



November 1st, 2018
Craig Douglass
Executive Director
Regional Recycling and Waste Reduction District
300 Spring Bldg. Suite 200
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Mr. Douglass,

Thank you for the opportunity to apply for the Regional Recycling Grant. Forest Park Elementary is extremely committed to educating our students on the importance of recycling and waste reduction. We are grateful for funding received in the past. We have leveraged those funds toward the expansion of our recycling program with the creation of an outdoor education center, school wide recycling opportunities, and participation in National Recycle Week and Earth Day. Our staff and PTA fully support the activities proposed in this grant application. Funds will be used to fill an essential need of our current recycling education program. We appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

Theresa Ketcher
Principal-Forest Park Elementary

Regional Recycling and Waste Reduction District

Recycle Advantage Grant Application 2018

Forest Park Elementary School



School Name: Forest Park Elementary

Address: 1600 N. Tyler

Little Rock, AR 72207

Little Rock School District (LRSD)

Superintendent: Michael Poore

Principal: Theresa Ketcher

Go Green Co-chairs: Page Shurgar/Julie Fiser

Contact: 479.200.0504 / pshurgar@gmail.com



Forest Park Elementary

Recycle Advantage School Grant Application 2018

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

At Forest Park Elementary, we have realized that repetition and reinforcement are key factors when educating our students about the importance of recycling. Teachers, staff, and PTA are dedicated to our mission of inspiring the next generation of environmentally conscious citizens. Our student body is made up of 470 eager to learn and highly capable future adults. Thanks to the support of programs like Recycle Advantage and Keep Arkansas Beautiful, our environmental education and recycling programs have grown exponentially. Recycling initiatives began in 2012 with classroom recycling, and we are proud to say that today they include the following expansion:

- Cafeteria Recycling with educational posters placed in the cafeteria and the installation of a new, educational recycle bin (2017-2018)
- WASTE-FREE Wednesdays where students are encouraged to pack waste free lunches. Over 275 students participated in our 2nd annual waste-free lunch challenge. 10 reusable lunch boxes with nifty containers were raffled off to participating students (2017-2018)
- “Pass the plaid” uniform collection bin purchased by the PTA (2017-2018). This is our uniform recycle program where outgrown/ gently used uniforms are donated to the school for re-sale. All proceeds go to the Forest Park PTA.
- Green space fencing completed and funded by PTA (2017-2018). We had our first harvest from the apple, pear, and plum orchard (with a sprinkling of blueberries). This “green” space is frequented by classrooms and parents alike.
- Friday Farmers’ Market from our ROOTS garden. The market is run by the students and all proceeds go to fund Forest Park Roots.
- Continued Participation in Stride Pride and Bike to School (Fall/Spring) teaching children about alternative modes of transportation and healthy lifestyles.
- Outdoor art area completed with the addition of permanent seating for ease of use (2017-2018). Continued use of the outdoor classroom in the Forest Park Roots Garden with Garden educator and biweekly garden schedule for all classes.
- Go Green month of recycling education and awareness surrounding Earth Day. Green activities include: waste free lunch challenge, walk to school, 5-minute shower, tree seedling give away, planting trees, recycling education from recycle advantage and “go green bingo.”
- Outdoor recycling containers at the front of the school with engaging educational posters.

Cafeteria Recycling Bin



Waste-free Lunch-Box



Waste-free lunch days



Outdoor Class Space



Orchard Helpers



New Fencing



What’s a “tangler”?



Pass the Plaid Bin



PROGRAM FOCUS for 2018-2019

EDUCATION

"I do think in certain areas of our city we need to do a better job of educating," Little Rock City Manager Bruce Moore said. (ADG Rachel Herzog | October 2, 2018)

Regional Recycling Executive Director Craig Douglass has been in the news quite a bit recently citing problems with the contamination of residential and commercial recycling bins.

"If there are plastic bags in a recycling cart, there's a possibility that that whole cart will end up in the landfill," Douglass said (AR Dem-GAZ Walkenhorst August 29, 2018)

"Contamination in May 2017 was 37 percent among the three cities, Douglass said. It was 32 percent in May 2018, he hoped it was a trend, because the district has been increasing its educational outreach (ADG, Emily Walkenhorst, August 29, 2018).

"The new terms also include Waste Management paying the Regional Recycling and Waste Reduction District \$150,000 to educate residents about what can and cannot be recycled in hopes of lessening the amount of contaminated materials placed in bins.....Contaminated materials include broken glass, plastic bags and other prohibited items.....some board members raised concerns about residents not knowing what they can and cannot recycle, and thus not having their bins picked up" (ADG,Rachel Herzog, October 2, 2018).

Forest Park Elementary will work directly with Regional Recycling on their targeted educational efforts in order to ensure our city continues to recycle well into the future. Greta Green even came out of retirement last year to showcase a new recycling video from Waste Management, quiz the kids on recyclable items, and most importantly warn us against the danger of **TANGLERS!**



"Contamination in Pulaski County is largely plastic bags, which are not recyclable at the processing plant and will not be a part of the contract extension, either. The bags can get caught in the plant's machinery and interfere with the processing of other materials"(ADG,Emily Walkenhorst, September 21, 2018).

*****The average American family takes home almost 1,500 plastic shopping bags a year (NRDC 2008).*****

In August 2018, Kroger CEO, Rodney McMullen, announced that Kroger was taking a "bold move that will better protect our planet" by announcing the phase out single-use plastic bags at all its locations by 2025 (Meyersohn 2018).

With Kroger being such a great partner of Forest Park Elementary, the Go Green Team decided to get a jump start on their efforts with the purchase and distribution of reusable shopping bags to every student. These bags will include logos of our partners and feature facts about recycling. Forest Park will work with our local Kroger stores on ways to incentivize the students to bring these bags to the store regularly.



STUDENTS DEMAND RECYCLING ACTION!

Forest Park Student Council elections were held in September. Candidates prepared quick, 2- minute speeches outlining their “platform” of ways to make Forest Park a better school. Two of the candidates running for President specifically asked for more recycle bins to be placed on campus, specifically next to each of trash cans on campus.



“If I win President, I will try to raise money to get recycle bins inside of the playground” Olivia Berardi, 5th grade, candidate for Student Council President

Two years ago, Forest Park used grant money to purchase two educational dual trash / recycling bins. The bins replaced existing trash cans in the front of the school at each playground entrance. These bins are well used and frequently full, prompting these students to realize the need for additional recycling bins. Grant funding will be used to *immediately* purchase 2 or 3 simple, yet sturdy blue recycling barrels that will be placed next to existing receptacles on both the east and west playground areas.



SUMMARY

If awarded the Regional Recycling Grant for 2018, Forest Park Elementary will:

- Purchase and place new outdoor recycle bins on the playgrounds (November 2018)
- Purchase and distribute reusable grocery bags printed with recycle messaging (March 2019)
- Partner with Kroger to incentivize students to bring reusable bags to the store (March 2019)
- Distribute the 10 Facts About Single-use Plastic Bags to teachers and students through the Forest Park Media Center, eblast, and Parent Portal links during National Recycle Week (November 2018)
- Run Regional Recycling PSA’s through the Forest Park media center to reinforce messaging to students during National Recycle Week (November 2018)
- Work with Regional Recycling on an educational module to be used through our Roots Garden Education program (December 2018)
- Continue our existing recycling programs