



## Grades of Green Sustainable School Pilot Program Berendo Middle School October 11, 2012

Berendo Middle School is located in Los Angeles, CA. The team 'greening' their school is led by Principal Rosa Trujillo and plant manager Reggie Malone. Berendo Middle School has 1,050 students in 60 classrooms in grades 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>. The campus also is home to a charter school of approximately 300 students. The school offers a breakfast in the classroom program to all students and a free/reduced lunch program to all students. Most students purchase lunch from the cafeteria or snack store with very few students bringing lunches from home. The kitchen serves approximately 1,050 breakfasts in the classrooms and 500 lunches each day.

### Berendo Middle School's Current Trash Stats:

- 60 bags of trash are produced in the lunch area each day. A total of 130 bags of trash are produced on campus daily.
- 20 trash bins are picked up by Republic Services twice per week on Tuesday and Friday.
- 2 recycle bins are picked up by The City of LA once per week on Wednesday but will be replaced by 5 3-yard bins which will be serviced by Republic Services.
- 8 wheeled blue recycle carts are picked up curbside on Fridays. Carts are wheeled to the curb by custodial staff.
- Two bags of litter are collected around campus each day.

### Berendo Middle School's Current Trash System:

- Lunch is served from both inside and outside the cafeteria. Students may eat at tables in the cafeteria, outside covered tables, or outside uncovered tables.
- A snack store and vending machine offer drinks and snacks for sale.
- Trash cans are positioned throughout the inside and outside eating areas.
- Cardboard lunch trays, juice and milk cartons, bottles and cans are recyclable. Spork packages are offered.
- Bottles and cans only are recycled at lunch.
- 12 staff members supervise students at lunch.
- Groundskeepers maintain the campus once a week on Wednesday for two hours. Leaves and green debris are put in the trash bins.
- Parent volunteers rake and maintain the garden weekly. Leaves and garden debris are put in the trash bins.

### Berendo Middle School's Current Green Programs:

- In-class recycling containers are present in each classroom. Students empty the classroom recyclables into 3-yard recycle bins.
- Bottles and cans are recycled for redemption.
- Kitchen staff recycles cardboard from cafeteria.
- Large garden has been built on campus with both edible and non-edible plants. Garden is maintained by parent volunteers and used for special events and outside instruction.

### Grades of Green Activity Recommendations:

- **Build a team of volunteers.** Berendo Middle School is off to a good start with administrative and custodial staff on board and is excited about adding new programs. A Compost Team is recommended led by a committed staff volunteer and may include environmentally-minded students from Leadership class, Golden Torch Club, and other volunteers (i.e. parents, community volunteers). A larger team expands learning and encourages sustainability of the program. Student involvement is critical to

empower kids to take ownership of the project and pride in the environmental impact and accomplishments.

- **Set up a Lunch Time Trash Sorting System**

Grades of Green recommends a lunch trash sorting system set up in the outdoor eating area that includes the following components:

1. **Mantis Compost Tumbler**
2. **Recycle Clear blue recycle receptacle**
3. **Recycle Clear dark green landfill receptacle**
4. **Trays stacking table**; basically clean stacked trays will be placed in the recycle bin.
5. **Liquids pail**; Students empty leftover liquids into the liquids pail so the cartons can be recycled. After lunch, liquids may be dumped into a mop sink.

**Color-coding** (blue for recycling, dark green/gray/black for trash) provides cues to encourage proper sorting. Clear liners in the recycle containers and dark/black liners in the landfill containers provide additional cues.

**Signage** on the components is recommended to further promote proper sorting.

- **Paired trash and recycle containers throughout campus**

Promote recycling by making recycling easier and more convenient for students and staff.

1. Position mobile trash cans next to each other on campus.
2. Use color-coded liners and signage to establish paired trash/recycle stations.

- **Establish on-site composting of fruit and veggie waste.**

1. Mantis compost tumbler to be incorporated in the sorting station. Students sort their compostable waste and put it directly into the tumbler. Composting activities (adding browns, water and turning) occur at this tumbler.
2. Additional collections of compostable items may be established on campus:
  - a. Leaves and garden debris collected from school garden.
  - b. Unbleached paper towels from staff lounges and restrooms.

- **Educate the students**

1. Deliver an Eco-Prep Rally Assembly to inspire students and to reinforce the importance of the 4R's (reduce, reuse, recycle, rot). Students will learn how to compost food and garden waste and the benefits of doing so. They will learn how to use their new sorting system and why it is important to sort their waste.
2. Provide on-site compost training for student based Compost Team. Team will be tasked with marketing the program (which may include creation of educational posters, displays, and announcements), monitoring the sorting station, facilitating the compost collection, managing the compost tumbler, and tracking metrics throughout implementation of the program.

- **Educate the staff (teaching, dining and custodial)**

Encourage staff to actively participate in recycling and composting activities by reviewing the new trash system, composting activities, and how best to support their students.

1. Present sustainable school pilot at a full staff meeting.
2. Send educational flyers to the staff.
3. Grades of Green to meet with the custodial and dining staff to review the trash sorting system and procedures for collecting compostable materials.
4. Guide Trash Free Lunch Coordinator and Composting Coordinators on their roles and responsibilities.

- **Educate the parents**
  1. Review the importance of trash diversion through proper sorting and composting by Grades of Green attending one of the following events: PTA meeting, Open House, Principal's Meeting, Volunteer Luncheon, Back to School Night.
  2. Send educational flyers home to the parents.
  3. Guide and parents volunteers on their roles and responsibilities.
  
- **Set a goal for lunchtime trash reduction!**  
 Make an environmental impact that can be quantified. Aim to decrease the breakfast and lunchtime trash from 60 bags to 40 and aim to reduce bags of litter from 2 to 1.

**Grades of Green will provide the following assistance:**

- Coordinate with Republic Services to procure and place permanent trash system and composter tumbler.
- Provide signage (electronically) for your trash system.
- Deliver educational Eco-Prep Rally Assembly for all students.
- Provide on-site composting education to the Compost Team.
- Coordinate educational opportunities for staff members and parents.
- Provide ongoing program assessment and communication with school, Republic Services and LAUSD.

**Berendo Middle School's Next Steps:**

- Register Berendo Middle School on Grades of Green website to be eligible for prizes.
- Review Eco-Audit Report and confirm next steps.
- Identify Compost and Trash Free Lunch Staff Coordinator(s).
- Trash Free Lunch Coordinator will assemble pool of volunteers to assist with sorting at lunchtime.
- Compost Coordinator will facilitate formation of student Compost Team.
- Identify sources of browns for composting and outline a collection method.
- Coordinate trash system and Mantis compost tumbler delivery and set-up.
- Coordinate date of Eco-Prep Rally Assembly/Trash Free Lunch kick-off.

**We look forward to working with you. Thanks for making a difference in the lives of students and our environment. Please direct questions to Robyn Murphy, Programs Manager for Berendo Middle School at 310-617-4511.**