free K-12 lessons for teachers: <http://www.facingthefuture.org/> Also, the Cambridge Science Festival has a great list of educational events and activities (4/30-5/8): <http://cambridgesciencefestival.org/2011Festival/2011ScheduleOfEvents.aspx>
- Sustainability Presentations: *Kristen is giving Sustainability Talks & Presentations at Cambridge Public Schools throughout April* to celebrate Earth Month, to promote sustainability & energy-saving practices, and to inspire students. If your school is interested in having Kristen do a presentation or assembly, e-mail kvonhoffmann@cpsd.us.
- Composting Update: *Meryl Brott, Recycling Manager at DPW, and Kristen are working with schools to establish composting programs.* If your school is interested in composting, e-mail Meryl Brott at mbrott@cambridgema.gov or kvonhoffmann@cpsd.us.

- The King Open, the 9th Grade Campus, and the Graham & Parks schools are the first Cambridge schools to begin composting their lunch leftovers. From September to February, these schools have composted over 14,500 pounds and saved more than 14,500 lbs of CO₂. That's equal to the weight of 1.75 elephants. Well done!
- The Graham & Parks School started their composting program this past November. Will your school be next? Lunchroom composting can be launched in only six weeks. Leadership from the principal or assistant principal is essential. A committee including the principal, senior custodian, and lead teacher meets with Meryl from the DPW or Kristen from CPS. Much of the initial leg work is done by the DPW, and then after the program is well underway, schools must take ownership of the program going forward.
- Read about the benefits of composting lunch leftovers instead of sending them to the landfill here: <http://www.epa.gov/osw/conservation/rrr/composting/benefits.htm>
- Please see attached PDF for more information about lunchroom composting.

Have a great week. -Kristen