

# Project Title Earth Week Celebrations

School Wakefield High School

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## Brief summary of the project

In honor of Earth Week's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the Environmentally Conscious Organization of Students (ECOS) had planned an Earth Week competition between schools for a "Green Cup" event. Note: Due to COVID closures, we did not get to actually hold these events, but we should in future years.

Each day would have a different focus for environmental issues:

- Meatless Monday (or Meal Monday) – Issues of food waste and with the meat industry. Several students volunteered to hold discussions during lunches and make informational fliers about food waste and the food industry (i.e. how much water goes into making a pound of beef). We were also looking into selling reusable utensils as a fundraiser.
- Transportation Tuesday – Walk or ride to work day. We had lined up people from Arlington Transportation to work with students to sign up for SMART cards and learn about the ART buses. NOTE\* This was changed in the final implementation to Taco Tuesday (let's Taco Bout the environment) because of COVID closures.
- No Waste Wednesday – Campus-wide clean-up event. This was the actual competition. We had discussed it with clubs at other high schools. The plan was to weigh the waste and divide by the number of students at the building to come up with a winner - which school collected the most trash per pupil. That school would be awarded a "Green Cup" for the year. I found plans online to make a DIY Stanley Cup out of a water jug and cardboard. We intended to paint it green and award it to the school that won – like the Stanley Cup in hockey.
- Thread Up Thursday – UpCycle event or clothing donation drive. We had planned to take clothing to donate to Goodwill. We already have several clothing donation groups around the school. Some students had prepared fliers on how to "Marie Kondo" your stuff and donate. We also had communicated with members of UpCycle through the Interact Club.
- For the Future Friday – Celebrate and reflect. We were planning to award the Green Cup and reflect on what we had accomplished!

## Getting Going

**How did the project start?** I was chatting with the Chair of ECOS and she and I thought it would be fun to have a clean-up competition between the high schools. One of the other

members had mentioned wanting to organize something for Earth Week so we started bouncing ideas around.

**Who were important people to contact at the beginning?** Admin staff at Wakefield put us in touch with Arlington Transportation and with APS Food Services. We had planned to get community involvement through ArlNow so I reached out to ArlNow's Nicole Merlene, a Yorktown graduate and columnist. Working with other clubs, such as NHS and Interact meant we had a lot more contacts to spread out who was working on which event.

**What are the threshold resources that need to be identified at the beginning before proceeding further? (For example, robust parent volunteer network, elevated loading docks, nearby outdoor spigot.)** Because students were working for their Senior Project or other major on-going projects, most students were able to take of a period or two to help with any set up/clean up.

**What are the policies (if any) from APS or elsewhere that may affect the project and need to be considered?** Administration was very helpful in figuring out who we could invite into the school to participate.

**What budget and/or funding sources were needed?** NONE!

## Implementation

**Did you pilot or test the project and then scale it up? If so, describe your process.** We did not get to. We intended to work a few things out in mid-March to give us a month to hammer out details, but schools closed.

**As you rolled the project out, how did you present this to students and encourage their participation?** N/A – will investigate in the future. Since most students were involved in a Senior Project of AP Research, they were using this to log hours.

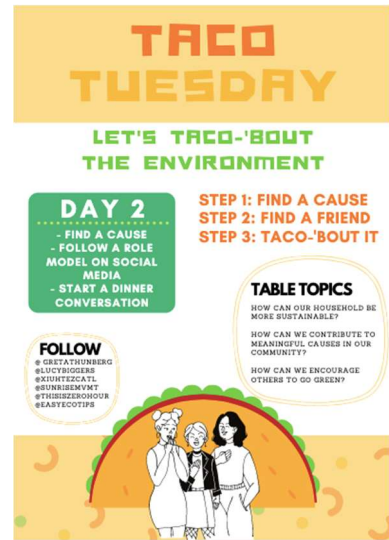
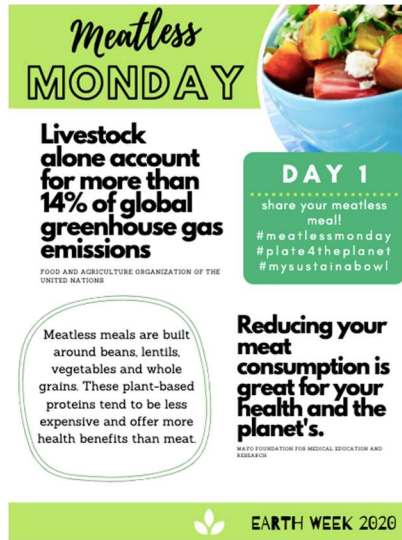
**Approximately how many students were actively involved, and how many were affected?** 12-15 actively involved at Wakefield. We were hoping it would impact the entire school and beyond.

**What obstacles were overcome? Are there continuing obstacles? What lessons did you learn from doing this?** Communication between schools. It is difficult because not all schools have a sustainability liaison or singular sustainability club. I got in touch with teachers I knew at the other schools and they pointed me in the right direction. Also, Dat Le from Teaching and Learning and Cathy Lin from Facilities and Operations were able to provide some contacts, who then provided me student officer contacts so our students could communicate. The sustainability working group needs some centralized contacts though. This was difficult, but it is evolving.

Will the project continue into future years? If so, how will you keep continuity? Do you plan modifications? Yes, I hope we can pull this off next Earth Week!

What effect has it had on the school? TBD

Are there photos that could help others visualize how this worked for you? If so, please insert them here. Since school was out, we ended up with a social media campaign. Several clubs shared the following student-generated digital posters.



## Replication

Do you have resources you used that would be helpful for someone trying to replicate this project? Would you be willing to share them? I would be happy to coordinate future

events with other schools around the county. My Admin staff and the contacts through the sustainability liaisons were the best resources.

**What else should someone wanting to implement a similar project at their school know?**